

Leadership Training: The Transformational Process

This article elaborates on the transition that leaders experience on their journey to achieve a level of leadership that makes their influence compelling and inspirational. A certain leadership training process is required in order to make this goal a reality. What does it take to be exceptional and what can leaders expect their leadership training programs to deliver?

Change is usually a challenging process for most and when leaders recognise that they need to do things differently it uncovers numerous obstacles from a leadership training perspective. The first challenge in the transition process is awareness of the totality of the issues at hand. Without agreement of the aspects to transform the process cannot move forward successfully.

When leaders have the "light bulb" moments themselves without having been coaxed into "seeing" objective reality the process is far more sustainable and meaningful. This needs to be an essential element in the leadership training approach.

The next step in the transformational journey is something called impact. Impact is the realisation of consequences beyond the self of doing and not doing certain actions. The power of a leader is his/her ability to influence and create change in the lives of those led by them. Leadership impact forms and moulds cultures in organisations and its ripple effect is felt through the DNA of people, systems and technological functions. This aspect in the leadership training process is crucial in ensuring that the transformational direction is kept on track.

Following this stage in the leadership training process is overcoming resistance. This happens when core beliefs are challenged, and the risks associated with transformation expressed. There is a gift and a liability to every action. When the risk of change is greater than the gift of success, transformation cannot occur.

When resistance is resolved the conversation of possibility can proceed. This can reveal exciting opportunities that previously were unavailable to the leader given his/her beliefs and perceptions. The skill of the leadership training professional is paramount in this stage. Without realistic, plausible and achievable possibilities the process loses face in the eyes of the leader and transformation is discredited. Leaders often need to see the "how to" before they will even start to venture further down the track. This leads to the next phase.

Action planning makes possibilities real. This is where leaders find the process the most stimulating and least threatening. They draw upon their vast experience and skills and become excited about the strategic aspects of the process. The capability of the leadership training professional is often surpassed by the leader in this stage. It is therefore most important that the trainer lets of any ego involvement. Transparency is king and it's important that expectations are managed.

Transformation is never simple or predictable but is a humbling process for the leadership training expert to be part of such a powerful and wonderful journey.