Developing Humanistic Leaders

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Abstract

This paper attempts to answer the question, how might a leadership training program develop

humanistic leaders? It examines the connection between leadership development and humanistic

leadership because the author believes it is an underdeveloped subject, judging from the

academic sources used in HOL 6100: Humanistic Leadership, which the author completed

through The George Washington University in Spring 2019. The paper starts with an exploration

of humanistic leadership's importance in our societal context. It moves on to explore human

well-being, dignity, and the transformational potential of business before identifying the

attributes of humanistic leaders. Finally, it concludes by examining how humanistic leaders can

be developed through leadership training. The paper draws from traditional academic and

business literature sources as well as more creative writings, like poetry. It draws from less

conventional sources because the author holds the assumption that the creation of humanistic

leaders is akin to a person's journey through self-awareness and toward self-actualization.

Therefore, it is important to take into account logical, feelings-based, and spiritual perspectives

to paint a whole person picture of a humanistic leadership development program.

Developing Humanistic Leaders

"The old world is dying and the new world struggles to be born. Now is the time of monsters." This is a quote attributed to Italian writer and political theorist Antonio Gramsci in the 1930s. It fits our current context only too well. We are out of road. Everyone seems to feel it, although nobody seems to agree on what to do about it, especially those who are most interested in our societal and political challenges, according to Pew Research Center (2014). Complex problem after complex problem—ranging from systemic and potentially existential challenges like climate change, growing inequality, and the implications of unprecedented technological advancement to deeply individual issues like gender rights and lifestyle preferences— are manifesting into our societal context (Harrari, 2020; Martin, 2007). Nevertheless, stark divisions exist between nearly every segment of our society, and even within political parties, on what to do about them, according to Pew Research Institute (2019). We are in need of a new way forward that is capable of integrating the understanding of these challenges and developing healthier and inclusive approaches to them that are in harmony with, rather than in contrast to, the well-being of all if we are to continue to thrive as a species (Harrari, 2020; Martin, 2007).

Wrapped up in this need for a new way forward is a question about the potential of business. *Is the potential of business to simply earn profits for shareholders in new and more innovative ways or is there a more enlightened way to look at business, one that is more inclusive, harmonious, and transformative?* As we shall see, the old business logic has focused on profits, and there is a more hopeful one emerging that is struggling to be born. Muff (2013) describes well how learning and development institutions, like business schools and in-house training programs, can coax this new way into existence. She says "Rather than training

managers for organizations that operate within twentieth century logic, management educators need to answer the call to service to become custodians of society" (p. 502). Indeed, more leaders with a broad sense of our challenges and a deeply held and widely applicable ethos focused on environmental and human well-being need to be in influential positions within public, private, and non-profit organizations if we are to bring into existence a new and better world.

The Dying Old Logic and an Emerging One

The US military after the cold war described the knotty landscape in which we find ourselves as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous or VUCA (Richardson, 2015). The model of business that took hold in the 20th century has failed repeatedly to cope with the challenges of the VUCA world, allowing irresponsible leaders to rise to the top of the rigid hierarchical structures it favors (Pirson, 2017) and leading to corporate scandals, environmental degradation, and stark inequality (Pless & Maak, 2013). This profits-focused approach is known as economism, and it is described by Milton Friedman as cited by Pirson (2017) who said:

> There is one and only social responsibility of business—to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits as long as it stays in the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud (p. 104)

Pirson (2017) builds on Friedman's point, saying "Any further commitment to societal causes is incompatible with utility maximization at the individual and organizational levels" (p. 103). Thus, economism sees no role for business in addressing the challenges it has helped to create, making it no longer a viable option for a world that is under increasing strain from a growing population and corresponding economic activity (Harrari, 2020; Martin, 2007).

Humanistic leadership stands in stark contrast to economism, providing a more inclusive, responsible, flexible, and inspiring approach that makes it better able to cope with the challenges of a VUCA world. Humanistic leadership encourages business leaders to act as "agents of world benefit" (Maak & Pless, 2009, p. 540). This means because of their power and privilege, business leaders have a responsibility to help address public problems (Mark & Pless, 2009). Embracing their role as global citizens, humanistic leaders take into account societal issues and develop strategies that increase human well-being along with company profits (Pirson, 2017). When strategies fail to do so, such leaders claim responsibility and find new solutions rather than allow communities and governments to cope with the ill effects their business helped to create.

