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November 2, 2015 **Emile Hawkins**

EMBRACING THE CHALLENGE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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Leadership is about hearts and minds, about empowering people but not controlling them. The word transformation means change, and transformational leadership is about empowering everyone in the Church to learn, to seek change and improvement, and to never be satisfied with stagnation. It is based upon trusting skilled, dedicated, intelligent people to do what they have learned is best, to take responsibility immediately (indeed to seize it) and to share leadership throughout the Church. The leader's job is to facilitate increased learning, trust, and understanding (Liontos, 1992).

Further, transformational leaders attempt to satisfy the basic needs of followers, but they go beyond mere exchange by engaging the total person in an attempt to satisfy the higher-level needs of self-esteem and self-actualization. Transformational leadership elevates leaders and followers to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns p. 90).

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IS EMPOWERING AND INSPIRATIONAL.

Hackman and Johnson note five characteristics that are believed to be absolute prerequisites for becoming a transformational leader: **Creative, Interactive, Visionary, Empowering and Passionate.**

Church members must be transformational leaders, always seeking out new ideas. In this sense, creative means not being content with things remaining the same. We show our creativity in the way we serve the body and witness to the community. It requires both hard work and perseverance. It takes being an independent thinker. Creativity in the way that we present the Gospel is critical. If you ignore creativity, then you might be satisfied with how things are. As pastors, in our witnessing and preaching we must always seek ways to craft and refine our thoughts and ideas.

IF YOU ARE NOT CREATIVE, YOU ARE SET UP TO BE "CHURCH AS USUAL."

Being interactive is one of the "glues" of the message we present and has to do with its ability to stick in the minds and hearts of the audience. Look people in the eye, ask questions to members in the audience, have someone come on the platform and assist with an illustration, provide fill-in the blank bullet points of the message inserted within the weekly bulletin—all of these could make the message memorable. However, it is not just pastors that need to be interactive in the pulpit. The church as a whole needs to be interactive with its community. Being transformational dictates that the church moves out from within itself to interact with the wider community.

TRANSFORMATION CANNOT TAKE PLACE WHEN THE CHURCH REMAINS SECLUDED WITHIN ITSELF.

However, being interactive must fit within the vision of the church. Leadership studies have proven over and over that having a vision is one thing. Communicating the vision well is a different story. The minute you get a vision for a project, which for you will be as real as the air you breathe, you will have to "communicate that vision, seven times more than you think is necessary." Transformational leaders are visionaries who can attract commitment and energize people.

Empowering followers, fellow teammates, etc., is a leader's most powerful tool! When we empower others, we share the space for success "from me to us." If at all possible, give others around you the power and authority to help get the job done. The church must be conscious to share power and authority to get others involved and provide ownership in the ministry.

Finally, we look at one of the most important areas of any organization called passion. No one wants to follow a leader that lacks passion, but also no leader wants followers who are passionless. Typically, passion cannot be taught. More often than not, it must be caught by followers! Passion is contagious and it is the (engine's) organization's spark plug.

PASSION CONNECTED TO WISDOM WILL PRODUCE A CONSISTENTLY EFFECTIVE MINISTRY.

Being a transformational leader is both fun and challenging. Very few people set out to earn the label "transformational leader." What they set out to do is make a difference in the lives of people. There are many efforts on many different levels that a transformational leader must do well. However, if they are successful in those efforts and relationships, the world will never be the same. However, if they are successful in those concepts and empowering others around them to do the same, the message and proclamation of Christ will be more effective in a generation so in need of Him.

🔖 TAGGED: CREATIVITY, EMPOWERING, LEADERSHIP, PASSION, TRANSFORMATION

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Dr. Emile Hawkins has long been passionate about the topic of servant leadership, so he is an ideal fit for Southeastern University, joining the Historical, Legal, & Leadership Studies department in 2010. Dr. Hawkins has published *Coming Home: For Those Who Serve and Those Who Wait* with Danny Lynchard and *Man Overboard and the Leaders that Watched Him Sink* with Ed Funk. The former is a devotional book published by Nelson, while the latter encourages leaders to transform their organizational cultures by being servants and by supporting their subordinates at every level. [View all posts by Emile Hawkins](#) ➔