LEADERSHIP STYLES OF JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE EXECUTIVES AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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This study found that Jewish Family Service executives follow both transformational and transactional leadership styles, and elements of both are needed for success. They exhibit considerable innovation yet are effective managers of their agencies. The everyday life of executives require that they be both leaders and managers.

As we approach the year 2000, executives of social service agencies ponder how their agencies will survive, under what conditions they must innovate and adapt, and what role their leadership plays in influencing a course of action for the organization. I recently conducted a study of Jewish Family Service (JFS) executive directors to explore what type of leadership style—transactional or transformational—they use. The findings of the study have implications for executive decision-making and the executive directors' relationships with funders, staff, the clients they serve, and their boards. The study sought to understand if JFS executives are transactional—following managerial practices primarily based on reward and accomplishment—or transformational—concentrating more on the human-relations skills that rely on the ability to articulate, inspire, stimulate, and promote the talents and thinking of others.

TRANSFORMATIONAL VS. TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLES

Transactional and transformational leadership styles are the two key contemporary models of leadership, with both focusing on the interrelationships between leaders and other organizational participants. Other leadership styles tend to emphasize either the personality and traits of the leader or the situations in which leaders find themselves. Within an organizational context, executive leadership cannot exist without strong followership from employees and board members within the organization. Collaboration between leadership and followership, in a mutually responsive, interlocking relationship, is the fulfilling fantasy of every leader.

Transactional Leadership

Put simply, transactional leadership follows managerial practices primarily based on reward and accomplishment. It is based on the social exchange model, where leaders initially approach followers and gain their compliance by exchanging rewards for services rendered. Transactional leaders let their staff know what is expected of them and what they can receive for meeting expectations (Hollander & Julian, 1969; Rosenback & Taylor, 1989). These ideas have their origins in the works of Barnard (1938, p. 142), who wrote about the role of "inducements and incentives." Transactional leaders typically rely on their formal position within the organization to provide rewards and punishments and to motivate followers (Barge, 1994).

Transactional style leadership is usually concerned with marginal or incremental improvements in the quantity or quality of performance. The transactional leader tends to work within the existing organizational culture by clarifying roles and tasks while trying to manage complexity. He or she promises rewards for good performance, recognizes accomplishments, and practices "management by exception" (Maclean & Wetzel, 1992)—actively watching and searching for

deviations from established rules and standards before taking corrective action, and then deciding if and when to intervene or to adopt a "laissez-faire" stance. Within this stance, the transactional leader can take a more passive approach to leadership, abdicating certain responsibilities and avoiding the need to make decisions.

As more attention was paid to the followers in a group setting, it became clear that many did not feel involved, understood, or appreciated by their transactional leaders. Further, the better off they were as followers, the more they expected to know what is going on and the more frustrated they were when they did not know. Issues related to employee satisfaction and group performance were documented as being crucial to organizational performance (Avolio, et al., 1988). This understanding is at the core of transformational leadership, which has proven to generate higher levels of employee commitment, satisfaction, and motivation (Barge, 1994).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership strives for higher-order changes within the organization that involve shifts in attitude, beliefs, values, and needs. Transformational leaders are interested in communicating about the future and the possibilities that can come with change through a clearly stated course of action that emanates from a vision of the future.

Transformational leaders rely on rhetorical skills to create a compelling vision of the future, which prompts shifts in follower beliefs, needs, and values. The transformation leader is charismatic (providing a vision of the future, instilling pride, and gaining respect and trust), inspirational (communicating high expectations, using symbols to focus efforts, and expressing important purposes in simple ways), intellectual (promoting intelligence, rationality and careful problem-solving), and gives individualized consideration (treating each employee individually, coaching, and advising them) (Bass, 1990).

Leading vs. Managing

Leadership is more than good management. Within the transformational leadership paradigm, leadership is concerned with fostering growth in others while seeing the opportunities for change, even if they exist outside the traditional arenas. In contrast, when executives function within the mindset of being resource-dependent and crisis-reactive, they feel as though they have little control over the external environment. Consequently, their primary attention turns to things that they can control. Such approaches may be inadequate for guiding nonprofit organizations into the twenty-first century. The consequence of working hard in order to maintain the status quo may be devastating to the organization. Table 1 shows some differences between leading and managing.