The shortfalls of economism and the advantages of humanism can be seen clearly by examining how each interacts with the four drives of human nature. Pirson (2017) says:

> There are two ancient drives that all animals with some capacity to sense and evaluate their surroundings share: the drive to acquire (dA) life sustaining resources, and the drive to defend (dD) against all life-threatening entities. In addition, there are two newer drives, which evolved to an independent status only in humans: the drive to bond (dB) in order to form long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with other humans, and the drive to comprehend (dC) in order to make sense of the world around us… (p. 71)

The economistic model focuses narrowly on acquiring profits (dA) and defending market share (dB). The humanistic model, again in contrast, seeks to balance all four drives, achieving broader and more sustainable levels of well-being for people, organizations, and communities (Pirson, 2017). It also sees the need to ethically harness the drives to acquire (dA) and defend (dD) to

encourage positive outcomes because when ambition stems from fear and anxiety the result can be deception of others and one's self (Richards, 2003).

A Focus on Human Well-Being

As is becoming clear in our exploration of the topic, humanistic leadership is centered on promoting and preserving human well-being, but what does that mean and how can that happen? Thus far, we as a society have asked such complex questions but have defaulted to simplistic, economistic models to guide government and economic activity that affect it (Fox, 2012). Enlightenment philosopher Jeremy Bentham in 1781 outlined a philosophy that attempted to assess the merits of an action based on the amount of happiness it produced (Fox, 2012). Bentham created a calculous for happiness using 12 pains and 14 pleasures, but his work was complicated and such notions were over taken by more narrowly-focused measures, namely Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the Twentieth Century, as a stand in for the health of a nation (Fox, 2012). Fox (2012), referencing a well-known statement by Robert Kennedy captures the conversation about GDP's shortcomings as a measure of well-being. He says:

> …GDP can't distinguish between economic activities that increase a nation's wealth and ones that eat into its natural endowments (cutting redwoods), result in sickness and future cleanup costs (pollution), or merely ameliorate disasters whose costs are never accounted for (ambulances) (p. 6)

While an exploration of alternatives to GDP is out of the scope of this topic, it is appropriate to dive deeper into the many subjective factors that make up human well-being to create a working definition of the concept and how it might be preserved for this sake of this paper.

The enlightenment is a good place to turn to deepen our understanding of human well-being because many thinkers of that era grappled with what constituted it in relation to their world's most powerful organizations, governments. For political philosopher, John Locke, humans were equal and were born with certain natural rights, which included life, liberty, and property ("Natural Rights," n.d.). These rights, according to Locke, are inalienable, meaning they are given to people by a creator and cannot be ethically taken away by another human entity. Locke meant more than just land with his inclusion of property among these natural rights. Indeed, he used the term property to refer to a right that encompassed self-determination and personal well-being ("Natural Rights," n.d.). Foreshadowing the existential challenges of today, Locke argued that preserving mankind is the most basic human law of nature and that a person should be free to make choices and pursue their own life path as long as it does not interfere with another person's liberty or right to do the same ("Natural Rights," n.d.).

For fellow enlightenment thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau, personal experience and expression were central to human well-being (Eagleton, 2012). He believed it was essential for humans to be able to act in ways that align with and express the uniqueness of each individual (Eagleton, 2012). Rousseau also believed in the right of people to educate themselves and help to design any system that creates rules by which people need to abide. Much of Locke and Rousseau's philosophy can be see in the reasoning of the founders of the United States for declaring independence from Britain and influencing the western liberal constitutional order (ushistory.org, 2020). Thus, enlightenment thinkers, who helped create some of our world's most important organizational structures, conceived of human well-being as centering on broad freedom and individual liberties for people to determine their paths forward toward happiness,

growth, and the enduring vitality for the human race. Locke, Rousseau, and their contemporaries also believed it was the right of people to enable and safeguard their well-being by constructing social contracts with any organization that can infringe upon it (Eagleton, 2012).

Adding social contracts to this discussion allows us to articulate a working concept of human well-being for the purpose of this paper; social contracts between people and the power bases that affect them are necessary for enabling people to determine their paths forward, express themselves freely, and pursue happiness, how ever a person defines it, for the sake of their well-being and that of fellow human beings. As stated, this concept aligns with economist Amartya Sen and philosopher Martha Nussbaum's contemporary work on the capability approach, which Classen (2014) summarizes as "Capabilities…are freedoms to achieve something and functionings are these achievements" (p. 241). According to Nussbaum, a society is just in so much as citizens are guaranteed entitlements to basic capabilities through a constitutional order (Classen, 2014, p. 241). Perhaps it is useful then for us in the context of discussing a shift to humanistic leadership to leverage the concept of social contracts as an element humanistic leaders should leverage to ensure human well-being is preserved and promoted by an increasingly powerful force in our VUCA world, business.

