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Education Department of Seventh-day Adventists**

**LEADERSHIP: THE KEY DIMENSION
IN ADVENTIST TERTIARY EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**

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**Prepared for the
International Faith and Learning Seminar
held at
Helderberg College, Somerset West, RSA
November/December 1993**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The term found most frequently in both academic and general literature exploring reasons for success or failure in an organisation is the term leadership. Effective leadership is seen as the key ingredient for the success of any undertaking. This paper is based on the hunch that educational administrators, by their training and experience, are better fitted to be good managers than to be good leaders.

The literature consulted covered an area much more extensive than that of strictly educational administration in search of insights that could be helpful to those with executive responsibilities in this area. The terms leadership and management are often used interchangeably and these will need to be clarified. But more pertinent for the Adventist educational administrator is the Christian approach to leadership. Against this background the following areas will be explored briefly:

1. The context for educational administration.
2. General leadership concepts, definitions and Christian leadership in particular.
3. Chief elements of leadership.
4. Aspects to be considered in developing educational leadership.

2. THE CONTEXT FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Seventh-day Adventist educational administrators (referred to in this paper as Chief Educational Officers: CEOs) face daunting challenges as they not only operate within church parameters, but also strive to meet the expectations and demands of secular educational authorities. The CEO is often placed in the unenviable position of trying to meet the aims and objectives of the global mission of the church while at the same time trying to satisfy the demands of secular or government accrediting bodies.

The CEO faces a major challenge to provide quality education at a time when there are so many other clamouring demands on the scarce resources of the church in the areas of finance and manpower. All too often the educational institution is seen as the poor cousin when it comes to the allocation of the resources of the church. Its work is not seen as direct evangelism and thus does not become a high priority when funds are allocated.

Another major challenge for the CEO is to attempt to gain accreditation and national and international recognition for the institution. This recognition is important to retain the support of its constituency and to compete with other educational institutions.

The CEO must communicate and interact with multiple constituencies, individuals and groups that have a particular stake in the institution. Here the CEO deals directly with students, faculty, and parents, and also with the trustees, alumni, the community, the church and the government. These publics often make heavy cognitive and affective demands of the CEO (Rallis: 1986: 302). The CEO must not only be visible to all these constituencies but must also communicate meaning and set goals for the institution (Ibid: 303).

Keeping abreast of the rapid changes brought about by technology and coping with these effectively is another challenge for the CEO. Today, change is rampant in all basic institutions such as the home, church, and the state, and these changes impinge on the educational milieu and exact a price on all individuals in leadership positions (Cunningham: 1985: 18).

In view of the high expectations and heavy demands principals and CEOs have to contend with, many quit the job or if they do not resign, they become ineffective over time. A recent study of school principals in the State of Vermont indicated that 22% quit within one year of their appointment (Duke: 1988: 309). The high drop-out rate for principals and CEOs is grave cause for concern and in research into what has given rise to this situation, various factors have emerged.

One of the major factors is the fatigue that CEOs experience from the heavy emotional demands from teachers, students and parents. So often the CEO receives little or no appreciation or recognition for the work done and the feeling at the end of the day is that little or nothing was accomplished. The general expectation of being all things to all men, and perhaps realising that aspects of their personalities were not suited for the demands of the job, have led many to quit. The pressure of coping with failure, and even at times coping with success with the concomitant increase in demands on their time, has led others to change their vocation. Finally the overwhelming frustration of having no one with whom to share their concerns and frustrations has been the final straw in changing their positions.

The challenge for educational administration is twofold: becoming effective leaders, and sustaining effective leadership over a period of time. The emphasis in the degree programmes in educational administration is on the management areas such as educational policy, personnel management, supervision of teaching, and finance, but has included little or no training in the leadership skills that are needed (Rallis: 1986: 302).

3. LEADERSHIP

3.1 Concept

It has been stated that over 5000 studies have been done in the area of leadership, with the number continuing to rise by several hundred each year (Schantz 1992: 3). But despite the best efforts of social scientists, biographers and historians, it has been hard to pin down an acceptable definition of a concept as complex as leadership and in many respects it is what people believe it to be (Cunningham: 1985: 17). The fact is that leadership is multidimensional and interacts with many factors.

According to Parker (1993: 230), values, goals, beliefs, and decision-making interact to influence leadership practices and behaviours.

The essence of leadership according Greenleaf (1977: 14) is going ahead to show the way and this includes taking the risk of success and failure. Another important aspect of leadership is that it functions within a particular institutional culture. A most important facet of all cultures, according to Florence Kluckhohn, is how people perceive value and purpose: what is worth doing and why (Maehr and Parker: 1993: 235). Perceived purpose is at the heart of an institution's life, work, and ultimate effectiveness (Ibid: 235).

