Leader Development: Transforming Self - Concept

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1. Write a 5-page paper based on the description below:

a. Synthesize and integrate all that you have learned thus far to write an essay on the following question:

“**Why are self-concept, spirituality, and moral development so critical for leadership**?”

2. Paper Outline

a. Begin with an introductory paragraph that has a succinct thesis statement.

b. Address the topic of the paper with critical thought.

c. End with a conclusion that reaffirms your thesis.

d. Use a minimum of seven scholarly research sources (two books and the remaining scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles).

Today, more than ever there is a need for new leadership across academic disciplines, every level of government, and within the Christian business community. The result is an opportunity for the church to raise up leaders grounded in the Word to serve a lost world. To do so, Academicians must respond to the question, “Why are self-concept, spirituality, and moral development so critical for leadership?”. This paper discusses the importance of these traits for leaders, but more so for BAM (Business As Mission) Practitioners, who rely on a solid foundation upon which they stand, build their capacity to lead, and equip others to do the same.

As a BAM Practitioner, my role is to teach people about BAM, equip them to do BAM, and lead them to become BAM Leaders. God has wired each person with gifts (i.e., spiritual and vocational) to serve with, but teaching this is not standard practice in schools or colleges. Every Christian needs to understand their gifts to effectively engage in activities like Faith at Work and Business As Mission. Additionally, leaders must also have a strong foundation of self-concept, spirituality, and moral development.

Allen & Wergin (2009) concluded that those who recognize our lives are influenced by education and experiences can be better leaders if they apply this knowledge to understand others; and use this knowledge to identify workers that are not in the right job. It is important to realize, however, that while one can be taught to match employees to jobs they are wired to do, relating to staff and clients is more difficult. It requires a leader to exhibit traits (i.e., positive self-concept, spirituality, and moral development) that correspond with the ability to be relational that helps them be compassionate and empathetic.

A relational leader exhibits these traits and acknowledges that education and experiences have shaped the self-concept, spirituality, and moral development of the person they are working/dealing with. Additionally, he/she will be equipped to help those who need guidance. As reported by Van der Aar, L., et al. (2022), who found that after training, “self-concept clarity and social self-evaluations positively predicted social adjustment to college and academic performance…” (p. 341). This is excellent news for BAM leaders who can prepare their servant heart to address a challenging situation.

BAM leadership requires one to be a “Servant Leader”, which translates to being a relational individual with a foundation built on positive self-concept, spirituality (biblical principles), and moral development. It also requires the ability to work in different contexts.

One such context is the recent trend of students taking time off between high school and college (or college and career) has become so popular that it is now referred to as a “gap year”. The desired outcome is for students to finish their year off with a decision about the future. While positive results can occur, it is important that they consider the steps they will take to be able to make that decision once the year is over. Van der Aar, L., et al. (2022) recommends further studies on this topic, which will help leaders and academicians understand and address this area to begin to reverse the trend.

Another context is “the ability to interact positively with people of different national, social, ethnic and religious backgrounds, as well as those of different genders.” (p 179). Interestingly, [Bart S. Vanneste](https://pubsonline.informs.org/action/doSearch?text1=Vanneste%2C+Bart+S&field1=Contrib) and [Ranjay Gulati](https://pubsonline.informs.org/action/doSearch?text1=Gulati%2C+Ranjay&field1=Contrib) (2021) found that “...individuals with broader multicultural experiences are particularly effective when leading more versus less multinational teams” (p 1599). Today, these differences apply abroad, within the USA, for workers and clients alike. Christian leaders need to pour into people and with so many differences this can only be sustainable if one has a strong foundation rooted in the traits discussed here. Working together, even with differences, is easier when one likes the work they are doing. Leaders can also host team building events where staff do a fun activity outside of work to get to know each other better. Leaders that recognize these occurrences are uniquely gifted for leadership and can create a unique work environment for staff and clients.

