

LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMATION:

WHAT DOES IT TAKE FOR A TRADITIONAL MANAGER TO TRANSFORM INTO A CONTEMPORARY LEADER?

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September 2010

This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA)

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ABSTRACT

My research question is *what does it take for a traditional manager to transform into a contemporary leader?* It was born from frustration with the extant leadership literature of the positivist tradition and an opportunity to draw on privileged access to seven CEOs who had demonstrated positive shifts in both their leadership effectiveness and organisational performance, supported by additional quantitative third party evidence of their 'leadership transformation'. Invoking the work of key social constructionist authors, I have used a narrative approach to explore how the CEOs interpreted the nature and causes of their transformation 'success'. Drawing on in-depth interviews with the seven CEOs, and collaboration with a broader 'community of research', I developed seven reflective narratives to provide insight into the character and context of each CEO's journey. The narratives are then interpreted by way of seven metaphors designed to be used in a 'generative' fashion to stimulate further insights into leadership transformation. The contribution of this study to management practitioners, my primary audience, is to inspire reflection and action. This contribution has already begun through speaking engagements that have been completed by me and the CEOs in this study to several thousand members of my management practitioner audience.

STATEMENT OF CANDIDATE

I certify that the work in this thesis entitled *Leadership Transformation: What does it take for a traditional manager to transform into a contemporary leader?* has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University.

I also certify that the thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me. Any help and assistance that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself have been appropriately acknowledged.

In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

The research presented in this thesis was approved by Macquarie University Ethics Review Committee, reference number: HE25MAY2007-D05213 on 22nd June 2007.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Fuda', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Peter Andrew Fuda (Student I.D. 31731228)

8th September 2010

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants (Isaac Newton).

I would like to acknowledge the many 'giants' who have made this doctorate possible, and I do so in the strong belief that it simply would never have happened without them. This doctorate is not the story of a single, committed individual; it is the story of a powerful community of knowledge and support.

I started my doctorate on December 16, 2005. I can be very precise about this date because it was the same day my daughter Isabella was born – probably the best excuse ever to leave early on the very first day of class. She has continued to remind me of what is most important in life every day since. My wife Kara has contributed in many direct and indirect ways, including helping me to get through Quantitative Research Methods with the credit I needed to progress to this thesis. She has provided emotional support and has done the lion's share of parenting Isabella – particularly in year one and five when the demands of my study became particularly onerous. Thank you for your support and encouragement – I love you.

My mum, dad, brother and sister have also provided me with encouragement and support over the years of this thesis. In particular, I'd like to thank my mum for instilling in me the values of self-reliance, accountability and resilience; they were gifts that kept on giving throughout this research process.

Professor Richard Badham has been the best supervisor, mentor and friend that I could have hoped for during this process. I am very grateful for your commitment, wisdom and criticism over the past four years. I have no doubt that this thesis is infinitely better because of your guidance – thank you.

I am particularly grateful to the stars of this study; the CEOs – Alan McGilvray, Mike Shove, Jim Varghese, Clynton Bartholomeusz, Tim Castree, Paul Timmins and Dennis Fox. Your commitment, humility and authenticity, within the scope of this study and beyond, continue to be a source of inspiration to me. I am prohibited by ethics guidelines from naming the colleagues of the CEOs who contributed to this study. Thank you for your time and frankness – you know who you are.

Thank you to Quentin Jones of Human Synergistics, James O'Toole and Chris Cheatley of the CEO Forum, John Karagounis of the CEO Circle, and Ray Weekes of the CEO Institute. The platforms that you each provided to me and the CEOs in this study over the past 12 months forced us to get clear on our stories and insights well in advance of this thesis. It was a great discipline that I believe has improved our research.

Thank you to my second family - the team at The Alignment Partnership (TAP); Johanna Jordan, Ian Moore, Graham Dunn, Ron Schwartz, Leanne Myers, Angie Virtue and Martin Lombard. Your direct contributions to this study, as well as your friendship and support, have been of immense benefit to me. I also appreciate you keeping our business healthy and growing when my attention has been divided. Thanks also to my old colleague and friend Mel Cowan.

I have left Skye Phillips until last because her contribution to this study has been simply immense. From the very start, you have played the roles of assistant, partner, confidant, supervisor, and pain in the backside – often all on the same day. Your commitment, insight and intellect have improved this thesis immeasurably and for that I am eternally grateful.