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Leadership through the valley of despair: What kind of Leader can keep the boat afloat during this transition time of Covid-19 pandemic? The case of Zambia

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Abstract

There is pressure on organizations in these times of crisis to undergo change for them to survive. Coping with complexities is more of a management role but coping with change is more of leadership. The nature of work has been changed due to the COVID-19 epidemic. With everyone still anxiously looking forward to returning to normal working environment, organizations need to tailor their leadership team from dealing with crisis to promoting authentic and transformational leadership. The work environment will never be the same as before especially after prolonged quarantines, remote working online or working from restricted places. Most people have suffered a lot of uncertainty, anxiety, depression, isolation etc. associated to this prolonged period of the epidemic. While many are contemplating on how the new normal will be like after this historical epidemic, we need leaders who are empathetic, flexible, and adaptable to keep workers united, engaged, motivated and cohesive.

With this major step change that has occurred in the whole world since the outbreak of the corona virus in December 2019, we need leaders who are change champions who will help organizations create clear visions, be able to align organizations to deliver the formulated strategies towards change and be able to embed the change into organizational culture and procedures.

This article will review literature on leadership, emotional intelligence, and change management and company performance with more emphasis on leadership qualities during this transition time. This article presents the role emotional intelligence plays in times of crisis and why it's an essential quality for leaders to drive change, it will also elaborate what kind of leaders we need in this era and what they possess for them to lead organizations during the valley of despair like this one. It will also show a clear benefit of having leaders who are change champions and the role of change management in the turbulent times like this one. We need strategic leaders to deal with this strategic change the world is experiencing. This journey of leadership never stops. Organizations that can adapt and be able to evolve by turning the challenges they are facing right now into opportunities, will win in this epidemic era.

Keywords: Leadership, emotional intelligence, change management, step change, Covid-19, ambiguous threat

Introduction

The way the corona virus epidemic was unfolding in my face here in China from mid-December 2019 put me to realize that times like these need leaders who don't downplay and keep on delaying to take action. From this lesson, my eyes and ears were glued on the television as I watched the virus swept the town of Wuhan eventually ending into a lockdown for months. Everybody was taken by surprise and the world leadership was seriously challenged. Being a basketball player myself and a keen follower of Basketball league in the United States, the reaction of the commissioner of the NBA (National basketball Association) Mr. Adam Silver over the corona virus outbreak just showed me how true leadership in during times of uncertainty.

- **Act with a lot of responsiveness and urgency:** Leaders tend to wait for more clarity and information before they act. This is what is called an ambiguous threat where there are no clear signs of threat that can affect the future and tend to treat the problem with less caution. Invisible risks will build up due to delayed response to act. Waiting for more clarity especially with a crisis that is growing steadily and exponentially like the way it was happening in the Chinese city of Wuhan, is breeding more trouble for you. Prevention is better than cure. Take the lead and risk the attempt.
- **The communication should be done with transparency:** meaning with an honesty outlook, creating hope and being as clear as you could possibly be to make everyone understand the message. Make the people feel they are part of the solution, and you rely on each of them to act in an appropriate way to fight the problem.
- **Leaders need to respond to mistakes or missteps acceptance and productivity:** With the magnitude of the crisis this virus brought, a lot of mistakes would have been seen as leaders tried to resolve it. But the way leaders respond to these missteps while correcting is just as important as how they handled and addressed the problem from the beginning.
- **Give constant feedback and updates:** A leader needs to constantly give feedback to the people. This is needed to tell the people where the current situation stands, any wins and pit falls with lessons learnt. This needs to be conveyed with steady and integrity. It's not that once a leader sets a course of action, they need to stick to it, with these dynamic changes reviews will happen and the leading team needs to give accurate feedback even on a daily basis as new information trickles that affect the current situation.

Leaders elaborated above showed the courage to act even when they didn't have all the information but become proactive. They would have made mistakes on the way but all they needed to do was to acknowledge the mistakes, listen, learn and be able to put everyone on course towards the bigger picture and being problem solvers.