The Central Role of Human Dignity in a New Social Contract with Business

Philosopher Immanuel Kant's treatment of human dignity provides an important and sound foundation to include in a new social contract with business because it shows that businesses and people should be on an equal footing as they interact with each other. Kant often is cited by human rights advocates as fundamental to the concept of dignity because of his extensive philosophical treatments of it. Bayefsky (2013) speaking of Kant and citing Giovanni

Bognetti, who has studied human dignity and constitutionalism, says "man is a morally autonomous being, who as such deserves respect and must never be treated, in general and especially by the law, as only a means to contingent ends but always (also) as an end in himself. (Bayefsky, 2013, p.811). Indeed, Kant, who Bayefsky calls "the father of the modern concept of human well-being" (Bayefsky, 2013, p. 811) is viewed by many as sparking a societal shift from valuing historical notions of honor, which rest on the hierarchical role an individual plays within a system, to valuing the universality of human dignity (Bayefsky, 2013).

Nevertheless, Bayefsky (2013) argues that Kant's views on dignity are much more complex and involve the interplay between people acting honorably and innate human dignity. These nuances actually deepen his applicability to humanistic movements, like humanistic leadership, and a potential new social contract with business. Bayefsky (2013) citing Kant says "Kant does hold that dignity grounds respect from others, and specifically equal respect; for instance, he states that a human being with dignity "exacts respect for himself from all other rational beings" and can "value himself on equal footing with them" (p.823). In other words, dignity is not a one way street or something that only needs to be preserved. Rather, dignity is a relational act deserved by all parties, who should interact with each other in ways that are equal and honorable and that are congruent with and promote the innate value and inalienable rights of human beings. Such a co-active view of human dignity works well as a foundation for a new social contract with business. In this contract, it would be the obligation of business, because of its power and position (Mark & Pless, 2009), to act in ways that honor human beings as an end unto themselves and it is the responsibility of individuals to act in ways that honor that dignity and promote it in relation to other people. Humanistic leaders have the potential to create and

uphold their end of such a social contract because of their strong ethics and expansive, inclusive world-view (Pirson, 2017). However, how to develop such leaders remains an unanswered question. Before diving into the topic, let us first explore the potential of the workplace for human development.

<h3 align="center">The Workplace as a Place of Transformation</h3>

Changing our mindset about the purpose of work from being a place that produces outcomes to being incubators for human happiness, creativity, and development is important because such spaces would increase the effectiveness of a program to develop humanistic leaders (Meyer, 2012). In Meyer's (2012) view, business has the potential to be spark human transformation through approaches that allow people to bring their whole selves to work. This view puts the workplace, along with academic and religious institutions, as a key part of the human journey toward ethical living, emotional intelligence, self-actualization, and spiritual exploration. Writer, poet, and philosopher John O'Donohue's (2004) work on inspiring creativity and a healthy ethos in the workplace supports this perspective and allows us to understand, and perhaps more importantly to feel, work's transformative potential. In his writings, he makes few if any distinctions between soul and worker, life and work, or organizations and society. He says:

> …our work should be a place where the soul can enjoy becoming visible and present. The rich unknown, reserved and precious within us, can emerge into visible form. Our nature longs deeply for the possibility of expression in what we call work. (p.134)

O'Donohue's (2008) poem "A Blessing of Your Work" helps us to further sense some of potential of the integration, rather than the segregation, of the complexity of the human experience with the workplace. It goes:

May the light of your soul guide you.
May the light of your soul bless the work
You do with the secret love and warmth of your heart.
May you see in what you do the beauty of your own soul.
May the sacredness of your work bring healing, light and renewal to those
Who work with you and to those who see and receive your work.
May your work never weary you.
May it release within you wellsprings of refreshment, inspiration and excitement.
May you be present in what you do.
May you never become lost in the bland absences.
May the day never burden you.
May dawn find you awake and alert, approaching your new day with dreams,
Possibilities and promises.
May evening find you gracious and fulfilled.
May you go into the night blessed, sheltered and protected.
May your soul calm, console and renew you.