According to Allen, S., & Fry, L. (2023) “the workplace is an implicit and essential outlet for spirituality (for meaning, purpose, and connection or belonging) and a place where leaders may spend much of their waking hours” (p 650). If this is true, Christian leaders should embrace it because adults spend the majority of their life working! Every job should be one that employees want to go to and employers/leaders should strive to create a purposeful place of belonging that fosters connection and support. Sounds like church! There are leaders that bring church to the company for workers who otherwise will/can not attend. Companies want and need to retain the good workers, especially after investing in their training. A strong leader, grounded in the Word recognizes this and will create this type of work environment. BAM can do this!

“If God can do all this through… me… He can do it for anyone” (p 170). We should be emboldened by Mike Rovner’s (2022) statement, who started as a businessman and created a supportive environment within his company. His success led him to offer training to other business owners to teach them how to share Jesus. Rovner says he has “ always tried to bring people to the next level. We do that by coaching and mentoring” (p 99). Imagine if every teacher, leader, and Christian business owner did this.

There are enormous possibilities through BAM training to help the church and Christian companies by equipping leaders and ensuring they have a firm foundation rooted in positive self-concept, spirituality (the Word), and moral development. Dr. Neal Johnson (2022), a BAM Pioneer states that “a BAM company has a dual mandate: A Business Mandate,... and a Mission Mandate” (p. 140). This is an enormous responsibility for Christian business owners and the main “why” self-concept, spirituality (the Word), and moral development are critical to leadership. Without these traits it is difficult to be a leader and not experience missional drift or succumb to other sinful behaviors. If you factor in the dual mandate, it is impossible to stay on course without being firmly rooted in Christ.

In addition to a dual mandate, BAM looks at more than just profit and factors in multiple bottom lines. Albright (2014) states **“**the potential tension between multiple bottom lines exists not only in pursuit and measurement of such outcomes as profitability, conversions, and jobs created, but also in less understood outcomes such as influence on unjust situations, intangible spiritual transformation, and environmental impact efforts” (p 74).

As a BAM Practitioner dedicated to training others about business and mission, my goal is to express the importance of a strong foundation owners must have not to do business, especially BAM. Collectively, these traits and other topics mentioned **“**provides guidance on practices, processes, and outcomes that may be helpful in applied contexts such as in coaching and mentoring, higher education, training, designing developmental assignments (e.g., cross-cultural assignments), organization-wide spiritual support (e.g., chaplaincy, meditation workshops and facilities), and integrated development programs” (Allen, S., & Fry, L., 2023 p. 661).

“Leadership is one of the foundational pillars/basics of a BAM Company” (Johnson, 2022,p. 384). As a “foundational pillar” the traits discussed are critical for leaders, especially BAM leaders. As a Practitioner, everything discussed will be factored into training programs developed to equip Christian business leaders and missionaries in BAM leadership. This paper examines both business and BAM leadership to convey the importance of:

* A positive self-concept to help cope with stressful situations and the challenges of business;
* Spirituality to create an welcoming space for staff and BAM leadership focusing on mission and business; and
* Moral Development maturity, which for an adult in leadership should be well established, however will be tested working with multiple bottom lines and a dual mandate.

Christians are held to a higher standard, but we are human and can fall to sin when overwhelmed or unable to see the way out. It’s a fallen world, but the Christian community can and should come together to support each other and to reach out to the lost world.

Christians understand the difference between Christ and the secular world. However, many have become of the world, when biblical teachings say not to. These traits in part also keep us accountable to Christ. It is time for the church and the Christian community to work harder than ever before to be light and salt to the lost, even the lost Christian.

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**Rubric: How We grade the essay**

1. **Thesis statement clear 5 points/5**
2. **Introductory paragraph 5 points/5**
3. **Main points, and overall coherence/unity of the essay 5 points /4**

**4. Conclusion/closing paragraph 5 points/5**

**5. Mechanics: Grammar & APA 7 formatting 5 points/4**

**Grading Scale: Total Points: 25 points/ 23**

**A= 25**

**A-= 24-23**

**B= 22-19**

**B-= 18-17 NC=No Credit, needs revision**