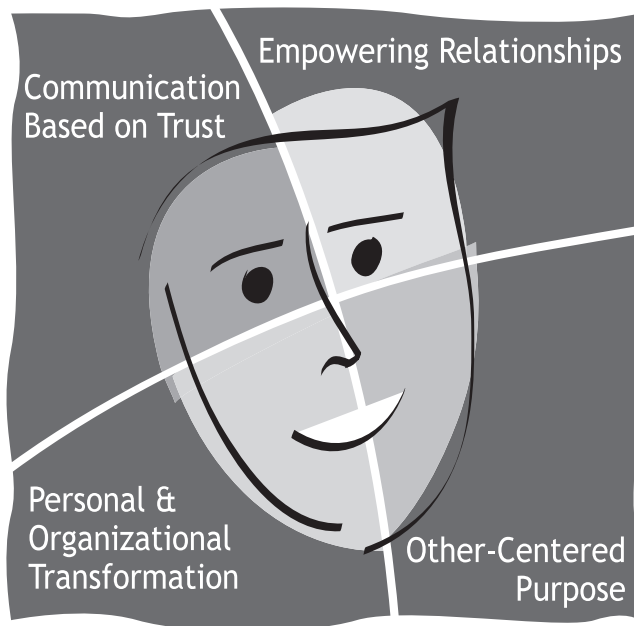# 1

Introduction to the Humane Dimension

Humane Dimension

2 Transforming the Culture of School Leadership

> *In the workplace, all of us need a language of moral discourse that permits discussions of ethical and spiritual issues, connecting them to images of leadership.*
>
> —L. G. Bolman and T. E. Deal, *Leading With Soul* (1995)

BACKGROUND

Portrait of a Teacher

Leslie Leonard had been an English teacher at Theodore Roosevelt High School (Roosevelt High School) in Kent, Ohio, since 1967. Her service there was interrupted by several breaks to raise her family and to participate in a national antinuclear movement and a local child advocacy program. From her first year on the job, Leslie was recognized by her peers as one of those individuals who led by serving. She was one of those teachers who continued to change as she challenged and, inevitably, changed the school around her.

The changes Leslie enacted stood out among her peers and her students because they eventually became embedded in the school culture. For example, in 1995, Leslie initiated community service projects in the Service-Learning Seminar course that she developed. Rather than becoming a stand-alone project, community service eventually became a vital component of several school programs and courses. This gradual development resulted mainly because Leslie did not allow her own ego to become entangled with her professional activities. She patiently nurtured community service with a small group of students within each class. She collaborated with administrators, fellow teachers, and community members by actively seeking their input and consistently inviting their involvement. In return, her work was met with support and encouragement generously provided by her colleagues. After a few years of fostering limited community service projects, Leslie sought out feedback from faculty and students. She admitted, sometimes reluctantly, the flaws in the various service activities and took steps to strengthen the program. Part of improving the student projects required expanding the school/community collaboration aspect of the Service-Learning Seminar beyond the course itself. Other classes, and therefore other teachers and students, became involved. For example, the Home Remodeling class began to work with the local Habitat for Humanity program. Students in a family and consumer studies program initiated partnerships with local child advocacy programs.

Two years earlier, had Leslie attempted to work in isolation, community service would have been relegated to a small group of seniors in a single class. If Leslie had not been willing to admit to the weaknesses in the initial program, other teachers may not have been inclined to participate.

And if Leslie had felt more passionate about the idea of community service per se and less compassionate for her fellow educators and students, the Service-Learning Seminar may have been just another reform effort with limited impact at Roosevelt High School, pursued in isolation.

Since 1995, the community service projects that Leslie began have slowly grown in number and scope. The collaborative environment of personal relationships and trust in which Leslie thrived has been a key factor in the growth of her project and other professional endeavors like hers.

Portrait of an Administrator

From the very beginning, Leslie was supported by the type of school administrator who could distinguish the use of *power over* people from *power with* people. The high school principal, Judy Kirman, saw the potential in Leslie's beginning plans for the Service-Learning Seminar. Judy also knew that the plan could fall apart if critical components like curriculum design, school/community partnerships, and department collaboration were not thoughtfully considered.

Instead of imposing a list of requirements on Leslie, Judy posed a series of questions:

- What do we know about successful student community service programs?
- What have the faculty advisors of those successful programs learned about what works and what doesn't work when students become involved in community service?
- How can one department in a high school initiate student service without limiting the enrollment in other departments' elective courses?
- How will the curriculum of this course be aligned with academic content standards?
- How will this course be evaluated?
- With whom will you share your successes and failures?

Judy did not pose these questions as challenges to be overcome. She posed them as opportunities for personal and professional reflection. Judy encouraged Leslie to ask other faculty and community members to respond to her questions. Judy also gave Leslie two valuable gifts: time (i.e., to reflect, to visit other schools, to write curriculum, and to work with other teachers) and trust (i.e., that empowered Leslie to soar beyond anyone's expectation of her project's potential for success). After the Service-Learning Seminar was initiated, Judy's support continued. She took care to keep lines of communication open between administrators of her team and guidance counselors to reduce scheduling conflicts. Knowing that the increased collaboration between the school and the community could lead

to some serious public relations issues, Judy served as the liaison between the high school and the central office. Furthermore, Judy continued her role as Leslie's critical friend by asking even harder questions:

- How can the academic rigor of this program be strengthened without compromising student time in the community?
- Can you describe ways the program can enhance collaboration within the school?
- What lessons can the seminar students teach to our middle school and elementary school students about compassion and service?
- Why do you want to continue building this program?