The literature was reviewed on leadership, emotional intelligence and change management in the sections that follows.

Leadership

Leadership and management move hand in hand even if they are different. Management skills are used to build, plan and align the systems of the organization for it to accomplish its goals and mission. But we need leadership skills to help us to direct our attention where there is a potential source of change and movement (Northouse, 2013) ^[28]. To do this, leaders in an organization will help to align workers towards the needs of the organization, inspire and motivate them as the leadership team establishes the direction to be followed (Bennis, 2009) ^[6]. We need leaders who will help to build trust within the organization and beyond to include all other stakeholders and the supply chain where the organization is involved. Such leaders who help in bringing trust are authentic leaders. We need leaders who act with a lot of urgency when it comes to responding to crisis. There is an assumption that we used to hear that all managers are leaders (Algahtani, 2014) ^[2]. This is not true for the reason that some

managers don't show any leadership qualities as they manager others, while we have many leaders out there who are not managers. With this distinction, we need leaders in this crisis time to be very proactive and have a good understanding between crisis management and crisis leadership. WE need leaders who are capable of creating good cultures and creating a good psychological protection for his employees. This is because most leaders tend to portray a laissez-faire attitude on the occurrence of crisis that there organization may face. For leaders to practice crisis leadership is not easy. In times of crisis, the organization managers who may be the same leaders need to understand that management is strongly practiced from a set of rules and protocols hence managers are known to be doing the things right according to the laid out procedures. This is different from leaders who are known at doing the right things. Leaders during these times of crisis need to understand and formulate a cohesive and effective approach that is robust and yield fruit. Leaders during this tough time need to see the sense of what is going on. An account of what is going on need to be seen by our leaders and show us what need to be done. They need to direct others to see their vision and be able to accept the situation. After the others have seen and accepted the situation, leaders need to decide on a clear road map. Leaders will need to make critical steps towards solving the problem. Where there is crisis, leaders see an opportunity. Leaders need to understand exactly what is mainly being threatened during a crisis. Leaders need to give a clear meaning to the crisis at hand and be able to justify their actions to mitigate it (Adair, 2016; Darling & Beebe, 2007) ^[1, 12]. The crucial time for a leader is to understand that this crisis is here for a long time so he needs to formulate good plans which will show how the crisis will be ended for the organization to return to normalcy. In this case, timing is a crucial element for a leader for this will help him or her understand when to terminate or cease the strategies he had put in place as he was responding to crisis. In this case leaders need to be reviewing their decision with their teams as they learn and account for what is happening. Even if a course of action was set. It can be changed if things are going wrong. Flexibility is very key. The leader must help workers understand the bigger picture. Once a leader manages to set the organization to focus on the bigger picture, it will be like the story of a janitor working for NASA who was asked what he was doing when the CEO who was visiting the organization asked him what he was doing. Of course, he was cleaning the floors in the organization, but he answered that he was there helping to put the determined men to the moon. We need leaders who explain to his followers what their bigger picture is for them to remain loyal to their duties and be reminded why they are there. We need leaders who have transparency in their communication who will give honest and give us an accurate situation of the reality and one who does not demonize workers. As the leader involves everyone in the process, as they review it will help to show where the team went wrong and where they won. This will help in the following planning session as the wrong thing done will be reviewed critically by all and new plans made. Once we have learned our mistakes, the effective leader will help in updating the new plan towards crisis mitigation. In times of crisis, we need leaders who are empathetic, one who can feel what others feel by being able to go into someone's position and feel what they feel. We need leaders who will listen with caution Drunker, 2005), who will acknowledge other's efforts during the period and

who will help the organization to be involved in a mindset of problem solving. We need leaders who will lead a team well during crisis. In most cases, what makes organizations loose track is not the crisis, but the mishandling of the crisis and what was done in trying to correct the situation.