As the chief executive officer of the organization, the executive provides a sense of understanding and purpose to the general activities of the organization and taps resources not available to others. Within their administrative responsibilities, executives identify emerging trends and anticipate their impact, create vision and purpose, and introduce and sustain innovation (Menefee & Thompson, 1994). To fulfill these responsibilities, executive directors need to think and act strategically (Bryson, 1988). The executive who possesses a greater cognitive complexity (Jacques, 1987) can help make the causal connections between complicated issues affecting organizational life, many of which reside external to the organization. Issues that were external to the organization, and therefore thought of as less manageable and amenable to change, are now brought inside the organization by the executive director. The executive director brings the knowledge of the external environment into the agency through the front door, so that the agency's challenges can be confronted directly.

Executives worry about job security like everyone else. The ability to take risks and to handle the fears related to risk is one of the

Table 1. Leading versus Managing*

Dimension	Leaders	Managers
Emotional involvement	By way of ideals, vision	By tasks, and people associated with task
Personal Life	No differentiation between personal and work life	Work is separate form private life
Achieves commitment by	Inspiration	Involvement
Holds people accountable by...	Guilt induction; wants the whole person	Contractual transactions; wants task accomplishment
Value emphasis	Terminal; end state	Instrumental; means
Problems	Create them—they are an opportunity	Fix them
Plans	Long range	Short-term
Appreciates from members of the organization...	Contrariness, the ability to challenge the process	Conformity
Engenders in members of the organization...	Intense feelings; love-hate Turbulence; desire to identify	Feelings that are not intense; Smoother relations

*Adapted from Srivastva, S. and Associates, *Executive Power*, p. 67, Jossey-Bass, 1991

crucial factors that this study explored in examining transactional vs. transformational leadership styles. Prominent management theorists all note that the ability of the leader to take risks and use new thinking to solve age-old problems is the most significant determinant in the effectiveness of an organization. Leaders who are involved in a wide, rather than a narrow range of organizational issues will be perceived as more effective.

Executive Leadership: Competing Tugs on Time and Roles

The kind of leadership style the executive uses influences the direction of the organization and the relationship of the executive directors to staff, board members, clients, and funders. Yet, we know very little about the leadership styles of JFS executives because no research has focused on this question. Previous research that has examined leadership styles has focused primarily on middle managers (Fleisher, 1996; Yukl, 1981), and there is reason to believe that the roles and leadership behaviors of executives differ form those of middle managers (Katz & Kahn, 1978;

Norburn, 1989). In addition, previous investigations of executive decision-making and leadership have been primarily in laboratory situations, in which executives were asked to respond to prepared cases and situations, and not to real-life issues and problems.

Within many nonprofit social service agencies, the cadre of prospective executive directors has primarily consisted of expert practitioners. Historically, there was a presumption that clinical expertise was a sufficient foundation for meeting the demands of leading a social service organization. A number of researchers have written about the fallacy of this premise (Austin, 1989; Levinson & Klerman, 1972). JFS agencies, steeped in a rich tradition of providing counseling and direct service to clients, traditionally favored the hiring of executives who were seasoned clinicians.

The everyday work of executives is characterized by brevity, variety, and fragmentation. Issues and decisions that require extensive consideration are crowded into very short period of time, and the amount of time devoted to management activity is minimal (Wolk & Way, 1982; Schmid et al., 1991).

Because of the continuous demand for decisions with insufficient time for complete analysis, executive decisions that influence the direction of the organization are often "muddled through." Frequently, decisions are made with the consequences understood and known only incrementally—those that vary only slightly from the status quo (Lindblom, 1965). Since the problems being confronted are continually being redefined, there are countless ends-means and means-ends adjustments. In one study of business executives, it was found that most decisions executives made were made with low breadth and low decision-quality, often-times taken "off the shelf" from somebody else (Nutt, 1982).

THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGE: WHAT ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS ARE MOST CONDUCIVE TO ORGANIZATIONAL SURVIVAL AND EFFECTIVENESS?

JFS agencies are facing serious organizational challenges. Social services have been transformed form a strictly public or voluntary status to a structured conglomerate in which several operationally autonomous units provide services to a distinct segment of the market, while headquarters has tight control over the allocation of resources (Hasenfeld, 1984). The market is often segmented according to the status of the clients, e.g. self-paying, private insurance, charity cases. Moreover, contracting out has introduced a new level of competitiveness, necessitating market-oriented strategy. The rapid changes in the external environment make it difficult to form stable relations, making change the only constant.

