DESIGNING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO: AN NLP REFLECTIVITY

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on different dimensions of leadership and its importance for every leader to possess. The author provides the ways of acquiring the leadership qualities through Neurolinguistic programming. The leader has to have the power of reasoning, Ingratiation for gaining the confidence of his team members, negotiating capacity for transactions, assertiveness to make things done, coalition to maintain relationship with others, and preserve upward appeal. The author suggests leaders to choose any inspired model for them to follow and practice Neurolinguistic programming which will bring a welcoming change in them. The paper is in two parts. The first part spoke about the literature of the variables whereas the second part gives empirical evidence. The author tried out the developed leadership model among ten headmasters in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The findings of the research reveal the significance of Neurolinguistic programming for leadership excellence.

KEYWORDS: Leadership, Neurolinguistic programming, Reflective leadership excellence.

INTRODUCTION

“Leaders are born, not made”. That’s what most people thought until social scientists began to make leadership a legitimate subject for intensive investigation not more than 40 or 50 years ago. Back in the old days, when strong social class barriers made it next to impossible for just any one to become a leader, it appeared to most people that leadership was inherited, since leaders emerged so frequently within the same favored families. As class barriers crumbled and it became obvious that leaders coming from all strata of society, common sense told us that leadership was much more complex than being born with the right genre or in proper families. If it is not the right combination of genes then perhaps all leaders possess certain traits or characteristics acquired through their upbringing or education.

In today’s trend, individuals who have taken up the place of leaders hardly realize the need for self-appraisal, developing oneself true to one’s role. Consequently there is mismatch between leadership and management. The existing imbalance reflects throughout in the function of the institution. It is high time, that there is the need for Educational Leadership to be sensitized and practiced by Educational Leaders.
Let us first look at what leadership is. It has got three dimensions, viz- focused leadership, strategic leadership, and accountable leadership. It denotes that the potentiality and competency of the leader being demonstrated in the course of the leadership and expressed in its outcomes. Each dimension is viewed in three themes, which explore the strength of the leader.

PART I

1. FOCUSED LEADERSHIP

Leaders with focus possess a long-term plan for their institutions as well as their career and personal life. They plan ahead, anticipating events and developing contingencies in preparations. They are goal oriented, setting clear objectives for themselves and others, which they work towards in a consistent and direct fashion.

I. VISION

The leader has a vision of the organization with which they are connected should be alike.

II. MISSION

The leader has a lifelong commitment to education and the teaching profession. He communicates particular values and sense of worth. He focuses on institution’s activities and progresses on student’s learning. Selecting staff that share a similar commitment is one of the primary functions.

III. CREDIBILITY

The leader has a healthy level of self-belief. He is generally proud of his professionalism and success. At the same time he takes up the institution towards recognition that goes with success. However he understands that respect has to be earned and to that extent will lead through example.

2. STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Strategic thinking enables oneself to sort through the clutter and find the best route forward. This distinct way of thinking and doing allows him to see patterns where others simply see complexity.

I. IDEATION

High concept leaders are constantly feeding their minds with their new ideas. They spend time thinking about new ways of doing things and different possibilities. They like to build linkages and connections between events, ideas and opportunities. At the same time they stimulate others to think. When the aim is high and there is insufficient activation, a degree of inertia can be created in the institution.
II. INSPIRATION

Leaders know how to motivate and inspire those with whom they work.

III. COMMUNICATION

Leaders with communication theme have an intrinsic ability to put their thoughts and words. They are able to connect and stimulate a range of audiences from pupils to teachers, parents and governors. At the same time they are effective listeners, understanding the ideas, concerns and point of views of others.

3. ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP

The process of setting goals and the commitment to achieving goals has the significant relationship towards improvement in the performance of individuals and groups. Specific goals result in higher level of performance than general goals. The impact of achieving goals is visible in their performance appraisal. Options for development activities include improving performance, working towards future changes in current role, enriching the current jobs, moving up or down and across the institution and exploring future positions.

I. RESPONSIBILITY

Leaders take personal responsibility and follow through commitments and obligations. The responsibility theme enables them to live on their values. With their staff, they convey responsibility by delegating ownership and accountability. They understand that their authority stems from the responsibility they show to other people.

II. EMPATHY

Empathy, not to be confused with sympathy, is found in all great teachers and leaders, enabling them to understand the needs, feelings and ambitions of people, tailoring the response or solution accordingly.

III. SOCIAL COMMITMENT

Leaders value truth, human rights, the law, justice and collective endeavor for the common good of society. In particular they value families as sources of love and support for all their members and as the basis of a society in which people care for others. Moreover, they value natural world as a source of wonder and inspiration, and accept their duty to maintain sustainable environment for the future.

Such effective leadership quality is neither inherited nor percolated rather acquired through modeling. Modeling is the ability to discover the expert’s map with the intention of helping others to learn to reproduce it. Neurolinguistic programming identifies and defines these hidden thought processes and mind patterns as used by top performers in excellent performance. Neuro linguistic programming (NLP) offers a practical way of achieving a highly generative learning ability with which to produce better results through professional development.
Neuro linguistic programming (NLP) emerged from an exploration of the relationship between

- Neurology
- Linguistics and
- Programming

‘Neuro’ refers to the experience gathered by nervous system/mind through five senses viz., visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory and gustatory which is then processed and coded as memory.