Gardner (1990: 1) states that "leadership is a word that has risen above the normal workaday usage as a conveyer of meaning. There seems to be a feeling that if we invoke it often enough with sufficient ardour, we can ease our sense of having lost our way, our sense of things unaccomplished, of duties unfulfilled."

So it is that leadership means different things to different people, illustrating its complexity.

3.2 Definitions

Maxwell (1993: 1) states that leadership is what everyone talks about, few understand, most people want and few achieve. Of the more than 350 definitions of leadership (Cunningham: 1985: 17), the following are a representative sample: Gardner (1990: 1) states that leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers. Eisenhower (Warren: 1988: 4) said that leadership is "the art of getting someone else to do something that you want done because he wants to do it." Tom Peters (Charlton: 1992: 32) says leadership is "a unique alliance between managers and workers that fully engages the talents and potential of everyone in the organisation." One more definition taken from Maxwell (1993: 1) states: "Leadership is influence - that's it. Nothing more; nothing less."

For the purpose of this paper I have chosen to use the definition by Maxwell that leadership is influence. It has to do with the ability to get and keep followers, for, as Maxwell (1993:1) states in his favourite leadership proverb, "He who thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk." The importance of influence is underlined by the Spirit of Prophecy: "Personal influence is a power" (White: 1915: 340). This power has lasting results, for "we all have personal influence, and our words and actions leave an indelible impress" (White: 1982: 55). This is further highlighted when White (1938: 99) states, "It is our own character and experience that determine our influence upon others." Recognising the power of influence, leaders have an awesome responsibility as to how this power is used in getting things done through people.

3.3 Christian Leadership

There are certain concepts and traits that characterise all leadership but there are aspects that set Christian leadership apart and make it unique. The Christian leader cannot be Number One, for Christ is the head. The chief characteristic of the Christian leader is submission to Christ - for submission is the key to power. Christian leadership requires that character and integrity must be in place before there can be leadership. The biblical belief that Christian leadership is one of the gifts of the Spirit suggests that the leader must be Spirit-endowed, Spirit-empowered, and Spirit-led. Christian leadership is marked by self-sacrificial ambition, and the best illustration of this type of leadership is seen in the first century when Christ "turned straw into bricks" - nobodies into somebodies, and recruits into generals (Lawrence: 1987: 329). It is fully recognised that potential leaders are born but effective leaders are made (Stott: 1984: 8). Gifts must be developed and used if they are to fulfil the intention of the Giver. Christian leadership is seen as a blending of natural and spiritual qualities - natural talents and spiritual gifts (Ibid).

Probably the most distinctive contribution from Christian literature has been the concept of servant leadership. In recent years a number of Adventist authors have written in various journals and papers about servant leadership. The concept of servant leadership comes to us firstly from the example of Christ who demonstrated the meaning of service in His dealing with all classes of society. Secondly, it comes to us from the teachings of Jesus to His disciples regarding their treatment of others and showing that leadership had to do with serving the needs of others. Jesus was addressing primarily the attitude that saw leadership as having authority and power as its primary focus while Christian leadership emphasised service. Bresee (May 1992) rightly maintains that servanthood is not servitude - servanthood is a voluntary action; it chooses to be of service to others. According to Musvosvi (March 1991) Jesus exemplified a new leadership style in the way He organised and trained His disciples for service. He shared His whole time and work with them, and fully identified with them and their needs. The test of being a servant leader (Newmann: March 1991) is whether he gives highest priority to meeting his own needs or the needs of other people.

The concept servant leadership does also have negative connotations, however, for in Biblical times many were servants due to necessity or due to a change in circumstances when they were captured as slaves. In the search for a biblical term that would more clearly identify the Christian leader without the negative connotations of servant, it seems that steward could better fit the picture.

In biblical times the Greek word 'Oikonomos' referred to a steward who was seen as the manager or foreman of a household or an estate. The few references to stewards in Scripture emphasise character traits like watchfulness (Luke 12:42), trustworthiness (I Cor 4:2), accountability (I Cor 4:1, I Cor 9:17, I Pet 4:10). In the ancient world the steward was regarded as an important person: he might be a slave, but he had full control over his master's possessions. He would be in charge of his master's estates and would be landlord to his master's tenants. As a steward he knew that none of the things over which had full control were his; they all

belonged to his master. He was always answerable to the master and he always served the interests of the master. Another salient fact about the 'Oikonomos' was that he had to be reliable; the fact that he enjoyed so much independence and responsibility of necessity put him under obligation to use his freedom to promote the best interests of the master. But underlying this fact was the recognition that there was a judgment - he would of necessity have to face the judgment of his fellow-men, also his own subjective judgment, but above all the judgment of his master (Barclay: 1975: 36, 37).

