Dear TLS Friend,

Previously, we discussed the first seven Cs of Transformational Leadership:

- **Character Formation:** Pursue personal integrity
- **Call:** Clarify life mission or calling
- **Commitment:** Commit to a life mission or calling
- **Community Building:** Build a healthy community with common values and mission
- **Creative Leadership:** Decide on a creative course of action
- **Capacity:** Increasingly building capacity
- **Coaching:** Developing change leaders

Let us turn our attention to the next C in Transformational Leadership called, **Collaborative Leadership: Building strategic alliances for synergy.**

Collaborative leadership is about synergy—forming alliances between distinct groups, such as the black and white piano keys described in Dr. Aggrey’s quote. Each group of keys is capable of playing music separately, however, the two groups can work together, resulting in a more beautiful harmony.

In the context of transformational leadership, collaboration occurs when people and organizations are in partnership. A crucial factor for successful collaboration is the ability to develop “win/win” relationships. But, what do we mean by “win/win”? These kinds of relationships do not work well with the “your way” or “my way” philosophy, rather, there is a “better way”—a “higher way” to achieve collaborative success.

The concept of “win/win” is a frame of mind and heart, where each group truly seeks the best for both groups. Valuing the unique differences of others is the essence of synergy. This combined effort is mutually beneficial for accomplishing a greater good. Knowing each other’s goals is one aspect of synergy, but it is through dynamic cooperation that groups receive added and beneficial value. As a group serves the interests of another group, this collaborative success can achieve the fulfillment of the overall mission.

Negotiation skills are paramount to collaboration. Effective negotiation helps to resolve situations where there may be conflict. Individuals may have to experience a type of “truth and reconciliation” commission, however, the aim of win-win negotiation is to find an acceptable solution for both parties. Ultimately, after the event, both parties will feel that they have “won” in some way.

As you can see, trust is foundational and integrity is the cornerstone for building synergy that will result in successful collaboration. To gain this level of trust, collaborating parties must be honest and understanding with each other. They must be more open in communication—sometimes speaking less and listening more. Nevertheless, a successful collaborative effort tends to maximize and produce a greater result than efforts achieved without collaboration. Effective collaboration follows the “Golden Rule,” which says, “Do to others what you would have them do to you.”
Consider how you, as a transformational leader, can build strategic alliances, create synergy and achieve a successful collaboration. What practical steps can you take to initiate an environment of collaboration in your organization and community?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Transforming Leadership Seminars (TLS) will be held in Bujumbura, Burundi (August 9th–11th) and Nairobi, Kenya (August 12th–14th). For more information, please contact: ILF@transformingleadership.com.

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