While some may see such a wholistic and transformational view of business as too idealistic, there are real business gains to be had from making this shift. According Meyer (2012), "Workplaces that afford people the opportunity to be authentic and invite whole-person, whole-body engagement are likely to be places where workers expand discretionary, creative energy for the good of the organization" (p. 30). This aligns with decades of research cited by Pink (August, 2009) showing financial incentives alone impede rather than promote the creative outcomes businesses are seeking. Indeed, Richards (2003) crystalizes the business advantage humanistic leaders bring to organizations through their people-focused skills, saying "Their intangible behaviors, characteristics, and qualities deliver tangible and preferred business results" (p. 12).

Fabio Barbosa: A Case Study in Humanistic Leadership

What are these "intangible behaviors" that Richards (2003) references? Let us turn to an example of a successful humanistic leader to begin answering the question. As of 2006, Fabio Barbosa was a senior leader at ABN AMRO Group, which is an international bank with branches

in nearly 60 countries (Loo, 2006). ABN AMRO Group has four corporate values; integrity, teamwork, respect, and professionalism. These values are supported by business principles, including a focus on long-term value creation for stakeholders, a respect for human rights, environmental stewardship, and acting as a good corporate citizen. Such structures helped support ethical actions and morale at ABN AMRO Real—the Brazil-based subsidiary that Fabio Barbosa led. Indeed, a 2003 climate survey indicated 93 percent of its 23,000 employees were proud to work for the bank and 88 percent identified with its corporate values (Loo, 2006).

"Fabio Barbosa tends to say that leadership development is in essence about becoming a better, more complete human being" (Loo, 2006, p. 180). Fabio Barbosa has a well-defined set of internal values—respect, stewardship, confidence, and self-awareness—that he can trace to a variety of challenging job experiences and to his childhood. For example, his career took him to Switzerland, the United States, and Japan before returning to his native Brazil in the early 2000s. These experiences made Fabio Barbosa more appreciative of cultural differences and the benefits of diversity (Levi, 2016). He also is known to imbed his beliefs in phrases like"let us not play dirty games" and "play the ball, not the legs of your opponent" (Loo, 2006, p. 175). Such simple messages allow Fabio Barbosa to convey his values to those around him. He also helps others reflect on their own beliefs by asking questions (Loo, 2006).

Fabio Barbosa's strong values were a major driver behind ABN AMRO Real's responsible behavior and morale of its workforce. Indeed, people in and outside the bank saw him as connected closely with the bank's "socially responsible approach" (Loo, 2006, p. 171). The bank, for example, has projects that foster civic engagement, like a non-profit organization designed to help Brazil's school system. Projects like this not only are in line with values held by

Fabio Barbosa and the bank but also by Brazilians writ large, 70 percent of whom wanted

companies to contribute to societal development, according to a 2003 survey by the Ethos

Institute (Loo, 2006). This data highlights the deep alignment between Fabio Barbosa, his

organization, and the broader environment in which it operates.

Identifying the Characteristics of Humanistic Leaders

Fabio Barbosa's example helps illuminate two foundational characteristics of humanistic

leaders; first, they have well-developed self-awareness and understanding of deeply held values.

According to Northouse (2018) self-awareness of values is a critical leadership capability. He

says "When leaders know themselves and have a clear sense of who they are and what they stand

for, they have a strong anchor for their decisions and actions. Other people see leadership who

have greater self-awareness as authentic" (p. 203). In addition to self-awareness, Fabio Barbosa's

example highlights the importance of having experiences that foster greater external awareness

of their organization's context and the communities in which it operates and appreciation for

diversity. This enables the humanistic leader to adapt their approach to better meet the needs of a

changing relationship or external dynamic. Thus, self-awareness, external-awareness, and

adaptive leadership are hallmarks of the humanistic leader.

From Awareness to Not Knowing. Richardson (2015) reinforces the importance of self-

awareness and expands upon this well-known topic by describing it as a process of individuation

that makes up the core of a responsible leader, a term closely aligned with humanistic leadership,

and gives that person "a quiet assuredness based on a clear sense of who I am" (p. 29). This

awareness, according to Richardson (2015), is an understanding and comfort with one's own

strengths, weaknesses, motivators, and personal values, which he says are composed of morals

and ethics that govern behavior. Understanding these components of self and acting in line with them are foundational for the responsible leader.

