THE CONTEMPORARY ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION:
A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

By

Brenda Sham

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(INDUSTRIAL SOCIOLOGY)

in the

FACULTY OF ARTS

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

PRETORIA

NOVEMBER 1999

© University of Pretoria
This work is dedicated to the memory of my brother
Vincent Gerard Sham
(22 April 1956 - 21 February 1999)
I would like to record my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following people who contributed in some way to the completion of this study:

- Prof Carel van Aardt, my promoter, for his encouragement, guidance and inspiration. He is to be commended for his excellent supervision
- Dr Richard Weeks and Prof Martin Nasser for their initial direction and support
- My sister, Prof Veronica McKay, for input, guidance and generous support
- All the respondents who gave so freely of their time, enabling me to gain a greater insight into the dynamics of leadership
- Dr Coen Slabber of Deloitte Consulting, who ensured that I had time off from the firm to complete this study and who gave me strength and inspiration throughout
- Michelle Ducci for her administration and typing of the thesis
- Roger Loveday for meticulously editing my work
- My parents Bill and Mary Sham for prayers, support and always being a great source of encouragement
- Merle Schlebusch, Pam Gerber, Marcelle Nasser and Peter Feather for their interest and commitment through the years.

Deo Gratias
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1 INTRODUCTION
2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
4 IMPORTANCE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER 2: AN OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION AND LEADERSHIP

1 INTRODUCTION
1.2 Organisational transformation
1.2.3 The international view of organisational transformation
1.2.4 External trends
1.2.5 Trends that affect the internal operation of organisations
1.3 Organisational trends: conclusion
1.3.1 Organisational transformation from a South African perspective
1.4 A South African model
1.5 A competitive view of organisational transformation
1.6 The racial emphasis in organisational transformation
2 LEGISLATION WHICH AFFECTS ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION
2.1 The Employment Equity Act
2.2 Implementation of employment equity plans
2.3 Implications of the Employment Equity Act
2.4 The implications of organisational transformation on leadership
2.5 Leadership Elements critical to organisational transformation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Organisational transformation internationally and in South Africa</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 A new world order</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Demographics and the new global work force</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 Knowledge, work and human capital</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 South African organisational transformation</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 CONCLUDING REMARKS</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 PART 2: A THEORETICAL APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Transformational leadership</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Definition of transformational leadership</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 THE PRINCIPLES AND COMPONENTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Employees are allowed and enabled to view their work from a new perspective</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Generating awareness of the mission and vision</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Develop workforce to higher levels of ability and potential</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Motivate followers to look at organisational interests</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 Self-mastery</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6 Cognitive-focused strategies</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 TOUGH LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Pack leadership</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Military-style leadership</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 New generation leaders</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 THE UNDESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF TOUGH LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Conclusions about tough leadership</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 TOWARDS A LEADERSHIP MODEL</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 CONCLUDING REMARKS</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1 INTRODUCTION

2 JUSTIFICATION FOR UTILISING A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH
   2.1 The research design
   2.2 Documentary study
   2.2.1 External documentation
   2.2.2 "Sampling" the documents
   2.2.3 General survey of the literature
   2.2.4 Internal documents

3 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
   3.1 The rationale behind using various interview techniques
   3.2 Eliciting response: rapport through using in-depth interviews
   3.5 The interview process

4 CHOOSING THE SAMPLE AND GAINING ENTRY
   4.2 Selection of the sample

5 DATA CODING AND ANALYSIS

6 CONCLUDING REMARK

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

1 INTRODUCTION

2 LEADER A
   2.1 The organisation's profile
   2.2 Leader A's views about organisational transformation
   2.3 Leader A's specific style and approach
   2.4 Leader A: successes and challenges

3 LEADER B
   3.1 The organisation's profile
   3.2 Leader B's views about organisational transformation
3.3 Leadership alignment 207
3.4 Facilitate continuous learning 207
3.5 Continuous organisational culture survey 208

4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH 209
4.1 The strategic management process 209
4.2 Enterprise transformation 210

5 CONSTRAINTS OF THE STUDY 211

6 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY 211
6.1 Contribution of situating leadership in a theoretical framework 212
6.2 The following elements of transformational leadership were discussed and evaluated: 213
6.3 The following approaches to a quasi-military/autocratic leadership styles were discussed and evaluated: 213
6.4 The value of obtaining input from leaders as opposed to specialists 214

BIBLIOGRAPHY 216
Appendix A: Interview Schedule 229
ABSTRACT

THE CONTEMPORARY ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION: A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

BY

BRENDA MARY SHAM

PROMOTER: PROF CJ VAN AARDT
DEPARTMENT: SOCIOLOGY
DEGREE: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (INDUSTRIAL SOCIOLOGY)

Leadership in South Africa have been given the major responsibility of having to transform and renew their organisation in order that they may now compete in the global economy and that they are furthermore aligned to the socio-political dynamics and imperatives of the country.

Ensuring organisational renewal and survival and meeting the requirements of labour legislation places extraordinary pressure on company leaders. Most South African leaders obtained their managerial experience and expertise during a period characterised by environmental stability and predictability and are now faced with unfamiliar conditions and environmental stressors for which most of them are dismally prepared.
This study demonstrates that given the turbulent environment in which leadership had to operate, there were few leaders who were able to meet these new challenges within their organisations.

The way in which these leaders were able to shift their organisation from its present state to the desired state was examined in this study. The study showed that despite the use of transformational leadership to effect many aspects of the transformation process, all leaders tended to resort at some stage of the transformation process, to a dictatorial and overtly 'quasi-military' style of leadership. Once the organisation had been renewed and stabilised, leaders were more likely to incorporate traditional elements of transformational leadership. Leaders therefore only tended to become more democratic, participative and person centred once their organisations had become sufficiently stable to cope with new and threatening conditions.
Leierskap in Suid-Afrika is die enorme verantwoordelikheid gegee om hul maatskappye te transformeer en te vernuwe sodat hulle nou in die globale ekonomie kan meeding en dat hulle ook toegerus kan wees vir die sosio-politieke dinamika en uitdagings van die land.

Die aandrang op organisatoriese vernuwing en herlewing en die voldoening aan die vereistes van die arbeidswetgewing, het buitengewone druk op maatskappyleiers geplaas. Die meeste Suid-Afrikaanse leiers het hul bestuurervaring en -kundigheid verkry in 'n tydperk wat gekenmerk is deur omgewingstabiliteit en voorspelbaarheid en word nou gekonfronteer met vreemde toestande en omgewingstressors waarvoor die meeste van hulle swak voorbereid is.

Hierdie studie toon dat in die lig van die stormagtige omgewing waarin leierskap moet funsioneer, daar inderdaad min leiers was wat in staat was om hierdie uitdagings binne hul maatskappye die hoof te bied.

Die wyse waarop hierdie leiers daarin geslaag het om hul maatskappye van sy huidige toestand te verskuif na die gewenste toestand, word in hierdie studie ondersoek. Die studie het aan die lig gebring dat ten spyte van die gebruik van transformasionale leierskap om talle aspekte van die transformasieproses tewee te bring, het alle leiers op een of ander stadium van die transformasieproses hul gewend tot 'n diktatoriale en klaarblyklik "kwasi-militère" leierskapstyl. Wanneer die maatskappy vernuwe en
gestabiliseer geraak het, het leiers meer geredelik tradisionele elemente van transformasionele leierskap geïnkorporeer. Leiers was derhalwe slegs geneig om meer demokraties, deelnemend en persoongesentreer te raak nadat hul maatskappe voldoende stabiel geraak het om die nuwe en bedreigende toestande die hoof te bied.