In these times of the crisis, we need leaders who are transformational, not transactional, Authentic and ethical leaders. In this era of uncertainty, we need leaders who create a sense of security to the workers (Montgomery, 2008; Datta, 2015) [27, 11].

A transactional leadership is a leadership style in which leaders lead by making followers comply by giving external motivation of reward and punishment. Transactional leaders value a lot of order and well-defined structures. They lead others like in a military environment which just allows people to follow orders with little or no input of its workers, there is no room for innovation and creativity on the part of the workers under this type of rule. This also lead by exception which is not what we need in these troubled times. In this type of leadership style, the employees are not free to try out new things and if they break the rule, they risk being fired. These kinds of leaders are very quick in spotting mistakes and then acting towards punishing. Transactional leaders work well with a workforce of already motivated staff, which is the opposite during these times of uncertainty. Almost everyone is not motivated as the job security is shaken.

We need leaders who are transformational. Transformational leaders don't just lead, but stimulate, motivate, and make others participative as they create a clear path for them to emulate and follow as a lot of freedom is given to the workers to make their own judgment and apply their creativity (Rooke and Torbert, 2005) [32]. These kinds of leaders lead with a vision, charisma, inspiration, and collaboration. Transformational leaders strongly rely on the principles of emotional intelligence (Beugre *et al*, 2016) [5]. In these difficulty times we need leaders who can work well with teams to create strategies that can help resolve and drive the organization to better horizons. Among one of the most notable strengths for these leaders is the ability to transform others, meaning being able to develop and empower their followers to be leaders themselves. Transformational leadership is also likened to servant leadership. With this prolonged pandemic, we need leaders who are supportive and recognize the efforts of others, who encourage others to reach their full potential with setting high expectations with very clear goals. They are willing to walk the employee through by showing a clear example of how things are done. In our African leaders, we have examples like the former President of South Africa Mr. Nelson Mandela as a good example of a transformational leader. He truly had a transformational effect and impact on the people who were around him and indeed to the whole humankind. This is one of the reasons why he even received a Nobel Prize. He managed to create a rainbow nation of South Africa where racism was a thing of the past compared to the apartheid rule. He was a man of vision and was able to create strong relationships with others as he led. It was very ironic of him to make the former President of South Africa who kept him in jail for a long time as his vice president. All this was due to his strong emotional intelligence he possessed and appreciating people over their strength rather than looking at their weaknesses. He set very clear goals, vision and as a leader he was able to transform everyone to embrace one another and be able to see each one as brother and sister, not black and white as it used to be

before 1994 in South Africa. Due to his strong leadership qualities, the people around him were able to agree with his ideologies and managed to create peace and started calling the country, the rainbow nation of South Africa. He totally put aside the past and focused on the bigger picture of creating peace and ending racial discrimination. We need leaders who don't claim they are born like that, but a leader who identifies themselves that they are indeed made (Torbert, 2005) [32]. Leaders in these times need to be leaders who understand complexity. These are leaders who try to fit into the circumstances facing them and hence they develop strategies to fit and operate in (Snowden and Boone, 2007) [35]. When a leader is open to accept change at personal level first, he will embrace the change needed for the entire organization. These kinds of leaders help their organizations to understand the different stages during the transition. To be a successful leader leading an organization with all these complexities the world has found itself in, leaders need to be good at intergraded thinking (Martin, 2007) [25]. An integrative mind is a mind which, if given a lot of information and decisions to make, even if they have contradicting choices, they don't discard any but rather create a solution which has both views in it but refined. We don't need leaders who just want to act like they lead others, we need leaders in these times, thinks like a leader already. Integrative thinkers highly welcome complexity because when they are faced with complex situations, the best answers will come from the same complex situation they are facing. We need leaders who see problems as opportunities to develop further than those who view problems as setbacks. Many leaders may be leading multi-cultural companies with branches all around the world (Brett *et al*, 2006) [7]. These leaders in the time of complexity need to understand all the dynamics to lead with consistence and have strong emotional intelligence ability. With the above said the type of leadership in these times of uncertainty need to be focused and be able to take us out of the valley of despair as we transition from our status quo to the desired stage. These are leaders who are innovative and creative (Carter & Greer, 2013) [10]. When the leadership can collaborate and share ideas, everyone is participative and feels safe. We need leaders who make their organizations to be the employee's choice, not to be an organization where employees view it as a last option when they have nowhere to run to (Stark & Flattery, 2010) [33]. It goes with the saying "Contented goats gives the best milk". Unlike the heroic or rather the authoritarian type of leadership which simply does make employees to reach their full potential. Visionary leaders know very well that one single person has all the knowledge and ideas, so they need to involve everyone and realize that leaderships exist at every stage in the organization. Authoritarian, command or hierarchical and command types of leadership just produce workers who are non-participative, just follow and not royal to organization's vision (Goncalves, 2013) [18]. For leaders to encourage this type of leadership which will bring prosperity they need to build inclusive and friendly environment for workers to operate from, which make them feel safe and secure. Organizational leaderships should show respect to organizational culture, values and be able to harness the ever-flourishing abundant ideas, perspectives, and backgrounds that every employee possesses. Leaders needs to be able to create a culture which allows works be themselves as unique individuals who comes with a varied wealth of experience to the organization. To attain leadership roles, the combination

