OL 703: Transformational Leadership

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**Definitions of Leadership**

Leadership can be a bit tricky to grasp because it's always changing and can mean different things in different situations. At its heart, leadership is about showing the way and getting others to work together for a common goal. But what makes a good leader and what leadership looks like can change depending on the situation and the people involved.

The latest research emphasizes the dynamic aspect of leadership. According to Northouse (2021), leadership is described as "a process in which an individual guides a group of people to accomplish a shared objective." This characterization emphasizes the interactive and interpersonal elements of leadership, placing importance on influence rather than mere authority. Northouse's viewpoint stresses the significance of viewing leadership as an ongoing process rather than a fixed role or characteristic.

Another recent perspective comes from Yukl and Gardner (2020), who describe leadership as "the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives." This definition emphasizes both the mental and practical concepts of leadership, focusing on agreement and facilitation as key components. It suggests that leadership is not just about directing others but also about building consensus and enabling collective action.

A more modern way to lead is through adaptive leadership, which was presented by Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2019). They described adaptive leadership as "the practice of rallying people to address difficult problems and prosper." This definition emphasizes leaders' capability to handle intricate, evolving settings and involve others in finding solutions and creating new ideas. Adaptive leadership underscores the significance of being flexible, resilient, and able to lead in ambiguous and swiftly changing situations.

New definitions show that people are starting to see leadership as a complex and situation-based process. Leadership is not just about telling others what to do; it involves influencing, helping, and adjusting to different situations. It's important to keep in mind that leadership is all about interacting with the people you're leading and dealing with the challenges you're facing. This detailed understanding of leadership is really important in today's complicated and interconnected world.

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### References

* Heifetz, R., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2019). The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world. Harvard Business Review Press
* Northouse, P. G. (2021). Leadership: Theory and practice\* (9th ed.). SAGE Publications.
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