Responding to these questions was not another item on Leslie's checklist of things to do. She took her time and discussed the questions with her students and with other teachers. Naturally, there were those adults in the building who began avoiding Leslie because they did not feel it was their responsibility to take on her burden. Many of her peers, however, felt it was their "response-ability" to consider the implications of this newly designed course. Not only were they interested in the community service aspect of it and the potential for cross-curriculum projects, but they shared Leslie's compassion for all students. Furthermore, their relationships with each other and with Leslie formed a bond of support. In a recent round of interviews with the entire professional staff, the teachers and administrators at Roosevelt High School described their school as "a place where students can excel in multiple ways" in a culture of positive relationships between and among students, teachers, parents, and administrators.

Landscape of the School

Throughout its history, Roosevelt High School in Kent, Ohio, has maintained a strong reputation of excellence. The school's ongoing commitment to changing and improving has engaged its staff of more than 110 professional educators and student body of approximately 1,300 students in countless successes related to academics, athletics, activities, and the arts over many decades. The school culture of which we speak has been sustained over time and cyclical changes in personnel (viz., teachers and administrators). Its first banner of excellence was hung in its modern auditorium during the 1984–1985 school year. It was during this year that the school was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education with the prestigious Excellence in Education award.

A critical phase in the high school's development came in 1994 when it joined a cadre of buildings in the state of Ohio known as Venture Capital Schools. Funded by the Ohio Department of Education, the venture capital phase lasted five years and earned the school $125,000 in grant funds. The schoolwide initiatives that resulted from this reform effort included the formation of a School Improving Team (SIT). This group of teachers

and administrators examined the school practices existing at the time, researched reform literature, and formed a number of meaningful collaborations with Kent State University and the elementary and middle schools in the district. Those five years of collaboration and study planted seeds of significant, long-term change in the school. Along with the many curriculum and instructional changes that resulted from the venture capital was the legacy of the SIT. This group forged professional and personal bonds through summer retreats, weekend brainstorming sessions, and after-school planning meetings. Team members who still work at the high school often refer to that time when personal transformation flourished.

Since the beginning of the 2003–2004 school year, the Roosevelt High School staff has embarked on a new journey of self-reflection in an effort to improve. Teachers and administrators there have agreed to use the process of appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999) to evaluate their past and to decide their future direction. Over a three-month period, in a series of focus groups, the faculty at Roosevelt High School was asked this question: "How would you describe the ideal Roosevelt graduate?" Their responses boiled down to four major attributes. The ideal Roosevelt graduate possessed strong intellectual skills, positive character traits, practical life skills, and effective interpersonal skills. After these skills and traits were defined and illustrated, faculty, students, and parents were interviewed with the appreciative inquiry process.

Appreciative inquiry is an approach to social and institutional change designed by David Cooperrider and Diana Whitney (1999). Here are its two major premises:

1. *Human systems grow toward what they persistently ask questions about . . .*

2. The single most important action a group can take to liberate the human spirit and consciously construct a better future is to *make the positive change core the common and explicit property of all.* (p. 10, italics originally used by authors)

The 115 faculty members, 650 students, and 40 parents who were interviewed answered questions about intellectual skills, character traits, life skills, and interpersonal skills. Each interview encouraged the interviewees to describe "what gives intellectual life, character life, etc. to Roosevelt High School" (i.e., appreciation of the culture), and "what else might be possible in the area of intellectual skills, life skills, etc." (i.e., vision of the culture). An analysis of the 800-plus interview responses revealed some interesting commonalities:

- Students at Roosevelt High School feel genuinely cared for by the adults in the building.
- Relationships between students and faculty and among faculty members are of primary importance.

- There is a sense of authentic community in the building. Students and parents trust the teachers and administrators. Faculty members, for the most part, trust each other and, as a result, are often willing to take curricular and instructional risks.
- Open communication, as characterized by an ongoing, even exchange of information, is a key element of past projects in which risks were involved.

Moving On

On February 20, 2004, Leslie left work early, feeling ill, and was tragically killed in a traffic accident. Three days later, more than 1,000 people lined up at Leslie's church to pay their respects at her calling hours. Hundreds of students stood by with their former and current teachers. Judy Kirman waited in the long line that wrapped around the old stone church. That evening, we expressed our sympathy and our gratitude for Leslie's presence in our lives.

It was at the church service and a school memorial service where Leslie's legacy became clear to anyone who was unsure about what she accomplished. What she accomplished was to touch thousands of individual lives; equally as memorable was how she brought people together. It was almost as though Leslie's primary goal was to ensure that all of her friends, acquaintances, and loved ones would be connected somehow. Divisions between people were not possible under her influence. She personified Roosevelt's professional family as much as Roosevelt embodied her individual spirit.