of authority and power are in inter play. The ability others must get things done is power while authority is basically formal rights someone acquires by occupying a certain position or role. It is very clear here that power can be gained even if you don't occupy a certain position. Leaders in this era need to understand power and authority so well because a lot of problems are observed which power is used without authority. Leaders in this time should not be leaders who hold very high positions but are powerless to influence others. Leaders should realize that leadership is a learnt thing and the ability to have that power is developed. For leaders to be effective, a distinction between what type of powers to use at a certain time and with what type of leadership style he or she adopts important. The type of power applied will constantly vary as the environment is changing, Leaders will have to understand that a blanket type of power style can't be used all the time. There are times when the leader is being pushed to have results delivered so he would have to be a bit coercive and get people moving.

Emotional intelligence

This is the ability for one to monitor their own emotions, including the emotions of other people. This is a very key feature in the leadership qualities of successful leaders who work selflessly without putting their interest first but consider others greatly in their day-to-day leading roles they are entrusted to carry. With this real situation of having the world epidemic, Corona virus has created a lot of disorder in almost everyone as people stresses over there and that of their family members, stress over the new mode of working which has caused many to lose employment. Emotional intelligence helps to distinguish amongst leaders who are very successful in leading their organizations, with technical skills being less of a problem. In any situation, change comes along with emotions. This happens as people are moved from their comfort zones and challenge the status quo. These changes will create anxiety and create uncertainty. In these times of crisis where we need strong cultures, we need leaders who poses strong leadership qualities and who are emotionally intelligent. Emotional intelligence is a critical element we need in leaders to drive change in the organization. Emotional intelligence as the following components.

Social skills: This is the ability to manage relationships and network building. This skill helps to find common bases of solving problems and help build lasting rapport.

Self-awareness: This is the ability for someone to understand themselves well in terms of their emotions, modes and how they affect other people. This skill leads to a person to develop their self-confidence, be able to make strong self-assessments and be realistic of yourself.

Self-regulation: This is the ability to control yourself especially on impulsive decisions or your moods. This makes you to think before you act or be able to create time to think about something than giving it an impulsive response. This element is very important for it brings integrity and creates a sense of trustworthiness. It also makes the person comfortable when there are things that create ambiguity which further creates an open mind towards change.

Self-motivation: This skill creates passion to do things without really looking at the financial rewards that comes with what you are doing or just to make yourself popular. Leaders with this skill tend to have strong drives to achieving whatever they plan with optimism, even if the failure level is high or during failure. A self-motivated leader gets

committed to what they do and in the process, they become committed to their organizations.

Empathy: This is the ability to understand the emotions of how others feel over something (Putting yourself in someone's shoes). This creates leaders who are sensitive towards how others feel. This helps to give good service to the people you serve and develop expertise on how to build and retain organizational talent.