In addition to self-awareness, Richardson (2015) argues that responsible leaders need to be comfortable with ambiguity. They also need to be curious, open, confident, and humble to thrive and lead others in our VUCA world. He lists asking questions, listening to understand, and openness to feedback and being wrong as traits of responsible leaders. For example, when discussing the need for comfort with ambiguity and change Richardson (2013) says:

> Volatility and uncertainty are prevailing forces operating seemingly unchecked. And paradoxically, businesses and markets crave stability to support investment decisions. What this suggests is that leaders of tomorrow will need to be comfortable with "not knowing", be able to model this confidently to their stakeholder groups (p. 34)

What does Richardson (2013) mean by not knowing? He says that it is a comfort with and ability to make decisions with incomplete information. He does not argue for abandoning the need to think critically and take data-drive approaches. Rather, he argues successful leaders in a VUCA world need to be agile, embrace rather than turn away from the unknown, and flexibly combine intuition with available data in a process that resembles systems thinking (Reed, 2006). If leaders do not develop this capacity, they risk being overcome by emotion, missing opportunities, and making poor decisions. Thus, humanistic leaders are comfortable with ambiguity, emotionally intelligent, listen and ask questions, think in systems, and are open to changing their mind.

From Traits to Action Logic. While the traits exhibited by Fabio Barbosa and laid out by Richardson (2013) help paint a clear portrait of a humanistic leader, there is another fundamental piece at play beyond attributes. That piece is a leader's "action logic," which is how

people have developed to "interpret their surroundings and react when their power or safety is challenged" (Rooke & Torbert, 2005, p. 1). Certainly, action logic, which is closely related to maturity, is worth exploring in our context where stability is fleeting and change is the rule rather than the exception. In such challenging circumstances, an aspiring humanistic leader could revert to more base behaviors if humanistic leadership is not sufficiently ingrained as a default way of acting. Rooke & Torbert (2005) argue, it is an action logic rather than a leadership philosophy, style, or values that is the key factor that "differentiates leaders" (Rooke & Torbert, 2005, p. 1).

According to adult development theory, which underpins Rooke & Torbert's work (2005), adults, like children, proceed through predictable stages of development, ranging from the earlier Opportunist, Diplomat, and Expert action logics to the later Achiever, Individualist, Strategist, and Alchemist action logics (Rooke & Torbert, 2005). As a person progresses through these seven stages, they take the knowledge and traits gained in earlier action logics and combine them with new understanding gained in later action logics, creating an aggregating process of maturation and development that does not add a new skill to a skillset but fundamentally shifts how a person interacts with themselves and their worlds (Rooke & Torbert, 2005). Petrie (2013), who uses the term vertical development to describe adult development transitions, clarifies this human growth process, saying "The aim of vertical development is not to add more to the cup but to grow the size of the cup itself" (p. 9). It is in the latter four of the seven action logics in which leaders consistently display the broad stake-holder view, awareness, emotional intelligence, adaptability, comfort with ambiguity, flexible decision-making, and openness of a humanistic leader (Rooke & Torbert, 2005). This more consistent embodiment of humanistic leadership typically starts at the transition from Expert to Achiever and takes hold in later stages.

From Expert to Achiever. The move from Expert to the Achiever action logic probably is the gateway to a consistent and integrated practice of humanistic leadership, judging from the characteristics of the Achiever action logic and their absence in earlier action logics as described by Rooke & Torbert (2005). At the Achiever action logic, which makes up about 30% of leaders in Rooke & Torbert's (2005) sample, a person leaves behind the central drive for perfected knowledge of the Expert action logic for a more complex understanding of human relationships and the environment in which they are formed. Rooke & Torbert (2005) say:

> Achievers have a more complex and integrated understanding of the world than do managers who display the previous action logics…They're open to feedback and realize that many of the ambiguities and conflicts of everyday life are due to differences in interpretation and ways of relating (p.4)

Achievers can create positive, inclusive team environments that balance personal and professional needs through effective leadership behaviors like delegation and deepening self-awareness and emotional intelligence. Achievers also can work productively with interpersonal conflict that would have deterred an earlier action logic, according to Rooke & Tortbert (2005).

To Individualist and Beyond. Individualists, who make up about 10% of Rooke & Torbert's (2005) sample, add a more fully developed understanding of personal values, ability to communicate more effectively with diverse and conflicting personalities, and meta-cognitive capabilities to the Achiever's strengths. Beyond Individualist, the Strategist action logic, which makes up about 4% of the leaders in Rooke & Torbert's (2005) sample, adds more broadly applicable change management abilities. Rooke & Torbert (2005) say that while the "Individualist" focuses on communicating well with people of other action logics, the

"Strategist" is concerned with organizations and cultures, which they see as constructs that

should be discussed and can be transformed through iterative processes. Strategists also "deal

with conflict more comfortably" (Rooke & Torbert, 2005, p. 5) and are excellent change agents

because they are better at "handling people's instinctive resistance to change" (Rooke & Torbert,

2005, p. 5). Strategists seek to build strategic relationships, knowing that collaboration is key to

achieving their goals, which, like humanistic leaders, often are socially conscious.

