LEADERSHIP TRANSFORMATION:

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

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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.

Peter Andrew Fuda (Student I.D. 31731228)

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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.

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