A leader who is emotionally intelligent possess self and social awareness, self-management and can manage relationships positively. A leader with Self-management simply means a leader who can control feelings which can be impulsive. Who can manage emotions in a very healthy way, be able to create innovative ideas and be able to adapt to changes. A self-aware leader who is emotionally intelligent is a leader who controls his emotions and how they affect your behavior and thoughts and that of others (Boyatzis *et al*, 2000) [9]. A leader who knows their weaknesses and strengths possess self-confidence. Another attribute of emotional intelligence is social awareness. This is the ability to be empathetic. An empathetic leader can feel what others are feeling even if he doesn't support their behavior at that time, but he is able to fill their feeling as if it is him in that position. Leaders with this quality can work well with others for the teams will trust him or her as they interact with the leader. With empathy, a leader is being able to understand the needs, emotions and be mindful of others concerns, be able to read through people's emotions and be socially comfortable with others. When you possess this as a leader, you can feel the dynamics of groups and you tend to lead others well. The last component you need to possess as an emotionally intelligent leader is a good relationship management. This is the ability to nurture, develop good relationships, one who is clear communicator, and one who influences and inspires others in a positive way. A person who possesses these qualities will be able to lead strong teams. In an organization teamwork opens good lines of communication, listening and speaking and good cooperation. For a workplace to be vibrant, we need leaders who exercise patience, flexibility and one that celebrates, respects and appreciates individuality of his workers. This will enable workers to be creative and perform at their level best. An emotionally intelligent leader is an artful critiques person who focuses on what someone does well than the wrong things they do. To be an efficient leader, you need to have a very high degree of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a fundamental principal for being a transformational leader. Leaders with a high emotional intelligence tend to be more intrinsic motivated than extrinsic motivated. This quality of emotional intelligence is very vital in all leaders in the following ways; emotionally intelligent leaders have high decision-making abilities. When you understand yourself and those around you, when making decisions, you can look at options as you weigh issues surrounding your decision. This is only possible when you have an open mind to avoid including unnecessary emotions towards your decisions. Since you understand others feeling and emotions, you will even be a good communicator. Leaders with high emotional intelligence are very resilient. Because of the strong intrinsic motivation they possess, they can rise quickly if they fall or get themselves into difficulty situations. Emotional intelligence is also a key ingredient towards change Leadership (Bar-On, 1997) [3]. Good Leadership is an essential tool for change to happen in the organization. To lead change in an organization, a leader

must be able to communicate well with his teams. Effective change leaders tend to explain to their employees not only what is happening but why it's happening. Once a leader explains the purpose of why things need to change in that direction as he connects it to the values of the organization, that leader is more likely to have a very supportive staff that will help achieve the vision. When a lot of change is to be enacted, the leader needs to be very collaborative in his leadership skills. He needs to involve employees from the early stages of planning and decision-making processes. After implementing these strategies, an effective change leader needs to commit themselves towards attaining these goals by being a role model towards the execution of the strategies. These leaders even commit their own personal time and leave their comfort zones towards the efforts to create change. When everybody sees how committed the leader is, they tend to trust and believe in such a leader and hence the whole organization will work towards attaining that desired change to better the organization during times of turbulence (Barbuto & Burbach, 2006) [4]. Once an organization is led by such charismatic leaders, he can initiate the change strategies with ease. Initiation of such strategies requires a leader who understands the problem at hand, why change is needed, and then be able to develop a clear vision. Once this is done, clear strategies are implemented with a clear vision, priorities, an elaborate action plan, tasks to be done, priorities, resources, and timelines. From this point such leaders would go into the execution of the strategies formulated. This would involve getting very key workers into positions, be able to break tasks into small quick achievable tasks to get fast results and keep the workforce encouraged as they work as a team. To increase moral, teamwork, cooperation and a welcoming and positive environment at work, leaders need to possess emotional intelligence which is the key ingredient towards leading with empathy in turbulent times.