In addition, JFS agencies are facing competition from new types of service providers: self-help associations, free health clinics, runaway shelters, safe houses for battered women and food cooperatives.

Within the Jewish community, Jewish Community Centers, Board of Jewish Education, and JFS agencies all lay claim to psychoeducational programs and services.

Social workers working in all three settings can potentially provide counseling, education, advocacy, and crisis-intervention, utilizing group and individual modalities. Concerns regarding duplication of service have surfaced in the Jewish community, and in 1993, a JFS agency in Ohio was subsumed into the Jewish Community Center out of an apparent inability to resolve a conflict the agency's mission and funding (Nadler et al., 1994).

Leadership helps an organization adapt to its environment by eliminating ineffective patterns of behavior and creating new ones. The executive must be able to identify these dysfunctional patterns, and help individuals and groups within the agency create systems of organizing to manage environmental challenges. To do this, an executive must have the communications skills to involve all the members of the agency and to develop a reciprocal relationship with the staff. It is for this reason that relational management—the managing of interpersonal relations among fellow workers—is cited in the literature as an important variable in leadership (Barge, 1994, p. 62). As agencies develop, conflict will arise over the kinds of roles people will assume in the organization and how problems are confronted. Executives must help organizational members negotiate their roles and resolve the conflicts that may emerge.

The different life cycles of an organization also require different leadership styles. A typology of leadership styles is necessary to meet the following organizational life-cycle stages: formation, development, maturation, elaboration of structure, decline, and death.

The leadership transition process, at whatever stage of organizational development, consists of a number of distinct but often overlapping stages through which every agency must move (Gilmore & Brown, 1985/86; Whittaker, 1991). Few actions that a board takes have a more profound impact on an organization than the selection of a new executive director. The clearer the board can be about the kind of leadership an organization needs at its particular stage of develop-

ment, the more likely it will make a sound decision.

Organizational effectiveness on some level needs to be understood within the question of What is it about the work of the executive that contributes to the effectiveness of the agency? Many executives find themselves in situations in which assessment criteria shift constantly, depending on the views of dominant lay leaders. As a result, some executives adopt increasingly defensive strategies to protect themselves by becoming more cautious and fiscally conservative, less creative, and less assertive in carrying out their managerial leadership responsibilities (Feinstein, 1994). In a nonprofit organization, this type of transactional executive leadership style may well become dysfunctional since it results in great concentration on detail, preoccupation with finances rather than with services, isolation from constituencies, and an overbalanced concern with means rather than ends. Such a leadership style can create leadership vacuums that board members may rush to fill. Hence, the high potential for conflict between boards and executives.

Leadership styles of executive directors need to be identified and understood in order to determine which style is conducive to agency continuity in this time of dramatic change.

THE RESEARCH STUDY

The sample consisted of 96 JFS executive directors (total universe of the executive directors), and 125 JFS associates who worked in the agencies of the participating executive directors. The 96 participants were form small, medium, and large size agencies, with geographic representation from all areas of the United States and Canada. Because there is little research on JFS executive directors, this was a descriptive/exploratory study, using the Romirowsky Executive Survey, which measures the complementary fit between transactional and transformational styles, and two additional instruments as part of the research design: the Competing Values Scale (Quinn, 1988), which measures agency effec-

tiveness, and the Leadership Behavior Questionnaire (Sashkin, 1990), which measures leadership within an organizational context.

The Leadership Behavior Questionnaire (LBQ) Findings

The LBQ findings demonstrate that JFS executives exhibit strong transformational leadership styles, as demonstrated by having visionary leadership behavior (VLB), building Visionary Leadership Culture (VLC), and visionary leadership characteristics (VLC). The LBQ scores for the JFS executives and JFS associates were very similar, meaning that executive impressions of their own leadership styles were not very different from the observations made by people who work with them. These scores are virtually identical to the findings of Fleischer (1996) in her exploration of transformational leadership and JFS middle-managers.