This book explores what it is about this school and the people in the school that allowed Leslie to flourish both personally and professionally for the past 37 years. We include data from our past 18 years of work and recent results from the appreciative inquiry process (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999).

THE HUMANE DIMENSION AT WORK

We admit that we are proposing only a small piece of a complex puzzle to improve public education. Any K–12 practitioner, higher education scholar, or national expert already has suggested many theories and effective practices that could support positive change in public education. Discussion of our Humane Dimension does not rule out their work or refute it.

Our work does add one piece to this puzzle, however, which we believe has not been addressed in enough detail to assist school districts in a process of organizational transformation. This piece, our thesis, is the *Humane Dimension—a place in an organization where personal transformation*

is allowed to occur in a culture of compassion, trust, empowering relationships, and common purposes. Specifically, we describe a pathway to personal transformation so that, ultimately, organizational transformation may occur and endure. We believe that without this contextual piece, individuals and the organization at large struggle to commit to change that is lasting.

We are not alone in our recommendation to lead for personal transformation. Bolman and Deal (1997) allude to this recommendation when they provide four frames or "lenses" through which individuals interpret and assess situations. Of the four lenses (viz., human resource frame, structural frame, political frame, and symbolic frame), two lenses, the human resource frame and symbolic frame, are similar to our Humane Dimension. That is, the human resource frame emphasizes people's needs and the importance of caring and trusting; the symbolic frame focuses on meaning, symbols, and stories of faith and hope.

We emphasize that this book is about school *transformation,* not school reform or restructuring. This distinction is based on our belief that school reform and restructuring are organizational phenomena, whereas school transformation implies that personal change and transformation precede organizational transformation. Therefore, this book is a handbook on human development, not organizational development. It is a manual on molding trust, relationships, other-centered purpose, and, ultimately, personal transformation within each and every individual of an organization. We argue that though *compassion* and *trust* are common, trite terms in the English language, they are far from having that status in most organizations in which we have worked or studied.
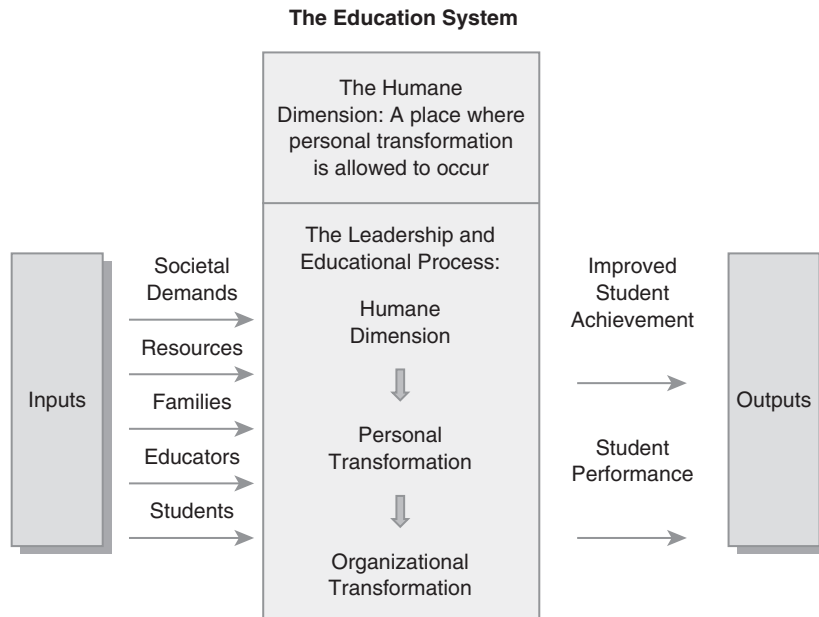
Inputs and Outputs

Most works that focus on improving practices in leadership and teaching and learning typically are based on the inputs or outputs of public education. The inputs encompass a host of variables related to student learning and achievement, whereas outputs (e.g., improved student achievement) are the expectations that emerge from society's political processes such as legislation, judicial reviews, and executive orders.

Yet in this book, we ask the education community to consider the place *between* the inputs and the outputs. We have adapted Easton's model of a political system (as cited in King, Swanson, & Sweetland, 2003) to show the potential impact of the Humane Dimension (see Figure 1.1). We define the Humane Dimension as a place where personal transformation is allowed to occur. In this place, levels of power within an organization are connected by compassion and trust, and people are united by relationships based on common purposes. This dimension is a place where interactions connect the inputs provided by the education community to outputs expected by society.

Figure 1.1   Easton's Model of a Political System Adapted for the Education System

The Education System

The Humane Dimension: A place where personal transformation is allowed to occur

The Leadership and Educational Process:

Humane Dimension

⬇

Personal Transformation

⬇

Organizational Transformation

Inputs

Societal Demands

Resources

Families

Educators

Students

Improved Student Achievement

Student Performance

Outputs

SOURCE: Adapted from King, Swanson, & Sweetland, 2003.