Change management

With the Covid-19 pandemic, the desire to transition people from their usual way of working to a desired way to work is the dilemma every organization is facing right now. Organizations need to work out a very good roadmap with its change management practices leading the organizations to the desired way of working in the new normal. In all dimensions of change happening, it all begins with creating a vision (Kotter, 2011) [21]. It doesn't matter what is causing this change to the organization, be internal like policy changes, structures or systems changes to being external forces like economic, political, technological, environmental, or social changes, creating a vision will give the organization clear direction into the future of how this change will be done. According to Kotter (2011) [21], where the organization is going is elaborated in the vision statement created. This creates a compiling work to be followed for the organization to get to the desire future position. A vision should be meaningful to any person reading it, hears about it or lives with it which makes them want to be part of the success being projected. For his reason, Kotter elaborated the qualities of an effective vision as below.

It must be imaginable: This part of the vision should be able to convey a clear picture of the future will want the organization to go into.

It must be Desirable: The vision needs to create a desire for the people in it and those being affected by it. For instance, it

must be able to reflect in the long term interest of the employees, stakeholders and the customers.

It needs to be feasible: This element of a vision needs to have a realistic face in it as being able to be attained.

It needs to be focused: This element needs to be very clear to be able to give clear guidance with decision making.

Flexible- As the vision is being formulated, it must allow initiatives from all walks of the organization for them to own it and be part of. It must also have a plan B in case this one fails.

It must be communicable: A vision needs to be short and simple for someone to be explained to in less than 5 minutes and be able to understand what it desires to do. After having created a good vision, the leadership needs to set good strategies to lead the organization to the desired future.

Effective communication by leaders is the key determinant for members of the organization to see the need to change. Ely (1999) [15] identified among many other causes of change as being dissatisfied with the status quo. The effective need to change this status quo by a leader will determine the way members of the organization accept the change. Even if the members are satisfied with the status quo like we have now, they resist to the idea of change, like into the use of more informational technologies to work as we are in lockdowns and isolation or restricted work environments, the leader's effective communication skills can make the members of the organization be dissatisfied with it and make them accept change (Gaubatz & Ensminger, 2017) [16]. Other sources of obstacles to change in most organizations has been the resistance from employees being the greatest source of resisting change, obstacle caused due to communication breakdown, also having insufficient training time devoted for this change Programme. Also during this transition time of change, if the staff turnover is high it brings a lot of problems during times to implement change. Another obstacle to change is normally where the change intended costs more than what the organization has budgeted for. This very initial stage of the change management can trigger among other things anxiety, a sense of fear, and indeed mixed emotions which affects the workers psychological safety. This is when we need exceptional leadership with very good communication skills assuring members that this change is very essential for the betterment of themselves and the organization. Change management is a planned and systematic organizational operation aimed at helping all involved stakeholders to accept and be able to embrace change. With the radical step change Covid-19 has caused in the world, good change management practices are needed more now than before. Change may be caused by internal or external pressures. According to Lewin's force field analysis, this analysis will help organizations to identify what kind of change the organization needs to tackle. Lewin identified the forces as either driving forces or restraining forces. When there is equilibrium of these forces, there is no need to change. For change to occur, the driving forces must be more than the restraining forces. In this case Covid-19 has created a big driving force that is compelling organizations to change the way they do business. Work cultures are changing and the whole market dynamics have changed due to the nature of the restrictions this pandemic has come with. We need an effective strategic management team to work on this step change and create clear visions that the organizations can implement if they have to remain afloat during this valley of despair as we transition (Graetz & Smith, 2010) [19]. Change