Beyond Strategist is Alchemist, which is the final leadership action logic for which

Rooke & Torbert (2005) had data. They say what distinguishes Alchemists from Strategists is

"their ability to renew or even reinvent themselves and their organizations in historically

significant ways" (Rooke & Torbert, 2005, p. 6). Alchemists work productively with multiple

complex situations simultaneously and are typically "charismatic and extremely aware

individuals who live by high moral standards" (Rooke & Torbert, 2005, p. 6). Alchemists make

up about 1% of Rooke & Torbert's sample, and the scarcity of these leaders raises a key

challenge facing humanistic leadership if it is, indeed, enabled most consistently in later, more

mature, and less prevalent action logics. Can you intentionally develop humanistic leaders or is it

more a matter of circumstance? According to Rooke & Torbert (2005) "planned and structured

development interventions" can support vertical development (p. 8). Based on this discussion, it

is appropriate to modify our original question to include the concept of vertical development.

Our new question becomes *how might a leadership training program enable vertical*

development to create humanistic leaders and promote humanistic cultures inside organizations?

It is to answering this question that we now turn.

Ulysses: A Case Study in Developing Humanistic Leaders

The Ulysses Program created by the well-known professional services firm Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) in 1999 serves as a good example of how a company committed to bringing values and trust into business (Pless & Schneider, 2016) attempted to develop its future leaders. PwC has a diverse workforce of more than 122,000 people who work in 144 countries; indeed, PwC is "a melting pot of talents, cultures, nationalities, styles, and professional backgrounds" (Pless & Schneider, 2016, p. 214). The organization's challenge was to leverage this diversity and integrate it into a culture in which "people feel respected , recognized, and heard; where they can grow and evolve to their full potential and where they can operative effectively in global teams" (Pless & Schneider, 2016, p. 214). The Ulysses program was created by a small group of leaders at PwC in response to this challenge and to create more socially responsible leaders.

Ulysses Program Design and Philosophy

The program was built around the strategic dimensions of diversity, sustainability, and leadership (Pless & Schneider, 2016). It was full-time for its students and took place over three months, including a one week of residential leadership training, an 8 week collaborative project during which participants visited developing countries (Pless & Schneider, 2016). The experience included coaching to help participants internalize learning as well as introductions to yoga and meditation as learning supports. The program was built around experiential learning and was intended to help students develop self-awareness, interpersonal skills, diverse relationships, and change strategies, according to Pless & Scneider (2016).

Lessons Learned from the Ulysses Experience

A personal interview with a former manager of PwC's Ulysses in late 2019 revealed several lessons learned from this program. According to this manager, the program graduated 120 students but faced several challenges that hindered the strategic impact it had on PwC (K. Jenkins, November 11, 2019). First and foremost, the program was not able to create a critical mass of graduates who could drive the culture change for which PwC was aiming (K. Jenkins, November 11, 2019). This probably resulted, in part, from the program's design, especially the experience overseas, which was hard to scale and limited the program's throughput and sustainability. Subsequent feedback on the program suggested that while the experience was personally transformative for many, such results could have been achieved in a shorter, simpler program with higher throughput (K. Jenkins, November 11, 2019). In addition, the program could have provided more learning support after its conclusion to participants, including encouraging and leveraging the alumni networks to drive culture change.

Developing Humanistic Leaders through Leadership Training

"In response to the query, 'are leaders born or made?', the appropriate response seems to be both…but perhaps a more important ingredient is the amount and type of developmental experiences that one accumulates to enable personal growth as a leader" (Hrivnak, Rechard, & Riggio, 2009, p. 457). This section, like Hrivnak, Rechard, & Riggio's (2009) research, assumes leaders can be developed. Indeed, Hrivnak, Rechard, & Riggio (2009), citing a meta-analysis of leadership development interventions, found participants in leadership training have a 73 percent chance of experiencing positive outcomes compared to a control group. In addition, this section assumes the leadership development recommendations it describes are one of many development

experiences that leaders should take part in over the course of their lives (Muff, 2013). A

program that leverages them could be housed in a business school, internal leadership

development program, or leveraged by an external consultant. In isolation, these

recommendations are intended to create the conditions for producing vertical developmental and

transformational experiences that may set leaders on the path to embodying humanistic

leadership. Any such results, however, would be amplified and accelerated if combined with

other leadership development interventions (Muff, 2013).

