

leadership approach?” and “What were the critical points in your career?” From the answers leaders provided to these questions, Bennis and Nanus identified four common strategies used by leaders in transforming organizations.

First, transforming leaders had a clear *vision* of the future state of their organizations. It was an image of an attractive, realistic, and believable future (Bennis & Nanus, 1985, p. 89). The vision usually was simple, understandable, beneficial, and energy creating. The compelling nature of the vision touched the experiences of followers and pulled them into supporting the organization. When an organization has a clear vision, it is easier for people within the organization to learn how they fit in with the overall direction of the organization and even the society in general. It empowers them because they feel they are a significant dimension of a worthwhile enterprise (pp. 90–91). Bennis and Nanus found that, to be successful, the vision had to grow out of the needs of the entire organization and to be claimed by those within it. Although leaders play a large role in articulating the vision, the emergence of the vision originates from both the leaders and the followers.

Second, transforming leaders were *social architects* for their organizations. This means they created a shape or form for the shared meanings people maintained within their organizations. These leaders communicated a direction that transformed their organization’s values and norms. In many cases, these leaders were able to mobilize people to accept a new group identity or a new philosophy for their organizations.

Third, transforming leaders created *trust* in their organizations by making their own positions clearly known and then standing by them. Trust has to do with being predictable or reliable, even in situations that are uncertain. For organizations, leaders built trust by articulating a direction and then consistently implementing the direction even though the vision may have involved a high degree of uncertainty. Bennis and Nanus (1985) found that when leaders established trust in an organization, it gave the organization a sense of integrity analogous to a healthy identity (p. 48).

Fourth, transforming leaders used *creative deployment of self* through positive self-regard. Leaders knew their strengths and weaknesses, and they emphasized their strengths rather than dwelling on their weaknesses. Based on an awareness of their own competence, effective leaders were able to immerse themselves in their tasks and the overarching goals of their organizations. They were able to fuse a sense of self with the work at hand.

198 LEADERSHIP | THEORY AND PRACTICE

Bennis and Nanus also found that positive self-regard in leaders had a reciprocal impact on followers, creating in them feelings of confidence and high expectations. In addition, leaders in the study were committed to learning and relearning, so in their organizations there was consistent emphasis on education.

Kouzes and Posner

Kouzes and Posner (1987, 2002) developed their model by interviewing leaders about leadership. They interviewed more than 1,300 middle- and senior-level managers in private and public sector organizations and asked them to describe their “personal best” experiences as leaders. Based on a content analysis of these descriptions, Kouzes and Posner constructed a model of leadership.

The Kouzes and Posner model consists of five fundamental *practices* that enable leaders to get extraordinary things accomplished: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. For each of the five practices of exemplary leadership, Kouzes and Posner also have identified two commitments that serve as strategies for practicing exemplary leadership.

Model the Way. To model the way, leaders need to be clear about their own values and philosophy. They need to find their own voice and express it to others. Exemplary leaders set a personal example for others by their own behaviors. They also follow through on their promises and commitments and affirm the common values they share with others.

Inspire a Shared Vision. Effective leaders create compelling visions that can guide people’s behavior. They are able to visualize positive outcomes in the future and communicate them to others. Leaders also listen to the dreams of others and show them how their dreams can be realized. Through inspiring visions, leaders challenge others to transcend the status quo to do something for others.

Challenge the Process. Challenging the process means being willing to change the status quo and step into the unknown. It includes being willing to innovate, grow, and improve. Exemplary leaders are like pioneers: They want to experiment and try new things. They are willing to take risks to make things better. When exemplary leaders take risks, they do it one step at a time, learning from their mistakes as they go.