is basically inevitable and if organization resists change, the change itself will run over the organization which leads to the collapse of this firm. This process involves the application of processes, tools, principles, and skills to be able to manage the people side of change. This aims at getting the people in an organization to get committed and be able to own change itself. It contains two major components but the most crucial is the management of the people side of the change process. In every organization, there is a diverse of people who are active, passive, apathetic and others are passive (Ramanayaka *et al*, 2018) ^[30]. These categories of people are either change champions or change resistors. The process of change is an ongoing process not a single event. Hence it needs a good plan to mitigate the change process. When a company or an organization is going through change, this state is called the transition process. The Transition period is the movement individuals or organizations take in reaction to the changing environment. With the covid-19 epidemic going on, organizations need to put in place strategies to survive in this new normal the world is experiencing (Lim *et al*, 2016) ^[24]. Organizations need change champions as its leaders to lead the diverse nature of people in the organizations. During organizational change, the management of people is the most difficult and challenging thing to handle. For instance, when there is a merger and acquisition, the process of the technical changeover is definitely more complex as in arranging financial transactions, to be able to integrate the newly acquired systems with the existing ones, creating the new company structure and many other technical issues. But the biggest success and failure can be encountered through trying to get people onboard, change their status quo and have them participate fully in the newly formed firm. This is so because these individuals will now perform their roles differently under the prevailing changing times like during this covid-19 times. The greatest success during these times of change is to manage the people aspect of the organization well.

Change leaders according to John Kotter's eight (8) step change management model need to observe the following;

Urgency creation: a compiling case to enact change needs to be created. In this case it's the changing environment that has come with this covid-19 virus and how the world was almost put to a standstill. The leaders need to make people in the organization, its stakeholders to come to an understanding why certain changes need to be implemented to remain afloat. The leaders need to inspire the people to go away from the status quo to focus on the future change the leadership is proposing.

Creation of a powerful team: The leader cannot deliver this alone so he needs to involve almost everyone in all levels of the organization to work together and needs to identify key people who will work as change champions and help the organization embed the vision into the day-to-day routines of the organization.

Vision creation: The leadership need to create a vision to reflect the new changes the organization is going through. If the change as an emotional part, the vision must have that element to make the people connect well with the vision. The vision needs to be clear, short, easy to understand and the vision needs to be very relevant to the people who get to hear it.

Vision communication: The leadership team needs to communicate this vision to the people in a very clear and way for the organization to embed it into their day-to-day operations.

Remove obstacles: the obstacles may be emotional or physical in nature. So the leadership team needs to get constant feedback from the people to see what is causing the obstacles and how best it can be resolved.

Victories must be reported promptly: as the leadership team is creating these measures to curb the change, any victory the organization is achieving must be reported to the people promptly to make the have hope and increase their moral as they implement these changes. All the benefits should be reported and the whole vision needs to be broken down to small attainable chunks which can be achieved in short times.

Keep on building on the change: All the above steps need to be repeated time and again to keep the people and the leadership awake.

Anchor the change: The leadership team needs to make show that change process sticks in the organizational procedures. It needs to be embedded into the operations of the organization, its procedures and make to be translated into the day to day running of the organization. Anchoring the change will see the organization succeeding with the implementation of the strategy.

According to Kotter leaders who try to implement change alone get isolated and labeled, hence the need to create a good team to communicate the vision, the need to change to the members so the team can overcome the resistance, be able to assimilate the changes so that they are embedded in the vision of the organization and become part of the daily routines of the members of the organization. The role of the leader therefore is not to enact change alone but create a team which can affect the change (Meyerding, 2016) ^[26]. Change management in these turbulent times needs to create new organizational processes, implementation of new technologies like enhanced internet services which can support good connectivity to online platforms like zoom etc. change management is made up of the techniques, processes, tools that are used towards the management of people in the organization for a continued success. It focuses mainly on how to help the employees adapt, embrace and how well they can utilize the change as they carry on their daily tasks. It is indeed a competency people need to acquire as well as a process they need to go through. In these times of changed work ethics due to covid-19, change management as a process will be the steps the employees follow to do their work effectively following the laid down strategies which will enhance the desired change. The process of change management will involve the preparation for change itself. The leadership needs to give a clear outline d vision which the organization desires to lead the people to during these change times. This vision should embrace and allow ownership by the people throughout the organization at all stages. This will make the workers feel a strong connection to the vision. The leaders must communicate and assure the people that the change will have a positive impact on them so that no one feels threatened by the change (Kwang & Koh, 2015) ^[23]. This is where the assessment of checking if the people are ready and this will help the organization formulate a strategy. This is called a readiness assessment which will establish the current status the organization is at and, hence formulating a strategy. From this point the second stage will be the management of the change, then the reinforcement of change. On the competency side of change, the leader needs to process this competency to be able to leader people through times of change and be an active participant towards