We address a question that a critic might ask: How does the Humane Dimension improve student achievement? We respond to our critic indirectly. That is, a teacher may have direct, positive impact on student achievement, but if a teacher's personal and professional needs are overlooked by the organization, this impact might be constrained by barriers that can limit teacher creativity, flexibility, motivation to change, and desire to engage in organizational goals. Without such teacher qualities, the likelihood of lasting change, school reform, or restructuring is decreased, if not totally denied.

The Potential Gap Between Teachers and Administrators

We believe that there exists the potential for a gap between teachers and administrators and the risk of creating silos in schools when the components of the Humane Dimension are not present. Evidence of this potentiality may be detectable wherever these two different levels of power and authority interact. Hall (1995) introduces the notion of a "gap" between levels of constituents in his work on policy makers and practitioners; he elaborates that the gap exists in perspectives, semantics, and scope of work. Furthermore, we also believe that gaps are possible between other

levels of power in the organization; we expand our meaning here to include any employee groups whose authority and power may differ by contract, by law, or even by status in the organization.

Our studies (Giancola, 1988; Hutchison, 1997) in six public school districts in the Midwest generally have identified the existence of multiple cultures or levels of power among teachers, administrators, and other employee groups. In a way, these levels exist on separate, parallel planes that never touch each other.

Evidence of these cultural differences essentially resides in how conversations change when any two of these groups come together. Consider how the conversation may change in the teachers' lunchroom on a day when a district office administrator eats lunch with the staff. No one is saying here that some degree of cordiality, collegiality, and decorum is not present. In fact, these social measures may even appear to be slightly elevated to accommodate the mingling of these two levels of power. The fully truthful conversation, however, may occur after that district office administrator exits the lunchroom. We all have heard it as teachers. Even administrators, who once were teachers of course, can recall readily the kinds of things that were said at the lunch table when they were teachers. These things could include many issues: family, last night's ball game, particular students and families, particular administrators, recent decisions by the district administrators or building principal, and so on.

Other important and equally unfortunate evidence resides in situations that we call "caucus." A caucus occurs whenever a group isolates itself, intentionally or unintentionally, to address an issue without the other group present. Consensus building is impossible under these conditions where all persons are not "at the table" to present their points of view. Obviously, what results is a compromising environment. In this environment, each group or level of power ultimately comes together in conditions where each side has prepared a separate proposal or solution to solve the problem. What is likely to occur is a compromise in which each side gives up a little to find some middle ground.

Senge (1990) implicitly concurs that this potential for a cultural gap exists with his principle of "personal mastery" (p. 139). Senge seeks a commitment to truth in an organization, and he views omission as a lack of truth. He uses the example of a business meeting where what is being thought by the participants is not what is being said. Consider the previous example of a caucus. Each one of us has witnessed situations at meetings or in other forms of communication where individuals withhold, omit, or possibly distort information to accomplish some ulterior goal motivated by a purpose that is not shared by both parties to a decision.

Argyris (2001) also views omission as a lack of complete truth in the organization. He identifies two types of learning: single-loop and double-loop. The former occurs when a simple answer is given to a simple question, but the latter occurs when a second, follow-up question probes more

deeply into the respondent's feelings about unspoken issues related to the question. Omission occurs when leaders do not probe more deeply (i.e., double-loop) into issues.

A final evidence and specific example of a caucus is the principals' meeting. Every school has such meetings. At such events, district administrators and building principals plan and share information about district activities. What is problematic here is the nature of the embellishing conversations that occur. Like the previous example of the teachers' lounge, the truthful conversations occur without the other party present. Things said could include issues such as abilities or behaviors of certain teachers, plans to implement an activity or project without input from the personnel who ultimately may be responsible to implement such plans, details of implementation that include a careful withholding (temporarily) or omitting (permanently) of information that might have been useful to other personnel, and others.

Because of differences between groups and possible gaps between levels of power within an organization, a better way is needed to communicate with each other. And so, we next look to the cycle of components that we call the Humane Dimension.

The Cyclical Nature of the Humane Dimension

So many phenomena in physical science, earth science, life science, and even social science are based on cycles. For example, consider in physical science the importance of the cycle of water's transformation from a liquid (i.e., oceans, lakes, and streams) to a gas and back to water in the form of rain. In earth science, consider the cycle of the earth's rotation on its axis and the regular change from night to day. In life science, consider the cycle of a seed (e.g., an acorn) transforming itself into a seedling, a sapling, a fully grown oak tree, and ultimately another acorn.

The most important examples for the purpose of our discussion, however, occur in social science. Consider Bloom's (1956) *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.* Bloom theorizes that students learn a discipline's concepts at different levels of understanding. A student may progress through a mere knowledge level of learning to a deeper comprehension. Beyond comprehension, a student may be able to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate knowledge. Complete mastery of a concept occurs when a student can demonstrate his or her learning at these varying levels of understanding. When faced with a new concept in that discipline, the student recycles this process of learning, which begins at the knowledge level. Beyond knowledge, the student seeks to comprehend, apply, analyze, and so on to demonstrate mastery of the new concept. Although Bloom did not refer to his taxonomy specifically as a cycle, we espouse that the nature of learning is cyclical as in the previously described process. That is, a learner recycles all or part of this model whenever he or she

encounters a new concept. In the course of a school day, week, month, or year, this cycle may be repeated literally hundreds and thousands of times.