The Competing Values Scale Findings

As a group, JFS executives scored highest within the roles of producers, facilitators, and innovators, and lowest within the roles of monitors and mentors. These findings reflect a diverse leadership profile in which the executive employs multiple styles. When compared to other nonprofit executives and 2,000 managers who have used the same Competing Values scale, JFS executives scored highest as innovator, facilitator, and as producer within the eight roles measured. In addition, JFS executives scored just slightly below other nonprofit executives as director, yet exceeded 2,000 U.S. managers in this regard. The three roles where JFS executives scored lowest—monitor, mentor, and coordinator—tend to be roles associated with middle-management, and with managers in particular. These scores were also the lowest with other executives, perhaps reflecting the emergence of new patterns of decision making within organizations which reflect team decision-making, and participatory management.

Foremost, JFS executive directors were producers, meaning they are task-oriented

and work focused, using legitimate power that is inherent in their role as executives. To be a producer, executives would tend to be directive and goal-oriented, with effectiveness primarily defined by some form of productivity or accomplishment, such as the number of clients served, number of kept sessions with clients, or number of billable hours to third party insurance. However, JFS executives did not view production as the primary approach to assessing their organization's effectiveness. Instead, they viewed innovation and adaptation along with commitment and morale as the primary approaches to measuring JFS organizational effectiveness.

The findings from the Competing Values scale indicate that JFS executives perceive their influence on the JFS organization based primarily on their fostering achievements and a "can do" posture within the organization. Within a leadership role, producers fit more within the transactional leadership style, clarifying roles and tasks within the status quo, or the primary operations of the organization. JFS executives also act as managers within their organizations, as reflected in the moderately strong director scores within the Competing Values Scale. This also fits into a transactional style of leadership.

JFS executives function within a team leadership culture, where there is great emphasis on process. The facilitator is very people and process-oriented, using the executive's relational power inherent in his or her position. The executive director shows concern for people, is supportive, and spends a great amount of energy in relating to others within the organization. This would be expected within a nonprofit environment, where so many JFS executives received their professional training in direct practice and sensitivity to the human condition. Consequently, the facilitator JFS executive tends to manage conflict by seeking consensus. The executive's influence is based on getting people involved in the decision-making and problem-solving of the organization. Effectiveness would be defined primarily by human resource values,

and behaviors related to morale, esteem, and professional growth. Participation and openness are actively pursued. This finding was also confirmed by Fleisher (1995) in her research of the JFS agency's middle-management.

Given the need to respond to ever-changing times, JFS executives evidenced high receptivity to the "adhocracy" culture (Quinn, 1988), shedding traditional bureaucratic structures in favor of boundary-spanning, innovation, and change. Effectiveness within this approach tends to be defined by the values of organizational growth and resource acquisition. In order for change to take place, the innovator needs to be clever and creative, relying on the use of reward power that is inherent in the position of executive. The innovator executive needs to envision change, and the executive's influence on the organization is based on an anticipation of a better future, generating optimism and hope. The high innovator scores were closely followed by high scores in the broker role. The broker needs to exercise both upward and external influence, selling ideas to the board and to funding sources. Using the formal authority inherent within the executive director's role, the executive can then exert influence upon decisions at higher levels. Through these efforts, the broker secures needed resources.

JFS coordinators and monitors do not rely on the expert power inherent within their position of executive director to exert information control or create policies and procedures.

The second part of the Competing Values scale measures organizational effectiveness. JFS executives confirmed their commitment to the innovator role, as innovation and adaptation received the highest score. JFS executives felt that organizational adaptation cannot occur without a commitment from the staff, reflecting high morale. Consequently, commitment and morale of staff scored next highest, but only slightly. These two approaches to effectiveness are companions to one another. Moreover, they reflect a growing realization that the bottom line of effec-

tiveness is not solely one of financial health or profit. JFS executives placed a high value on productivity and accomplishment, but the scale was not designed to ascertain the nature of productivity that executives value most within their organizations.

The Romirowsky Executive Survey Findings

The Romirowsky Executive Survey confirmed the finding that executives spend little time on internal procedural matters. They reported that they spent the least amount of time on achieving outcomes, focusing on results with their staff, and clarifying rules and procedures.

When asked to assign a percentage of time spent with each of these ten activities—working with the board, budgets, personnel, talking to funding sources, networking external to the agency, monitoring policy and procedures, planning, supervising, internal networking, and teaching/training—the largest commitment of time was spent working with the board. Almost 48 percent of the directors spend between 10–15 percent of their time, while 25 percent spend between 16–20 percent of their time on board work. In addition, over 85 percent of the executive directors believed that working with their board is crucial for change to take place within the organization. Prior research has found variation in nonprofit chief executives' expectations of boards, with executive effectiveness associated with an ability to use the board for their community linkages, technical expertise, and fund-raising ability, in that order. The findings suggest that the more effective executives see their boards' relation to the environment in a different way (Herman & Heimovics, 1995).

