

Inspired leadership through capacity, capability and confidence

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As a new member of the Albanian Medical Journal Editorial Board, I am pleased to offer some thinking about what leadership represents and how leaders inspire others to achieve uncommon results from their collective efforts. Since Albania, like many countries in Central and Eastern Europe, is undergoing substantive healthcare reform, now, it would seem, is an appropriate time to also examine and propose a new look at leadership as a critical component to achieve the desired future state of its healthcare system.

Leadership, by my definition, is the exercise of a

selected set of competencies, expressed in terms of knowledge, skills, and behaviours, to guide and motivate members of an organization to actively pursue their work toward achieving the vision for their organization. Leadership inspires by creating *capacity* and *capability* which builds the *confidence* needed to produce the behaviours of everyone involved for sustained superior performance. Based upon my own work experience, study and research on the topic of leadership, I suggest the following diagram (Figure 1) as a picture of what I propose inspired leadership looks like.

Figure 1. Layout of inspired leadership



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Before we explore the C_3 model as presented, let us first examine the historical context of the foundations of leadership and how over time this former perspective has now evolved into a new way of thinking about a leader's role. Based upon my own readings, research and work experience, I posit leadership was defined and described in three ways:

- Authority in terms of one's position, rank, and/or level in the hierarchy one occupied in the organizational chart.
- Responsibility in terms of the scope of activities one managed and/or the task or mission of the leader's organizational unit.
- Accountability meaning at the end of the day the individual one looked toward to assign the *credit* for the positive outcomes or the *blame*, if you will, for the negative results of the leader's organizational unit.

Moreover, this perspective assumed there is some positive correlation between each of these three perspectives and, by definition, fit within a very hierarchical view of an organization. This model was quite consistent throughout the early years of the industrial revolution when the nature of organizations evolved. The most notable work of many authors supporting this model comes from Frederick Taylor (1).

Over many years of study of organizations by such authors like Jim Collins, Daniel Goleman, Noel Tichy, Burt Nannis, and Patrick Lencioni to name just a few, we have a new and quite different view of organizations and the role of leadership has evolved into a new model (2-6). It is from these authors and others I have developed my own thinking about leadership to conclude that today's leader's task revolves around three principal evolving roles which is, simplified, from a *top down hierarchical* model into a *collaborative and relationship-based* approach to leadership. Again, I believe this new perspective fits well with how Albanian healthcare leaders might see new opportunities to transform their leadership styles as a result. Let us explore for a time what I mean by this form of inspired leadership.

The C_3 model consists of three elements critical for a leader's success each linked to the others in such a way to provide an opportunity to create an organizational environment founded on the principle

that success comes from the collective contribution. In this editorial, we will only briefly describe each and how it fits within the total concept of inspired leadership.

First, a leader's role begins with the idea that organizations work best when everyone sees how they are free and encouraged to expand their capacity for greater contributions in the best interest of the total organization. *Capacity* consists of a leader's vision, values, goals and objectives for the organization. The leadership imperative involves a leader's role to define and articulate that vision so that he/she helps others to *see* what he/she *sees*. The ability to really see a vision transitions into a change in thinking about *who* we are and *what* we want to create in a desired future state. Visions also drive changes to how we are organized to achieve the vision resulting in how we need to interact to transform that vision into reality.

Second, leaders influence organizational performance by creating and driving learning resulting in enhanced *capabilities* in terms of individual competencies (knowledge, skills, and behaviours). Inspired leaders seek out talent and build it, and, so doing, create bench strength across the team. As a consequence, leaders promoting learning demonstrate how they *believe* in what they are doing by generalizing it to members of the organization to *believe* in what they are doing. By its very nature, *believing* what we do results in ownership for performance improvement.

Third, the C_3 model proposes that as leaders create opportunities to build and enhance capacity and capability having a direct and positive impact on the *confidence* of individuals to achieve uncommon results. *Confidence*, by its very nature, motivates and drives performance in actions and behaviours by inspired leaders who provide the tools to make *things* happen. Moreover, they are comfortable delegating responsibilities and stepping aside to provide their team members the opportunity and freedom to perform.

To conclude, the C_3 model is all about inspired leaders who help others *see* what they can *see...believe* in what they *believe...and*, produce environments of personal and the collective of *confidence* to produce results that are meaningful and have meaning. For

Albania and its evolution of healthcare reform, I submit the C₃ model represents an appropriate framework to use in the professional development of healthcare leaders so they are adequately prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. The call, then, for leaders is to take on the mantle of a new framework and commitment to create organizations

characterized by sustained collaborative relationships, modelling learning, redefining individual mental models about what is possible, and encouraging productive conversations about an organization's current and future state. Inspired leadership creates excellence through *capacity, capability and confidence*. Are you ready?

Conflicts of interest: None declared.

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