Leverage a Hybrid Informational and Transformational Learning Approach

Muff (2013) describes the challenge of developing humanistic leaders as requiring a

different approach than most leadership development programs. She says:

> Rather than acquiring desirable traits or isolated knowledge, the educational challenge of
>
> developing globally responsible leaders hinges on developing the potential of a person to
>
> act consistently on behalf of society, including the ability to embrace complex
>
> trans-disciplinary issues and hands-on collaboration with other members of the larger
>
> community (P. 490)

A hybrid of informational and transformational learning that focuses on action logics probably is

an effective approach around which to base such a leadership training program, judging from

Muff's (2013) assertion and our previous discussion of action logics. According to Merriam &

Bierema (2014), referring to Robert Kegan's work on transformational learning, informational

learning adds to what we know and transformational learning changes how we know. Petrie

(2014) applies the concept of transformational learning directly to adult development theory

through his notion of vertical development, which he says increases a person's ability "to think in

more complex, systemic, strategic, and interdependent ways" (p. 8) and helps a leader better

handle the challenges of a VUCA world. A hybrid approach, drawing from Petrie (2014) then

would seek to both fill a students glass up with carefully curated content teaching humanistic

leadership skills—including self-awareness decision-making, and adaptive leadership—as

discussed earlier and increase the size of the vessel itself to absorb through potentially

transformative experiences that we will discuss in the next section. Merriam & Bierema (2014)

quoting Mezirow (2000) describe how transformational learning can enable shift to a humanistic

mindset, saying it is " a process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of

reference…to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change,

and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true and

justified to guide actions" (p. 84). A good way of sparking this transformation is first creating the

right conditions for it (Petrie, 2015).

Focus on Conditions that Spark and Support Development

Petrie (2015) says most leadership development programs lack focus and rely too heavily

on horizontal development or as he says "a grab bag of different tools, techniques, and

methodologies" (p. 2). Instead, he argues for leadership training programs to focus on creating

three essential conditions for vertical growth, which, according to Petrie's (2015) research, are

heat experiences, colliding perspectives, and elevated sense making. According to Petrie (2015),

heat experiences are complex situations that disrupt a leader's typical thinking patterns, revealing

the current way of making meaning to be inadequate for addressing the situation. Petrie (2015)

goes on to describe colliding perspectives as the leader being exposed to different people and

points of view that further challenge the leader's mental model and open up new possible

interpretations. The final condition for sparking vertical growth is elevated sense making, which

Petrie (2015) describes as a learning support that helps the leader make meaning of and integrate

more complex perspectives into their understanding of themselves and their world. Petrie (2015)

says "Leaders don't grow because they like to…Vertical growth begins when you face a

challenge so difficult to solve from your current stage of development that you almost have to

grow to survive it" (p. 8). Petrie's (2015) conditions align well with Mezirow's (1978) notions of

a disorienting dilemma triggering a transformative process involving self-examination, assessing

assumptions, exploring options, and reintegrating into life (Merriam & Bierema, 2014).

Petrie (2015) lays out a variety of instructional approaches for creating these three

conditions, including having leaders identify past heat experiences, creating colliding

perspectives through communities that help people learn how to learn, and leadership coaching

to support elevated sense making. He also advocates for discussing adult development with

participants, which aligns with Rooke & Torbert (2005) who encourage leaders to reflect on their

action logic because those who "undertake a voyage of personal understanding and development

can transform not only their own capabilities but also those of their companies" (p. 1).

A particularly powerful instructional approach for creating Petrie's (2015) conditions for

development could be collaborative inquiry (CI). Bray, Smith, & Yorks (2000) describe CI as "a

process of repeated episodes of reflection and action through which a group of peers strives to

answer a question of importance to them" (p. 6). For example, to create colliding perspectives

and a greater awareness of the dynamics and needs in a leader's external context, a humanistic

leadership program could leverage CI in a series of excursions into humanistic businesses, the

community, and nature. During these excursions participants would act as co-researchers (Bray,

Smith, & York, 2000), helping each other reflect, ask questions, and learn about humanistic

leadership. Bray, Smith, & York (2000) say that when CI participants engage as co-researchers

into "the result is a more valid understanding of the experience" (p. 7).