The Life Cycle of the JFS Organization: Development, Maturation, Formation, and Decline

JFS executives were asked about the stage of development of their agencies. Over one-third saw their agencies as being in the devel-

opment stage, in which the activities of the organization are involved with creating an identity, becoming known in the community, identifying services and products, and acquiring basic resources. The socio-emotional tone within the organization is one of high activity, excitement, hope, risk-taking, and spontaneity. Within the development phase of an organization, the executive tends to be involved in defining mission, focusing on internal environments, creating programs, hiring staff, having frequent contact with the board, and representing the agency in the community (Bailey & Grocheau, 1993, p. 38). JFS executives rated elaboration of structure as the next highest stage (32.29%). In this stage, the organization is focused on renewal, redefining its purposes and services. This redefinition may require merging or consolidating, expanding or differentiating. The executive conveys a tone of hope, excitement, activity, and confidence (Bailey & Grocheau, 1993, p. 40). The maturation phase of an organization was cited by 19.7 percent of the sample. Maturation typically is associated with bureaucracy, when organizations are formalizing, codifying, defining procedures, coordinating, and systematizing. Executives working within this stage convey a tone of restraint, reviewing programs and priorities, establishing policies and procedures, coordinating the internal environment, and networking with colleagues (Bailey & Grocheau, 1993, p. 38). This stage of development is more likely to have a transactional leader. Just over 6 percent of executives saw their agencies in the process of formation, and 4 percent reported that their agencies were in decline.

DISCUSSION

This exploratory research into JFS executives shows that transactional and transformational leadership styles can complement one another, and both are needed for organizational success. The three instruments used in the research study demonstrated that JFS executives as a group are transformational, capable of leading their agencies into the

future. Within the eight roles examined the innovator was the role that JFS executives rated as highest. Yet, many of the hats that executives wear within their agencies require them to utilize components of the transactional leadership style in order to sustain productivity and to simply get things done. For this reason, JFS executives scored highest in the role of producer. Their clinical background, based on knowledge of personality and development helps them handle the range of human relations issues that are part of any organization. JFS executives apply their human relations skills in the service of developing participation in decision making in order to achieve greater consensus on organizational issues.

Executives of JFS agencies need to be innovative and adaptive in order to respond to changes taking place in the marketplace, with their diverse funding sources, and with the changing needs and services for the clients whom the agency serves. Yet, they must continue to be productive around those current processes and activities that define the organization's success. JFS executives have to be focused both internally and externally, thereby creating the paradox of competing values. As a result, their leadership of the JFS agency can be understood more clearly as a process of mutual influence that produces collective action in the service of a shared purpose or value. Using participatory decision-making with middle managers, employing empowerment principles with staff, and working through their boards, JFS executives have been successful in shaping the missions of their agencies, articulating values, setting directions, and building motivation.

The study demonstrates that JFS executives are effective managers of their agencies, employing transactional leadership in order to produce desired results. In addition, JFS executives evidence considerable innovation and adaptation to change, reflecting predominant transformational leadership styles. These findings demonstrate how the executive working in today's nonprofit social service agency has to be value-added. That is,

the executive must add value to the resources of the agency at all levels, with higher level leadership requiring greater conceptual effort in dealing with uncertainty, risk, and the ability to evaluate complex information (Fiedler, 1996; Jacques, 1990). Rather than being concerned about artificial distinctions between leaders and managers, the everyday life of an executive requires and demands the capacity to accomplish both jobs. No longer are social work executives predominantly concerned with structures, processes, and conditions within the agency; they now must give equal if not more attention to the entire context of service delivery by actively monitoring and managing the boundary between the external environment and the internal organizational arrangements.

The real value of leadership rests with the meanings that leader actions generate in others, not in the actions themselves. Transformational leadership styles now become the opportunity to take the next step: intervening in the environments within which social work functions, and influencing these external environments through advocacy, fostering policy changes, acquiring political savvy and power, and retooling social work education to enable students to develop the requisite competencies to accomplish these goals. Each of these processes require the ability to evolve a vision of a desired state, which is the highest form of transformational leadership.

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