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LDRS 3104 Fall 2020

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10/25/2020

Reframing Leadership Reflection #3

1. What are your initial reactions while learning the content?

When I first started learning the content, I was surprised at how dynamically different the political frame is from the human resource frame. The human resource frame was very people and group-centered, whereas with the political frame it's very "every man for himself". It was shocking to see how a frame that seems so toxic on the outside can truly hold the organization afloat. When you think about it without the political frame, new ideas would never come up, leadership doesn't change over time, the organization would almost halt in the position and ideas it was founded on. The political frame is like a double-edged sword. In theory, it should be a new idea factory filled with civil debates and opinions, but in some cases can be the most toxic part of the workplace filled with possible nepotism, or corruption within the organization.

2. What ideas fit with other concepts you had already learned in class or elsewhere?

As someone who enjoys sociology, is getting a minor in leadership and social change and is constantly reading up on politics, I found many concepts that were shared in the content of these modules. One of them being *Political Assumptions*. "The political

frame views organizations as roiling arenas, hosting ongoing contests arising from individual and group interests. Five propositions summarize the perspective:

- Organizations are coalitions of different individuals and interest groups.
- Coalition members have enduring differences in values, beliefs, information, interests, and perceptions of reality.
- Most important decisions involve allocating scarce resources—deciding who gets what.
- Scarce resources and enduring differences put conflict at the center of day-to-day dynamics and make power the most important asset.
- Goals and decisions emerge from bargaining and negotiation among competing stakeholders jockeying for their own interests.” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 184)

Most recently in one of my classes, Identity and Inclusion in Agriculture, we talked about the allocation of resources. Over the class, we learned that politics is simply the fight to see who gets what or the allocation of resources. Now that I know that politics are simply the allocation of resources, it’s weird to look back and realize that I didn’t put the two together. But now that I have, it helps me understand politics just a little bit more and puts this whole election into a new picture.

3. What was the most impactful surprise?

The most impactful surprise for me was about the *Agenda Setting*. This was an impactful surprise because it made me think back on current and past managers that I have worked with over the years. “The effective leader creates an “agenda for change” with two major elements: a vision balancing the long-term interests of key parties, and a

strategy for achieving the vision while recognizing competing internal and external forces (Kotter, 1988).” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 205). Back at home, I work for a retirement home, specifically in dining services. Over my almost 5 years at this organization, I have seen 3 different changes in management. The first was fun but not as efficient in getting work done and could sometimes be toxic. The second was extremely toxic and the work ethic and morale of myself and my coworkers were extremely low due to the verbal abuse and sexual harassment from management. The third has personally been my favorite so far but still has its problems which have led to a recent firing of the top manager. But looking back it felt as though none of the management took in ideas or even tried to make an impactful change. Mind you most of the employees who work in dining services are between the ages of 16 and 22, so when new management came in it felt as though they were not listening to our wants and needs because we are “children”. Bolman & Deal as well as other books and professors that I have had make a point that when new management/leadership comes in, they need to listen to the wants and needs of the employees if they want to be liked and respected.

4. What are you most curious about now?

After these modules, I have realized that I’m most curious about the sociology behind the political frame. While Bolman & Deal didn’t bring up the topic of sociology within the political frame, they did make this point: “Differences and scarce resources make power a key resource. Power in organizations is basically the capacity to make things happen.” (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 186). When in sociology we tend to talk a lot about privilege, which happens to make big impacts on politics in government or within organizations. It makes sense, those who know more can do more. And by “know more” I

simply mean, who has the most cultural capital? Who was able to go to a well-known school? Where did everyone grow up? Who was and wasn't raised "properly"? Etc.

5. What are you discovering about yourself through this week's content? And how can you use what was learned this week to help you in the future?

Like with any of the other topics we have discussed and learned about in this class, I read and look more and more into how the world and organizations work. Bolman & Deal said this: "A vision without a strategy remains an illusion" (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 205). And I find myself relating to this greatly because I want to work on bettering myself academically, mentally as well as physically. Like an organization, I have my structures and frames that work together to make me, me. But with no strategy, I can't make myself the best possible version of myself.

Citations

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2017). Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership (6th Ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.