change, be able to demonstrate the ability to commit themselves towards the implementation of the change strategy. Organizations become successful towards change management when the competency in change management is developed throughout the organizational ranks. This competence varies depending on the relationship leaders build towards change. Organizational change happens gradually and collectively results in an attained goal. Leaders in these times of uncertainty need to understand how change management affects the overall performance of the organization. Ignoring the component of change which involves employees would lead to a lot of consequences like; declining productivity, customers and the whole supply chain tend to fill the negative impact of the change and above all the employee's morale is low and begins to divide workers and eventually the company may experience a high staff turnover. Leaders need to have a clear understanding of how the employees understand the change itself. The leaders need to ensure that the employees are aware of the need for change to happen as in this period of lockdowns and isolation, how much willingness do employees have towards the participation, the knowledge and supporting the change itself. The employees must be willing to implement the laid-out strategies towards change by the willingness to implement the change skills and accompanying behaviors and how they can reinforce change. If the employees are stuck from the ability to understand why change must occur, the change will not be successful in that organization.

The organization then needs to build a structure that supports the change so that it helps to build awareness, knowledge, desire, the ability and be able to support every member towards this goal. According to Gaubatz & Ensminger (2017)^[16] two types of resistance can be present in an organization. These are rational and irrational resistance. The feeling of being noninvolved by workers is called rational while irrational resistance is just resisting for the sake of resisting. (De Jager, 2001)^[13]. The organization needs to take keen interest in addressing the resisting members as they may start to contaminate the others. The resisting syndrome may increase. This needs to be done early for they need to be engaged and their concerns addressed for them to change their deception.

Conclusion

The status quo has been challenged in all angles due to the current economic status brought by the covid-19 pandemic. We need a solid and effective leadership to handle the organizations into accepting the status quo and enact the required change for organizations to operate in the new normal. Leaders need to be equipped with competences in change management to be able to understand how the organization is transitioning to different heights. We need transformational leaders who can work well with their teams in identifying the needed change, be able to take the risk, and be able to create an appropriate vision which will help and guide in the change process (Krishnan, 2012)^[22]. These kinds of leaders can lead without self-interest, and they are emotionally intelligent to be able to effectively communicate to the members of the organization bearing in mind their emotional feelings including theirs. I strongly feel the training for leaders in emotional intelligence is a necessity to prepare them to make effective leaders. Leaders must embrace change themselves before the convince others to change. This can be done by them displaying self-confidence,

innovation, adaptability, and them being change champions themselves. By leading with a good example, this will increase their credibility with the members of their organizations. This is a good starting point to propose any changes the organization may need to undertake. An effective training in emotional intelligence will create leadership that is engaged with their staff, who are able to build confidence and commitment towards what they are doing, increase positive working relationships and be able to increase their intrinsic motivation which will make them be optimistic.

This new normal will change a lot of business cultures and hence we need visionary leaders who can see through the horizon, lead the organization through the valley of despair and transition the organization to the other side with a clear vision and keep the boat afloat than make it sink.

Referring to the big picture is what strengthens leadership which creates an anchor. Leadership in these times of uncertainty needs leaders who avails themselves and make themselves feel how others feel in their shoes which is simply to lead with empathy.

Zambia had a strong transformational leader Mr. Patrick Mwanawasa who managed to lead the country to great heights and turn the economy to what others had a privileged to worsen.

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