From the foregoing it seems that the concept of steward leadership more closely suits the idea of Christian leadership. It incorporates the idea of servanthood and more fully recognises the role of manager and of being fully accountable, responsible and reliable. The fact that there is independence and wide responsibility must always be seen in the context of judgment - there is a time for accountability. Whatever a man's position in the church or institution, whatever power he may wield or prestige he may enjoy, he still remains a steward, a servant of Christ (Ibid).

Christian leadership gives due recognition to the divine dimension of faith. God's promise to Joshua is a promise to all Christian leaders: "Be strong and brave, for you will be a successful leader of my people. . . . Yes, be bold and strong! Banish fear and doubt! For remember, the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Josh 1: 7,9, TLB). This is the dimension that gives credence to the idea of the integration of faith and learning in educational administration.

3.4 The Difference Between Management and Leadership

While some authors use the terms management and leadership interchangeably, others see distinct differences between the two. Management may be seen as a special kind of leadership in which the achievement of a goal is paramount (Schantz: 1992: 3). Kotter (Topic: 25) believes that leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary systems of action, each with its own functions and characteristic activities, and both necessary for success.

The main domain of management according to a number of authorities is to cope with practices and procedures in the organisation, without which complex enterprises would become chaotic. Good management brings a degree of order and consistency to dimensions like the quality and profitability of products. It has to do with steering targets and goals, with organising and staffing, structure and communication, delegating and monitoring the results by reports and meetings. Management has to do with the nuts and bolts of the organisation, and with keeping the organisation working smoothly (Rallis: 1986). According to Wilson & Willamon (1990), too often the dominant image of church officials is that of managers.

In contrast with management, the main domain of leadership has to do with coping with change. According to Kotter (Topic: 191), more change demands more leadership. Leadership is concerned with vision, a willingness to experiment and change, the capacity to tolerate messiness, to take the long view (Rallis: 1986). Leaders are not only active but proactive, they do not just respond to ideas but they

shape them. According to Zalesznik (Katz: 1990), leaders have personal attitudes to goals and they evoke images and expectations with regard to the future. Leaders are able to influence, inspire, and work with and through others to accomplish goals and objectives. To this end leaders must envision the future, align organisations and develop people. According to Max Deprea the first responsibility of a leader is to define reality (GC: Dec. 1993). In a nutshell, leaders are change agents, risk takers and strategists, and they must continually demonstrate hope. This means that a person cannot be a leader if he is pessimistic; he must be an optimist. Leaders take responsibility for their own lives and actions and thus they demonstrate accountability.

In summary, there may be fundamental differences between management and leadership in theory for each has its own and distinct area of operation, but in practice the distinctions may be blurred.

4. CHIEF ELEMENTS OF LEADERSHIP

In discussing the elements of leadership I have chosen to examine six as given by Maxwell in his book, Developing the leader within you.

4.1 Vision

Writers on leadership are unanimous in maintaining that this element must be present if there is to be good leadership. Maxwell (1993: 125) calls this the indispensable quality of leadership. The personal ownership of a vision is the essence of leadership: it is the big picture. Behind every great achievement is a dreamer of great dreams (Stott: 1984: 13). It is the act of seeing and grasping what can be done. Christian leaders need a vision of the purposes and power of God and of how through faith these can become realities today. Vision is in Kotter's (Topic No 191) view, not something mystical but is rather a process of gathering and analysing information and then combining ideas into a new framework. Without vision, even short-term planning becomes a risk. To envision the future there must be consensus building about the present. Greenleaf (1977: 24) speaks of the central ethic of leadership as foresight. He says the leader is historian, contemporary analyst and prophet. The failure of leader to foresee is seen as an ethical failure (Ibid:25).

4.2 Integrity

Integrity is one of the cardinal elements of leadership. Maxwell (1993: 31) defines it as a state of being complete, unified. Where there is integrity, the words and deeds match up and the lips do not violate the heart. As someone has said, it is walking your talk. Integrity includes honesty and trust. Integrity has high influence value and if leadership is influence, this is a cardinal element thereof. A charismatic person will draw people, but only a person of integrity will keep them.

4.3 Priorities

The key to leadership, according to Maxwell, is the ability to set priorities (Ibid: 17). The two most difficult things to do is to think, and to think in order of importance. The major difference between leader and follower is the ability to think ahead and to prioritise responsibilities. He strongly recommends the Pareto principle which says that twenty percent of your priorities will give you eighty percent of your production. Priorities continually demand attention. As someone has said, you cannot overestimate the unimportance of practically everything; thence the need to prioritise. Every administrator must follow a programme of planned neglect or, as William James said, the art of knowing what to overlook.