‘Linguistics’ refers to the language (Verbal and non-verbal) we use which codes, orders and gives meaning to our experience. It is an expression of ‘how we are’ and ‘how we think and communicate’ our experience.

‘Programming’ addresses how we code or mentally represent experience. Our personal programming of our internal processes and strategies (thinking patterns) that we use to make decisions, solve problems, learn, evaluate, and get results. NLP shows people how to recode their experiences and organize their internal programming so they can get the outcomes they want.

Our ability to do anything in life, whether it is stitching a cloth in a sewing machine, cooking a meal, or reading a book depends on how we control our nervous system. Neuro linguistic programming (NLP) is devoted to learning how to think more effectively and communicate more effectively with oneself and with others.

The relationship between our perceptions, thinking and behaviors is therefore neurolinguistic in nature. There are relationships between NLP and an understanding of body language. Eye gaze, facial expressions, gestures, orientation, posture, body contact, dress, odor, and territory are all elements linked to body language communication. Rapport is created by matching, mirroring the other person’s behavior, mirroring voice tone/tempo, breathing rate, movement or body posture and other aspects of body language. Learning how to build and maintain rapport is a way of enhancing influence and strengthening relationships. For NLP there needs to be the focus on developing self-belief, confidence and excellent performance, which will be subsequently manifested through body language.

NLP can also be used readily to help people uncover, change or transform what is holding them back. It can be used generatively to enable people to far-reaching changes to themselves, and their lives. To achieve this, the power of a well formed outcome is a central process for self-empowerment. The likelihood of achieving what one really want is enhanced by compelling goals. The following NLP model provides the opportunities for enhanced understanding and better communication, which is central to improve teaching and leadership skills through professional development.
NEURO LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING

- Reason – the power of the mind to think, understand and form judgment logically
- Ingratiation- bringing oneself into favor with someone by trying to please them
- Exchange/bargaining-negotiating the terms and conditions of a transaction
- Assertiveness-showing a confident and forceful personality
- Coalition- having a temporary alliance
- Upward appeal- quantity of being interesting

The leader has to have the power of reasoning at all occasions. As the designed activities of the leader are processed through the actions of the team members, he needs ingratiation for gaining the confidence of his team members, and negotiating capacity for transactions. Along with flexibility the leader needs to be assertive to make things done. The leader is always with people and coalition helps him to maintain relationship with others, and he has to preserve upward appeal.

Communication is essential in the areas, viz-textual, contextual and content contextual. The NLP model tends to chisel one’s beliefs, values and behavior. It builds up a personality of calm, cool and assertive nature. Practicing the above components of NLP will help one to get good rapport with another person through the skillful use of body posture and movement, voice- tone quality, language content and listening and observational skills. It helps him to prepare and lead conversations. It will help him to formulate and reach one’s own goals. The practiced NLP will reflect on leadership excellence. It can be perceived through five dimensions.

The five dimensions of leadership excellence

1. RESOURCEFULNESS
   i. Accelerated learning
   ii. Voracious reading
   iii. Fluency in writing

2. COMMUNICABILITY
   i. Developing interpersonal effectiveness (Body Posture and movement)
   ii. Developing voice tone quality
iii. Developing language content
iv. Developing listening and observation skills
v. Developing conversational skills

3. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

i. Adapting to changing circumstances and leading others through the discomfort of change
ii. Identifying key issues, simplifying the problem, and offering innovative solutions
iii. Motivating and encouraging the team towards production
iv. Removing the barriers and enabling others to overcome fear

4. COLLATERAL THINKING

i. Analytical thinking - analyzing the facts, figures, information, needs and gaps
ii. Metacognition - thinking about the subject
iii. Divergent thinking - finding alternatives and innovative inputs
iv. Logical thinking - looking forward to value based results

5. CREATIVE ACTION TAKING

i. Willingness to take risk
ii. Persistence and resistance at times of need
iii. Setting new policy and structure
iv. Essential in times of change

A leader shows his excellence in resourcefulness, communicability, emotional intelligence, collateral thinking and creative action taking. This could be possible out of conscious practice keeping a model in focus through Neuro-linguistic programming. A sincere effort will help the leader to gain focused, strategic and accountable leadership. The neuro linguistic programming reflectivity in leadership excellence is expressed in the model attached with.
PART - II

As a teacher-educator, the investigator wanted to find out how far the heads of the schools focus themselves towards leadership excellence. Hence the researcher developed a Leadership Excellence tool and did a survey among ten heads of schools in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The tool consists of 28 items incorporating Leadership Excellence components, viz. 1. Resourcefulness  2. Communicability 3. Emotional intelligence 4. Collateral Thinking and 5. Creative Action Taking.

LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE- A TOOL

Read the following items and answer Yes or No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Items to respond</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I am interested in learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I have been doing a course in distance education.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I am interested in visiting libraries.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I am a member of the distinct library.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Reading is my hobby.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I read newspaper every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I do read at least ten pages in a book, before I go for sleeping.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I am interested in writing articles for educational journals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I do have my hand in letters to the editor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I present myself for people to respond.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I am regular in listing AIR news in television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I do listen to BBC English news in television.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I organize staff meeting with a theme, every month.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. I focus the staff meeting for every staff to converse.

15. Every day I meditate to make myself cool and calm.

16. I accept change and face it with interest.

17. I do make the team to hold hands together to break away the barriers.

**IV. Collateral Thinking**

18. I motivate my team to involve with enthusiasm in working out the challenges.

19. I identify the weakness in my action and add efforts to make it successful.

20. I follow evaluative procedures for future actions.

21. I get feedback from the beneficiary after the implementation of any plan.

22. I monitor my every plan and do change for betterment.

**V. Creative Action Taking:**

23. I take up a challenging project every year in my institution.

24. I discover strategies to overcome unexpected problems.

25. I pursue possibilities and design my course of action accordingly.

26. I do monitor every step in my action.

27. I consciously perceive situations, and structure new policies for client’s benefits.

28. Considering facts and truths, I observe firmness and not hesitant to refuse sometimes.

Chennai city has ten zones. One headmaster from each zone was identified and ten head masters were selected for the study. They were given the developed Leadership Excellence tool and were asked to respond. Their responses were counted and converted into percentages.

It is inferred that the low percentage lays in communicability. Resourcefulness, emotional and creative action stands almost in same percentage. Collateral thinking stands a little higher than other dimensions. The investigator inferred the fact that there is negligence among the heads of the institutions towards developing their resourcefulness. This in turn pulls them down in other
dimensions especially in communicating ability which is essential for leadership excellence. Emotional intelligence keeps them in balance stature in dealing matters. Collateral thinking and creative action take up the institution in progress. Hence it is necessitated that all the heads need NLP training. The investigator observed that the heads of institutions are managers and hardly are they leaders. There is little motivation and absence of initiatives on the part of heads of institutions. It is high time that they are to be tuned towards vision and mission to achieve educational objectives.

Keeping the above facts in focus, the investigator designed a training programme for the heads of institutions for a week. The training inputs include Lectures, group discussion, Demonstration, Case Studies, Agenda method, Role-play, Simulation, Buzz session, Brain Storming, In-basket method, Study circle method, Situation technique and Games incorporating NLP. The programme was structured in such a way that they assess themselves in Resourcefulness, Communicability, Emotional intelligence, Collateral thinking and Creative Action Taking. Moreover they were provided choices to select models to be followed. Every day there was self-assessment, self-monitoring and self-evaluation. Thus NLP provided every trainer to sense his level in all the dimensions of Leadership Excellence and motivated them to develop to come near the model they have selected. The training programme went on for a week. At the end of the programme the same leadership excellence tool was given and the right responses were counted and were converted into percentages. The data were analyzed on Leadership Dimensions and it was understood that there was considerable improvement in all dimensions of leadership excellence among the trainers.

The details are given in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Before Training</th>
<th>After Training</th>
<th>Between the mean scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Leader 1</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Leader 2</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>79.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Leader 3</td>
<td>38.18</td>
<td>15.27</td>
<td>88.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Leader 4</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>10.05</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Leader 5</td>
<td>36.57</td>
<td>9.34</td>
<td>80.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Leader 6</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>69.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Leader 7</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>74.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows that there is marginal difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the Headmasters (Leaders) in their Leadership excellence. The pre-test mean scores ranges from 27% to 62.6%. The posttest means scores range from 60% to 88.18%. It shows that there is improvement in leadership excellence which is due to the training input on leadership excellence. The ‘r’ value is relatively very high. There is significant mean difference between the scores of pretest and posttest in leadership excellence in all the Headmasters and it is inferred from the ‘t’ values which is significant at 0.05 level. The shown variation is due to the training input on leadership excellence.

NLP is unique in the field of human functioning, which is aimed at personal development. It is about how people do things, think, process information and behave. It shows us how to develop dormant resources. It helps us to discover how to attain personal and professional goals through creating a compelling life purpose, how to open up what is within, in order to retrieve spontaneously the verbal expressions that are the most adapted to a particular context. It is also about how to be at ease on the functional level; how to face all kinds of difficulties, how to know ourselves better, how to proceed in order to challenge ourselves as appropriate and how to uncover our essential value as a human being. Through NLP education leaders can learn to change negative beliefs about themselves and the unconscious behaviors and habits that limit success and better understand their potential to achieve.

The excellent attribute of the leaders reflected in the excellent output of the institution. The leadership excellence is seen in the resourcefulness, communicability, emotional intelligence, collateral thinking and creative action taking. Thus there is a clarion call for educational leaders. It is for self-appraisal. Through Neuro Linguistic Programming one must know their level of communicability, the required change, and steps for personal development. It could be done through modeling Neuro Linguistic Programming. Had this be done by every Educational Leader, no doubt we could see education excels in all the spheres of the society.

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