

Leader Education Program (LEP)—Handouts

Definitions of a learning organization

Scholars have proposed various definitions of organizational learning

Learning organizations are skilled at five main activities: systematic problem solving, experimentation with new approaches, learning from their own experience and history, learning from the experiences and best practices of others, and transferring knowledge quickly and efficiently throughout the organization. Each is accompanied by a distinctive mind-set, tool kit, and pattern of behavior. Many companies practice these activities to some degree. But few are consistently successful because they rely largely on happenstance and isolated examples. By creating systems and processes that support these activities and integrate them into the fabric of daily operations, organizations can manage their learning more effectively.

"Building a Learning Organization, by David A Garvin", from the July–August 1993 Issue.

"Organizational learning means the process of improving actions through better knowledge and understanding."

Fiol CM, Lyles MA. Organizational Learning. *Academy of Management Review*; October 1985.

"An entity learns if, through its processing of information, the range of its potential behaviors is changed."

Huber GP. Organizational Learning: The Contributing Processes and the Literatures. *Organization Science*; February 1991.

"Organizations are seen as learning by encoding inferences from history into routines that guide behavior."

Levitt B, March JG. Organizational Learning. *American Review of Sociology*; 1988:vol 14.

"Organizational learning is a process of detecting and correcting error."

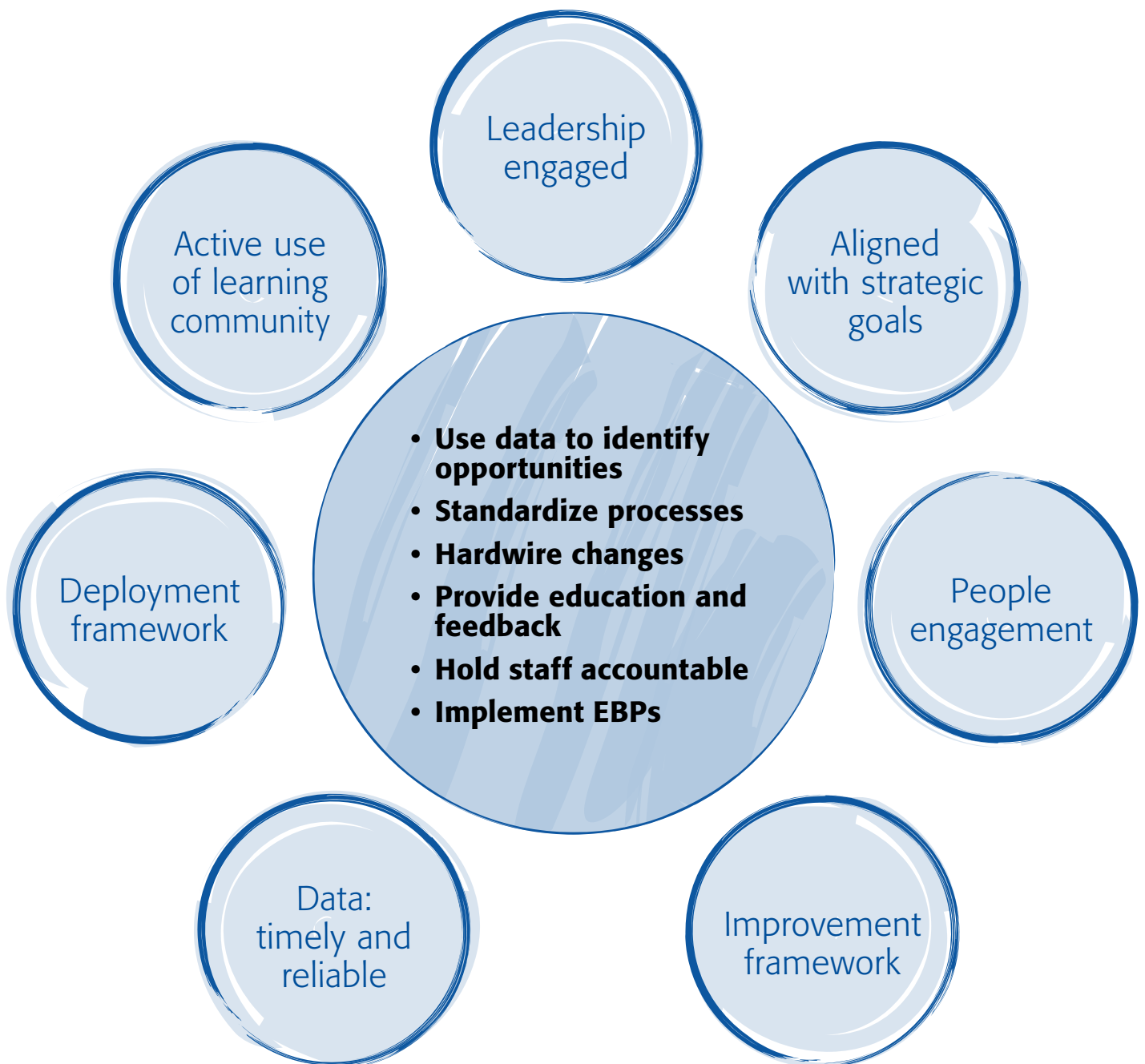
Argyris C. Double Loop Learning in Organizations. *Harvard Business Review*; September–October 1977.