Another important example but not as theoretical as Bloom's (1956) taxonomy is the forming of a friendship. When one meets a new friend, one may invest a limited amount of **Trust** in the new **Relationship.** If one is gratified by the first encounter, one may invest a bit more Trust in the second encounter and deepen the Relationship. Increasingly, one's focus becomes more **Other-Centered** and less self-centered. Each meeting may result in a **Personal Transformation** of more **Trust,** deeper feelings, a stronger and more **Empowering Relationship,** and more focus on an **Other-Centered Purpose.** This cycle is almost as though one has an implicit character rubric in mind that evaluates each new level of Trust, Empowering Relationship, and Other-Centered Purpose when a new interaction occurs.

As primitive and simplistic as this example may seem, it is the basis for humans' encounters with each other. We say that **Communication Based on Trust** leads to **Empowering Relationships,** which in turn lead to an increased focus on the other person, or what we call an **Other-Centered Purpose.** Finally, these three components of relationship building lead to a **Personal Transformation** where "the new you" is ready for another encounter with that other person, at which time the cycle starts again. Figure 1.2 graphically depicts this simple notion.

In his *Complex Responsive Processes in Organizations,* Stacey (2001) makes a significant contribution to our cyclical design. He states,

> Individuals in interaction with each other together create the levels of organization and society, and those collective levels constitute the context within which individuals act. In other words, individuals construct organizational/social levels, which then act back to affect those individuals. (pp. 14–15)
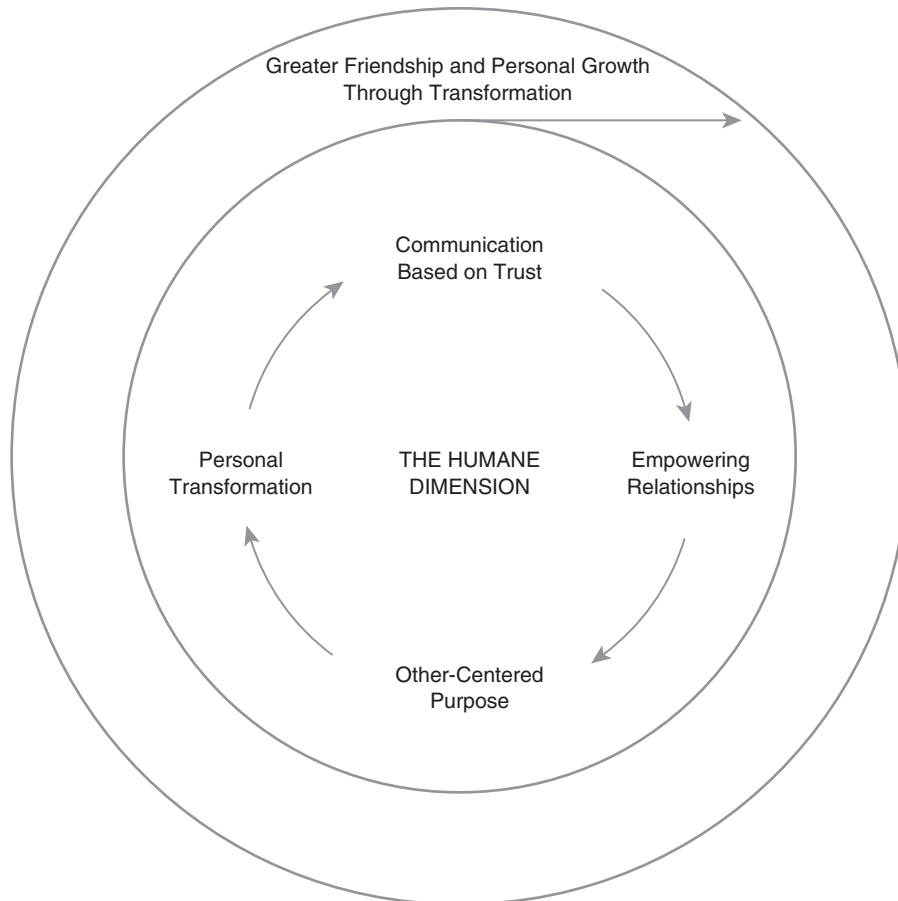
Furthermore, in his own "Figure 2.1, Mainstream Thinking: The System of Learning and Knowledge Creation" (p. 16), he captures a substantively similar concept of a recursive cycle of interactions, although his focus is not on Trust, Empowering Relationships, Other-Centered Purpose, and Personal Transformation.