4.4 Creating Positive Change

The leader is responsible for bringing about and managing change. The ultimate test of leadership is creating positive change. To continue to lead, the leader must be willing to change and be receptive to new ideas. Change is frightening and most people resist change because of the fear of the unknown, of the changing of routines, and fear of failure. Managing change takes additional commitment and a readiness to create a climate of change in the organisation. Max Depree (Maxwell: 1993: 64) said, "In the end it is important to remember that we cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are."

4.5 Attitude

Attitude has to do with what happens in the leader and not what happens to him. Chuck Swindoll (Maxwell: 1993: 88) said, "I am convinced that life is ten percent what happens to me and ninety percent how I react to it." Leadership has less to do with position than it has with disposition. It has been shown that the leader's attitude helps to determine the attitudes of the followers. Attitudes also include such aspects as industry and perseverance. For dreamers to become thinkers demands industry and hard labour and perseverance. In a recent survey it was found that 94 percent of all Fortune 500 executives attributed their success more to attitude than to any other basic ingredient (Ibid: 88).

4.6 Self-Discipline

The price tag for true leadership is self-discipline. Great leaders understand that their number one responsibility is for their own discipline and personal growth (Ibid: 141). For the Christian leader, there is the recognition that God's grace is sufficient for all circumstances. A powerful aspect of self-discipline is how the leader uses the symbols of office and the symbols of leadership. The behaviour of leaders, "the flow of images" sends out powerful messages to constituents of the integrity of the leader (Cunningham: 1985).

The six elements of leadership that have been discussed briefly must not only be lived and exemplified in the life of the leader, but must be taught if there is to be success. The leader must be a teacher and must continuously, by word and example, teach the mission

and objectives of the organisation. For the leader's behaviour is imitated by others in the institution and he must have the ability to communicate belief and perspective with clarity, conviction and simplicity (Cunningham: 1985). When all share the mission of the institution, the excitement created finds leaders on every level; this is the true reward for good leadership and the secret of its success. This provides opportunities for dialogue, for input into decision-making, for sharing the burdens, for closer rapport between the leader and the led.

5. DEVELOPING LEADERS

In concluding this brief study, consideration is given to practical applications which could assist CEOs in their leadership of Adventist colleges and universities. There are four areas that could be helpful in improving the training of leaders.

5.1 Developing Younger Leaders

A major responsibility of CEOs is the developing of younger leaders. These individuals with potential must be identified early and then given opportunities to experience leadership under proper mentors. They should be exposed to a wide range of leadership responsibilities. These must be planned so that the individual gets a grasp of the complexity of the whole enterprise. The future of any institution is dependent on the development of younger leaders.

5.2 Academic Training for Educational Administrators

The focus of most universities that offer degree training in this area is on management. They train for academic managers with emphasis on organisational planning, personnel management, educational policy, school law, finance and supervision. In training people for such positions, more time and effort should be expended on leadership training, on seeing the big picture, and helping potential leaders experience leadership opportunities.

5.3 Peer Training

One of the programmes instituted to assist principals and CEOs is through peer training. One way is to shadow a fellow principal and observe and learn how a particular principal does his work. Educational leaders are brought together where they are given opportunities to learn from each other and in this way gain support from colleagues. Too often the CEO feels isolated and would welcome opportunities to learn from colleagues. It was found that those who participated in such programmes were more willing to try new ideas and so improve their leadership skills (Barret & Long: 1987).

5.4 Sabbaticals for CEOs

The context for leadership in colleges and universities make heavy demands on the emotional lives of administrators. Administrators could better face the rigours of leadership if they knew that sabbatical time was coming to them when there could

be a change in pace or even a change in occupation. CEOs need support and care if the drop-out rate is to be reduced. The expense involved in sabbaticals for educational administrators would be minimal in relation to what this can mean for the future of the institution.

6. CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that in these times of scarce resources, the role of the CEO as a leader in Adventist tertiary education is crucial. The milieu for the exercise of his leadership makes heavy demands on the emotional life of the CEO. From the reading done, it appears that conventional academic preparation has not prepared CEOs for their leadership roles. The emphasis has been on management training which is essential but not sufficient for their role as educational leaders.

The concept of Christian leadership seems to be better served by the values of the steward than of the servant. The concept of steward emphasises the ideas of accountability, leadership, reliability and responsibility. At the same time it includes the idea of being a servant and recognises dependency on the master.

From the literature it is clear that management and leadership are two separate concepts while at the same time it is conceded that there is a great deal of overlap. All true leaders manifest the six chief elements of leadership: they have vision, they show integrity, they know what their priorities are and they work unstintingly for positive change, and by their attitudes and self-discipline they demonstrate their gift of leadership.

Developing and training other leaders is probably one the prime duties of the CEO. The integration of faith and learning shows up best when CEOs recognise that leadership is a gift from God. It behoves those to whom this gift is given to follow the injunction of Paul to leaders - that they lead diligently, and with enthusiasm.

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