"Organizational learning occurs through shared insights, knowledge, and mental models... [and] builds on past knowledge and experience—that is, on memory."

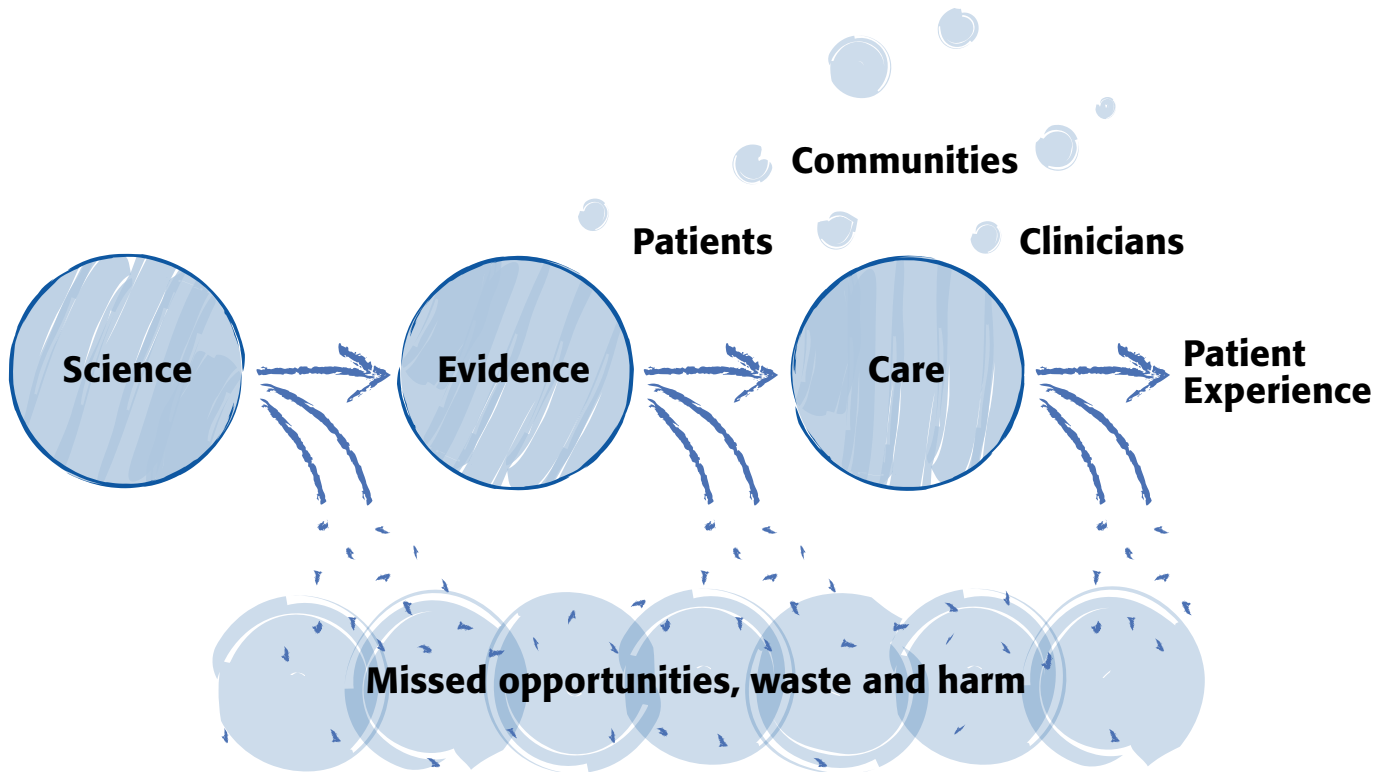
Stata R. Organizational Learning—The Key to Management Innovation. *Sloan Management Review*; Spring 1989.