Weick (1995) also makes a significant contribution to our cyclical design in Figure 1.2. In his *Sensemaking in Organizations,* he states,

> Sensemaking is about the enlargement of small cues. It is a search for contexts within which small details fit together and make sense. It is people interacting to flesh out hunches. It is a continuous alternation between particulars and explanations, with each cycle giving added form and substance to the other. (p. 133)

Figure 1.2   The Humane Dimension: A Cycle of Components in
Transformation

Greater Friendship and Personal Growth
Through Transformation

Communication
Based on Trust

Personal
Transformation

THE HUMANE
DIMENSION

Empowering
Relationships

Other-Centered
Purpose

Each of the previous authors therefore recognizes the importance of a
recursive cycle of interactions that build on previous interactions. In short,
their work confirms for us what we have observed at Roosevelt High
School in Kent and other schools.

The growth of a friendship, then, is depicted by an increasing number
of layers (i.e., concentric circles) of **Personal Transformation.** This cycle is
the essence of the Humane Dimension. In this dimension, Personal Trans-
formation is allowed to occur time after time in a culture of compassion—
compassion between and among all levels of members in the organization.
Empowering Relationships sprout up in an atmosphere of **Trust** that
allows individuals to experience the empowering freedom to grow as
human beings, friends, and colleagues of other people.

So, we believe that the body of an organization's employees transforms
itself one person at a time. The focus of school leaders, then, must be to

support **Personal Transformation** on a one-on-one basis. Levels of formal power must be connected by compassion, Trust, Empowering Relationships, Other-Centered Purpose, and Personal Transformation.

INTEGRATING ROUTINE MANAGEMENT (I.E., THE MANAGERIAL DOMAIN) AND THE HUMANE DIMENSION

We believe that all too often there is an emphasis on managing, but not managing *and* leading organizations. Before we discuss this very important balancing act, let's take a closer look at each set of behaviors. Kotter (1996) makes the distinction between these two different types of leadership behavior when he states,
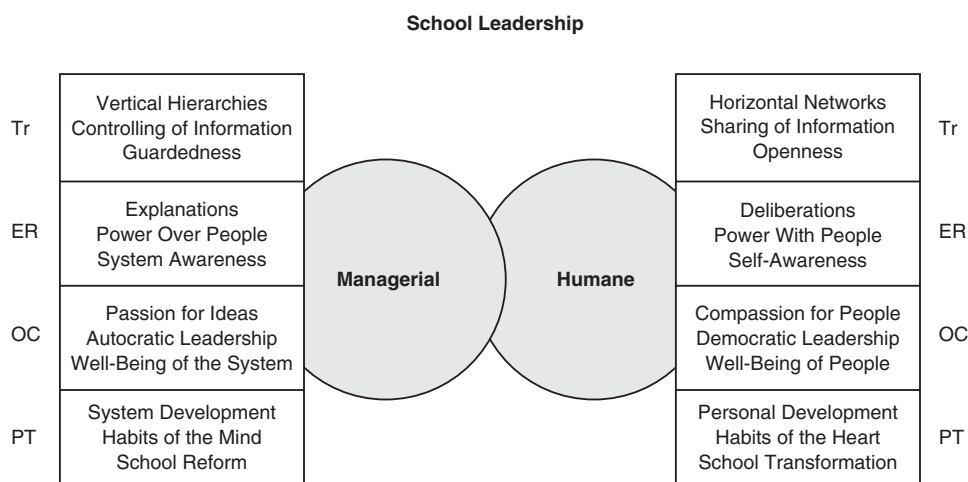
> Management is a set of processes that can keep a complicated system of people and technology running smoothly. The most import aspects of management include planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling, and problem solving. Leadership is a set of processes that creates organizations in the first place or adapts them to significantly changing circumstances. Leadership defines what the future should look like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles. (p. 25)

Another way of making this distinction is to look at the day-to-day activities of any organization and to imagine how things could be different. We offer contrasting ideas within the framework of our Humane Dimension in Figure 1.3. We note that the day-to-day activities are those routine things that must occur daily for the organizational policies and procedures to be carried out. What should underpin these policies and procedures, then, are organizational goals.

We acknowledge and emphasize that many routine or day-to-day activities are necessary realities for school leaders. We say that these activities exist in the Managerial Domain of leading, a necessary dimension where managerial activities must be carried out. Both Fayol (1949) and Sears (1950) have identified classical elements of management: planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling. (We do not wish here to associate any negative meaning to the Managerial Domain. In fact, there are many cases of school governance that must be carried out in the Managerial Domain.)

Consider the example of employee unions, where certain types of communications, such as explanations, may be required by law during interim periods between contract beginning and ending dates, in lieu of reopening

Figure 1.3   Identifying the Managerial Domain and the Humane Dimension

School Leadership

	Managerial		Humane	
Tr	Vertical Hierarchies Controlling of Information Guardedness		Horizontal Networks Sharing of Information Openness	Tr
ER	Explanations Power Over People System Awareness		Deliberations Power With People Self-Awareness	ER
OC	Passion for Ideas Autocratic Leadership Well-Being of the System		Compassion for People Democratic Leadership Well-Being of People	OC
PT	System Development Habits of the Mind School Reform		Personal Development Habits of the Heart School Transformation	PT

NOTE: Tr = Trust; ER = Empowering Relationships; OC = Other-Centered; PT = Personal Transformation

authentic deliberations. Also, state laws often define *power over* within the context of administrative contracts but not teacher contracts. Our use of a dichotomy in Figure 1.3 is simply to unravel, not to undermine the routine, day-to-day operations of a school.

