



# Transformational Leaders

by Nido R. Qubein

**S**ome people manage by telling others what to do.

Others lead by teaching others how to think on their own initiative.

The first kind of leadership is transactional. The second kind is transformational.

Transactional leadership puts emphasis on what people do. Transformational leadership puts emphasis on what they become. Transactional leadership imparts a body of knowledge. Transformational leadership equips people to acquire knowledge on their own.

Transformational leadership does more than impart skills. It changes minds and inspires positive attitudes.

Changing attitudes is harder than teaching skills. To change attitudes, you must create the kind of atmosphere that makes people want to change.

Transformational leaders don't rely on formal authority to exert their leadership. Through character and proficiency, they earn the respect of those they lead. If people respect you, they'll be willing to follow

you. If you have demonstrated proficiency in what you do, they'll follow you out of self-interest.

You can order people to do a job, but you can't order them to do it well. The ability and willingness to do a job well come from attitudes, not orders. Dedication is not a skill; it's an attitude. Pride in quality is not a skill; it's an attitude.

Transformational leaders look and act the part of leaders. They dress appropriately for their leadership roles. They exude confidence but not arrogance. They are likable, not intimidating. When they spot a problem, they don't go looking for someone to blame; they go looking for a solution. They encourage others to offer ideas, they listen to what others say, and they empower others to act on their own initiative. The leader who tries to be the brains of an organization is cheating the organization. Every organization consists of a number of brains. Transformational leaders make use of that multiple brainpower.

When an idea fails to work, transformational leaders don't ridicule the person who

offered the idea. They collaborate in finding ways to learn from the failure.

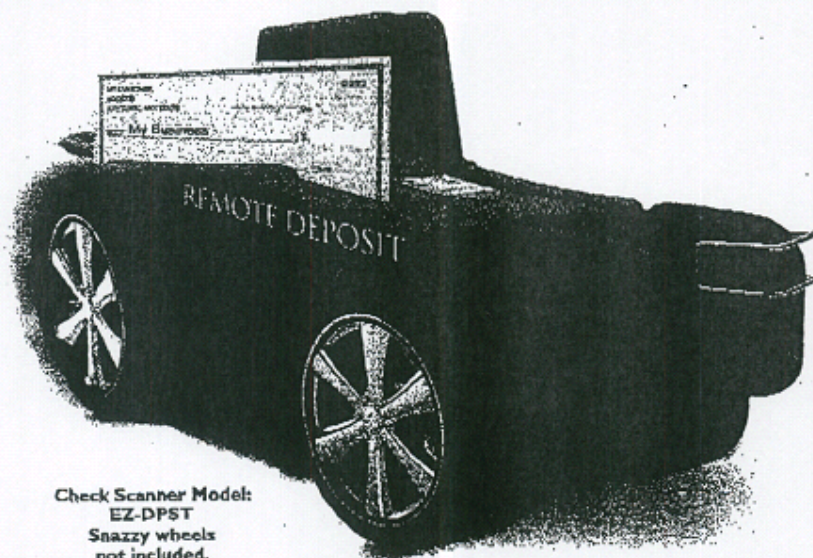
When an idea works, they don't hog the glory. They spread it around among everyone on the team. When they make the people they lead look good, they also make themselves look good.

Transformational leadership is not something you do in front of those you lead. It's something you do with them. When people feel an ownership in a project, they invest themselves in it.

The difference between the two forms of leadership is easy to define: Transactional leaders change behaviors; transformational leaders change hearts and minds. ■

*An internationally known speaker, consultant and author, Nido Qubein also is president of High Point University. He serves on the executive committee and board of the ninth largest financial institution in the United States, BB&T, which has over \$115 billion in assets, and on the corporate board of La-Z-Boy Corporation, one of the world's largest and most recognized furniture retailers.*

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