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Attributes of high-performing systems (HPS)



Schematic of the healthcare system today



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How transformational leaders inspire

Have you ever been in a group where someone took control of the situation by conveying a clear vision of the group's goals, a marked passion for the work, and an ability to make the rest of the group feel recharged and energized? This person just might be what is called a transformational leader.

Transformational leadership is a type of leadership style that can inspire positive changes in those who follow. Transformational leaders are generally energetic, enthusiastic, and passionate. Not only are these leaders concerned and involved in the process but they are also focused on helping every member of the group succeed.

The history of transformational leadership

The concept of transformational leadership was initially introduced by leadership expert and American presidential biographer James MacGregor Burns. According to Burns, transformational leadership can be seen when “leaders and followers make each other to advance to a higher level of moral and motivation.” Through the strength of their vision and personality, transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work toward common goals.

Later, researcher Bernard M Bass expanded upon Burns' original ideas to develop what is today referred to as Bass Transformational Leadership Theory.

According to Bass, transformational leadership can be defined based on the impact that it has on followers. Transformational leaders, Bass suggested, garner trust, respect, and admiration from their followers.

The components of transformational leadership

Bass also suggested that there were four different components of transformational leadership.

Intellectual stimulation—Transformational leaders not only challenge the status quo but they also encourage creativity among followers. The leader encourages followers to explore new ways of doing things and new opportunities to learn.

Individualized consideration—Transformational leadership also involves offering support and encouragement to individual followers. To foster supportive relationships, transformational leaders keep lines of communication open so that followers feel free to share ideas and thus leaders can offer direct recognition of the unique contributions of each follower.

Inspirational motivation—Transformational leaders have a clear vision that they are able to articulate to followers. These leaders are also able to help followers experience the same passion and motivation to fulfill these goals.

Idealized influence—The transformational leader serves as a role model for followers. Because followers trust and respect the leader, they emulate this individual and internalize his or her ideals.

Observations

In their classic text, *Transformational Leadership*, Bass and Riggio explained:

“Transformational leaders...are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization.”

Researchers have found that this style of leadership can have a positive effect on the group. “Research evidence clearly shows that groups led by transformational leaders have higher levels of performance and satisfaction than groups led by other types of leaders,” explained psychologist and leadership expert Ronald E Riggio in an article published on the Psychology Today website. The reason, he suggests, is that transformational leaders believe that their followers can do their best, leading members of the group to feel inspired and empowered.

By Kendra Cherry

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Bibliography

- **Bass BM.** *Leadership and Performance*. New York: Free Press; 1985.
- **Bass BM, Riggio RE.** *Transformational Leadership*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc; 2008.
- **Burns JM.** *Leadership*. New York: Harper&Row; 1978.
- **Riggio RE.** Are you a transformational leader? Psychology Today. Available at: <http://blogs.psychologytoday.com/blog/cutting-edge-leadership/200903/are-you-transformational-leader>. Accessed March 24, 2009.

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How does a transformational leader work?

Transformational Leadership begins with awareness—awareness of our own thoughts and feelings, and how these affect your actions, and the states of others. As your awareness grows, you begin to see your own inner motivating force, what drives you—your passions and values—and how these affect your thoughts, feelings and actions, and that of others. As you become more aware your perception increases, and you are able to choose actions that directly meet the needs of the situation and people around us, but much more powerfully than a Situational Leadership style. It speaks to the “being” level of the people around you.

Transformational Leadership inspires wholeness of being, so your thoughts, feelings and actions are consistent. It is about leading with an integrity and authenticity that resonates with others, and inspires them to follow. Not only does it inspire others to follow but also to become leaders themselves. This approach to leadership takes us from a constricting model of competition among individuals, teams or nations, to a connection with the whole of a situation, and leadership for the good of all. We move from making a sale at any cost, toward creating lasting relationships and seeking socially responsible outcomes; it takes us from a narrow focus primarily on the bottom line, to realizing a sustainable vision that contributes to the welfare of all involved, not just the ones with power and control.

What are the characteristics of a leader of change? What is it about certain leaders that enable them to successfully lead their organizations through change?

- Be inspired in your heart and mind, and show it.
- Be connected to yourself, the world and the people around you. Be grounded in reality.
- Have a vision and communicate it with passion and purpose. Allow your emotion to speak to others in a way that transcends the mind, and speaks to the heart.
- Pay personal attention to others in a way that engages them and generates trust and commitment. Genuinely care about them, what they want, and how you can serve them.
- Access the awesome power of the mind. Be curious, open to new ideas and learn constantly.