The challenge for any leader, then, is to enhance the role of manager and elevate his or her thinking, wondering, and aspiring to a higher level. Kotter (1996) asks administrators to lead, not just manage. We ask them to move between the Managerial Domain and the Humane Dimension whenever possible.

Consider Figure 1.3's dichotomies related to the Humane Dimension's first component of relationship building, namely, Communication Based on Trust. The manager emphasizes sustaining vertical hierarchies, controlling information, and maintaining guardedness in communications. We suggest that to be a leader, one must *also* emphasize horizontal networks between and among levels of power, share information, and create openness in communication. Successful school leaders balance these roles, avoiding the gravitational pull to be a manager *or* a leader.

In relationships of the Managerial Domain, the manager relies on explanations, position power over people, and system awareness or adherence to organizational policies and procedures. In contrast, in the Humane Dimension's second component, namely, Empowering Relationships, the leader emphasizes the importance of group deliberations, power shared with people, and self-awareness. Combining the managerial domain with

its humanistic counterpart evidences a holistic approach, effective in both managing and maintaining strong shared leadership.

In the day-to-day, routine activities of the Managerial Domain, the manager demonstrates passion for ideas, believes in autocratic leadership, and protects the well-being of the system. In the Humane Dimension's third component, namely, Other-Centered Purpose, the leader shows compassion for people, believes in democratic leadership, and protects the well-being of people. Still, when these two domains intersect, amazing things can happen. They are not mutually exclusive.

Finally, in the Managerial Domain, the manager emphasizes development of the system, promotes habits of the mind, and espouses school reform. In the Humane Dimension's fourth component, namely, Personal and Organizational Transformation, the leader emphasizes personal development, promotes habits of the heart, and espouses school transformation over reform or restructuring. Throughout the book, we offer practical applications for managers to avoid being trapped in the day-to-day activities of the Managerial Domain and to support making room for increased emphasis on the compassionate components of the Humane Dimension. Although day-to-day, managerial activities are a part of an organization's operation, these activities are not sufficient for an organization to succeed and accomplish lasting change in the long run.

Transformation's Capacity to Connect Potential Gaps Between Two Cultures

Our studies have shown that both Personal Transformation and Organizational Transformation have the capacity to connect the potential gap between levels of power between teachers and administrators and to fuse the mission and connection between teachers and principals. For example, consider the case of Leslie Leonard's growing and thriving at Roosevelt High School, described at the beginning of this chapter. Getting to **Personal Transformation,** however, is a slow process of developing **Communication Based on Trust, Empowering Relationships,** and **Other-Centered Purpose** in an organization.

Like the cycle of the acorn's transformation into a magnificent oak tree, the cycle of the Humane Dimension takes time. In the self-similar pattern of individuals' Personal Transformations, the larger, similar pattern of Organizational Transformation may undergo many years of taking root. From the many seeds of Personal Transformation, that is, individual-by-individual or one-at-a-time, Organizational Transformation blossoms with no clear end. Just as each spring the oak tree becomes larger, stronger, and more beautiful, Organizational Transformation can grow even when members of the organization think it is as good as it can be.

At Roosevelt High School, we have observed a culture of successful Organizational Transformation that has grown and lasted for the past

40 years under several different leaders. This example is evidence that many Personal Transformations can sustain the Organizational Transformation as different leaders come and go.

As the circle of Organizational Transformation grows, its outer edges reach the parallel planes of the teachers' and administrators' culture. This growth forms a lasting connection, as it were, between teachers and administrators. In Figure 1.4, we conceptually depict this growth and ultimate connection with layers of concentric circles.

Different from the acorn-and-oak-tree example given previously, a deep and lasting human relationship is our final example of this cycle leading to Personal Transformation. We cite a man and a woman who are celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2002), "Five percent of married couples in 1996 had been married 50 years or more" (p. 9). This low percentage is some indication of the challenge of longevity (i.e., longevity of physical health, emotional health, and a lasting relationship) in not only marriage but also in long-term Personal Transformations. Over the past 50 years, this man and woman have been through many changes, emotional, physical, and otherwise. They probably have endured the range of possibilities from success to hardship, happiness to sorrow, and good health to ill health. Through each tribulation, they have experienced Personal Transformation that may have been unprecedented. But with each Transformation, there occurred an increase of Trust, a deepening of their Empowering Relationship, and a greater Other-Centered Purpose. One can only imagine how many of such events could occur during 50 years of marriage.

Yet, through a large series of Personal Transformations, the two people have emerged over and over again as one, a unified embodiment of trust and love, a married couple who have endured life's greatest and worst events. And now, as of their fiftieth anniversary, this man and woman have transformed their union into something far different from what it was 50 years ago. This event describes a transformation of the union, not just of the individuals involved.

