David Wildman

“Transformational leaders have characteristics similar to those of other effective leaders. In addition, they are charismatic, create a vision, encourage personal development of the staff, and give supportive leadership. Emphasis is also placed on empowerment, innovative thinking, and leading by example. Transformational leaders are likely to strong on moral reasoning” (Learning, 2020). For my selected leader I chose to research Indra Nooyi from Pepsico. Indra has revolutionized Pepsico since taking over as the CEO. According to the description of transformational leadership above, Indra Nooyi falls into many categories. Of the most relevant I have found that she has created a vision for her company and thus rallied her employees around her strategic vision. “One of Nooyi’s most controversial initiatives has been to redirect Pepsi’s considerable corporate spend away from junk foods and into healthier alternatives. To this end she reclassified Pepsi’s wide-ranging products into three categories, designed to give customers more information about the foods they consume: ‘fun for you’ (such as potato chips and regular soda), ‘better for you’ (diet or low-fat versions of snacks and fizzy drinks), and ‘good for you’ (for example, the recently acquired Quaker Oats oatmeal)” (Driver, 2018). Her strategic vision was to create a wide spectrum of products that fit the needs of consumers from each of the three categories aforementioned, Fun for You, Good for You and Better for You. However, this vision differed from the stance of previous regimes and was initially seen as controversial. Along with her commitment to this plan she also spun off several of the company’s fast food chains. “Nooyi oversaw a number of key restructurings during her first years with the company: in 1997, Pepsi elected to spin off its Pizza Hut, KFC and Taco Bell restaurants for $4.5bn” (Driver, 2018). With the excess cash from the sale of these entities, she was able to slash the company’s debt in half and position the company for future growth.

One of the unique ways that Indra Nooyi has been able to engage employees and foster creativity has been to empower her employees. “Nooyi has perpetuated *Intellectual Stimulation* throughout her global communities by giving her employees the autonomy to create; and because of this “employees around the world are empowered to invent local flavors for the Lay’s potato chip brand. So long as the chips retain their signature crunch, employees can make them taste like seaweed in China, tikka masala in India, and cuttlefish in Thailand” (Spiridigliozzi, 2018). Actions like this are a fun way to keep employees engaged in the business and drive creativity.

**Do you think these attributes are critical for successful leadership? Why or why not?**

I think that transformational attributes are critical for successful leadership of large organizations. The ability to empower staff and foster a creative environment is essential for company growth and also for employee retention.

**Can anyone learn these behaviors, or are they innate aspects of one's personality?**

I think an important aspect of transformational leadership is learning to empower employees and lessen control. By lessening control over every aspect of the company you can groom leaders and also utilize the strengths of your work force to their full potential. With that being said, I think that anyone can learn over time to be less controlling, to trust but verify staff and to learn strategize for empowering employees. Some leaders may find this skill set to be easier than others however.

**What attribute did you particularly identify with or rate as more important than the others? Why?**

Creating a vision for the organization is one of the most important attributes of a transformational leader. I think I identify with this because I have joined a new hospital system and our President is a transformational leader. We are making great strides in several key areas such as growth, patient experience and safety. He has created a new culture and it is almost palpable. Coming from other sister hospitals in the system, it is refreshing and energizing to be working with this kind of a leader.

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