Another technique that could be especially effective in creating heat experiences and

colliding perspectives could be what Muff (2013) describes as the collaboratory. She says it is:

> a place where people can think, work, learn together and invent their respective futures.
>
> Its facilitators are experienced coaches who act as lead learners and guardians of the
>
> collaboratory space. They see themselves as transient gatekeepers of a world in need of
>
> new solutions. (p. 495).

Muff (2013) advocates for bringing together an eclectic group of participants, including business

leaders, academics, politicians, entrepreneurs, and coaches. In such a space, participants actively

collaborate to better understand and suggest solutions to real-world challenges that affect the

participant, their organization, and the community in which it operates. Such an experience

would be valuable on multiple levels for the burgeoning humanistic leader because it would help

participants gain greater external awareness of meaningful contemporary challenges while

working together to learn and apply critical skills for leaders in a VUCA world, including

systems thinking, creative problem solving, and working on diverse teams, to name a few (Muff,

2013). One can imagine Muff's (2013) collaboratory as being a capstone event for a humanistic

leadership program because of its potential for creating heat experiences and colliding

perspectives by synthesizing the program's learning with a powerful real-world experience. It

also could create a jumping off point for additional alumni engagement that could serve as

elevated sense-making for both current and past participants. For example, alumni of the

program could come back as facilitators of subsequent collaboratory experiences, keeping

learning happening for alumni and creating a greater potential for an active, change-focused

community, which PwC's Ulysses program experience (K. Jenkins, November 11, 2019)

suggests is critical for the effectiveness of such a training program if culture change is a desired

outcome.

Be Intentional about Audience and Scalability

If we are aiming for transformational learning as well as creating the potential for

vertical growth, selecting the right participants would be important for the success of program.

Students would need to be already capable of self-reflection, which Muff (2013) says cannot be

taught in a discreet learning event. Such self-reflection is critical for transformational learning

because students need to be open to taking a critical look at their own attitudes, behaviors, and

mindsets to create the potential for transformation and vertical growth, judging from Muff (2013)

and Petrie's (2015) work on each. Indeed, Muff (2013) underscores this point when describing

transformational learning as seeking "to transform problematic (limited) frames of reference into

perspectives that provoke exploration into previously unknown, future-oriented and holistic

solutions" (p. 491). Finding participants through adult development assessments who already are

close to a vertical development transition—particularly from Expert to Achiever, the potential

gateway to more humanistic leadership behaviors (Rooke & Torbert, 2005) and at later stages—

could be a worthy technique for building a class roster. Choosing facilitators who also are at a

later stage of development could increase the program's transformative potential (Petrie, 2015).

Another key aspect for a humanistic leadership development program to consider is

scalability. Given the heavy aspects with which we are grappling—including addressing pressing

world problems, transformational learning, and adult development—the designer of such a program might be tempted to hang too many ornaments on the tree. Nevertheless, keeping a program lean does not necessarily mean it would be less effective. PwC's Ulysses experience suggests breakthroughs can happen quickly, especially if paired with learning supports (K. Jenkins, November 11, 2019), and a lean program would be more sustainable than cost-heavy, resource-intensive efforts, allowing for greater portability and throughput over time, again judging from PwC's experience. A program that leverages alumni, in addition to coaches, as learning supports and community builders and that could be scaled to run in as short a time as a week or over the course of no more than three months could be a model worth exploring for such a program, especially if such learning supports and even evaluation efforts (Jarvis et al., 2013) are designed to further the participants' learning beyond the formal program. Leveraging free resources, like a CI activity in nature, could further increase the program's scalability and sustainability.

Conclusion

Humanistic leadership is a more effective, inclusive, and potential-rich means of addressing the challenges of our VUCA world compared to economism. Humanistic leaders can better safe-guard human well-being and dignity by creating a new social contract between business and people. Developing humanistic leaders is possible, especially if we treat the workplace as a place of transformation and not just results. A leadership development program can capitalize on this mindset shift to create humanistic leaders by focusing on creating the conditions for vertical development and transformational learning, which are heat experiences, colliding perspectives, and elevated sense making (Petrie, 2015). A focus on enabling the jump

from from Expert to Achiever and to later stages (Rooke & Torbert, 2005) could be an effective

way of selecting ready participants for such an experience, which should be scalable, focused on

maximizing throughput, and leveraging alumni to create a change-focused community.

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