Thus, in the present tense, one can only imagine what the transformed organization might look like in, say, 50 years. So, from the many seeds of Personal Transformation, that is, individual-by-individual or one-at-a-time, Organizational Transformation blossoms with no clear end. Just as each spring the oak tree becomes larger, stronger, and more beautiful, Organizational Transformation can grow even when members of the organization think it is as good as it can be. It is only a coincidence of nature here that the oak tree does not produce acorns for its first 50 years of growth. This coincidence of nature, however, suggests to us that some cycles take time and that deeply rooted Organizational Transformation is the same way.

In the next four chapters, we present each of the four components in the Humane Dimension's cycle. Definitions are linked to recommendations for action by way of specific staff development activities.

Figure 1.4   Transformation's Capacity to Connect Potential Gap Between Two Cultures
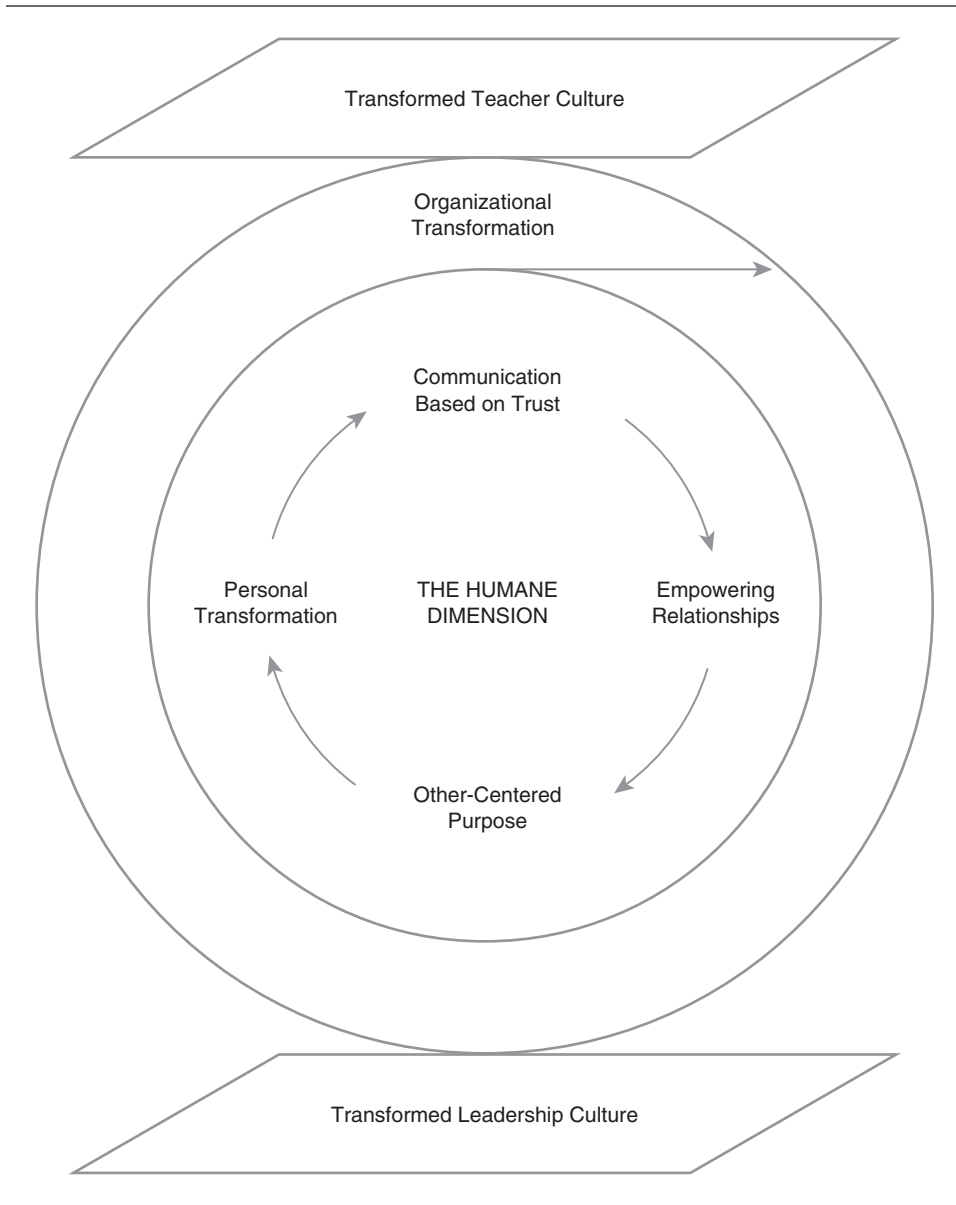
APPLYING THE HUMANE DIMENSION

Specific staff development activities are provided for each of the four components of the Humane Dimension in the Professional Development Notepad exercises (see Resources A, B, C, and D). Here we remind you of

the components and process of achieving the Humane Dimension, namely, the following:

- Communication Based on Trust
- Empowering Relationships
- Other-Centered Purpose
- Personal and Organizational Transformation

REFLECTION

Q: Based on what you know about the Humane Dimension and thinking in your own school setting, where are there moments or evidence of the Humane Dimension?

Q: Where would you like to see more effort toward achieving the Humane Dimension?

Q: What are some ideas that you have to start this important work?