BERNIE'S TRUTH

Introducing Servant-Leadership through a Case
Study of Leadership's Effect on Organizational Culture

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The narrative case study presented in this article takes place in a Midwestern city with a population that exceeds one hundred thousand residents. The city has a long history of labor/management problems complicated by political corruption and professional inbreeding with regard to appointing city employees; from the lowest levels to the very top leadership positions. The resulting organizational culture has created a cadre of Good Ol' Boys where politics rule over expertise, common sense, and ethical judgment.

It is in this environment we introduce Bernie Russo, a fictitious character based on the real prototype of command and control leadership that exists the world over. In this article, and the accompanying analysis, Bernie Russo has finally advanced from firefighter to fire chief during a long career in the department. He has an extensive history of misbehavior during his tenure on the department, but most of his shenanigans have been covered up through influence peddling and political favors. He epitomizes a corrupt public official.

Bernie recently dismissed a fire engineer from the department for admitting, under pressured interrogation by his second-in-command, that he has "claustrophobia." The fire engineer, Peterson, worked as a driver of a fire engine that pumps water at a fire scene. A fire engineer stays at the machine's console and operates the flow of water and does not enter the fire scene while the fire is being extinguished. Peterson's firing followed an incident where he refused to assume the position of his captain in the captain's absence on sick leave.

In its most recent negotiations the labor/management contract added this clause, regarding assuming the position of captain in the captain's absence, and it was approved by all parties involved in the collective bargaining process. The union failed to give assistance to Peterson when he

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filed a grievance, based on the premise that he was disallowed to take the written captains' promotional exam because he did not possess the necessary educational requirements and, therefore, was not qualified to assume the position. He was brought into the deputy chief's office, and it was there that he admitted under aggressive questioning to being claustrophobic. Shortly after this meeting, the fire chief terminated him from the department on the basis that his illness was a danger to other firefighters.

Peterson was only two years from completing twenty years service and becoming eligible for pension rights of 50 percent of his salary at age fifty. But he was only in his early forties. He was not offered any disability pension, and the department's pension board, which the fire chief sits on, did not inform him of his eligibility for a non-service-related pension at a lower rate. Peterson was discharged from the department without any pension as income. He was later reinstated, but his recent marriage nearly failed from the stress, and he lost salary and seniority rights during his absence from the department. It was rumored that the fire chief fired Peterson to set an example of what happens to those who question the authority of his position. In a monologue introduced later in the article, The fire chief, Bernie Russo, is being interviewed by a local newspaper reporter concerning the matter.

INTRODUCING BERNIE RUSSO

The actions of top management influence an organization's culture, which governs how its members behave and is directly related to employee turnover. Through their statements and actions, managers establish cultural norms within the organization (Robbins and Judge 2009; Rainey 2003; Robbins 1997). Accordingly, public administrators can, through a lack of concern for others, abuse the power inherent in their positions even as they are sometimes able to maintain an outward appearance of cooperation and efficiency. In doing so, they create a culture of dominance and submission. Ignoring such abuse of power can result in institutionalized suppression of individual rights beneath the guise of serving the common good.

Robbins and Judge define organizational culture as "a system of shared meaning held by members that distinguishes it from other organizations" (Robbins and Judge 2013, 512). They state that it has seven primary characteristics and is descriptive of how employees perceive their organization. Each characteristic helps determine when and how employees form boundaries for their behavior in the organization.

These characteristics include:

1. Innovation and risk taking. The degree to which employees are encouraged to be innovative and take risks.
2. Attention to detail. The degree to which employees are expected to exhibit precision, analysis, and attention to detail.
3. Outcome orientation. The degree to which management focuses on results or outcomes rather than on the techniques and processes used to achieve them.
4. People orientation. The degree to which management decisions take into consideration the effect of outcomes on people within the organization.
5. Team orientation. The degree to which work activities are organized around teams rather than individuals.
6. Aggressiveness. The degree to which people are aggressive and competitive rather than easygoing.
7. Stability. The degree to which organizational activities emphasize maintaining the status quo in contrast to growth. (Robbins and Judge 2013, 512–13)

These seven characteristics create a composite guide to employee behavior and the way things are done in the organization, along with dominant organizational values. Notably, organizational culture determines such things as group cohesiveness, group norms, loyalty, and commitment to the organization.

Strong cultures with shared values and opinions endow organizations with an intensity that creates a climate of high behavioral control, without the need for high formalization to enforce predictability, orderliness, and consistency because employees internalize and accept the organization's culture. On the other hand, weak cultures rely on formal rules and regulations to enforce employee compliance, due to either a lack of leadership or a situation of corrupted leadership at the top, which then permeates throughout the organization. Culture defines the rules of the game and the climate of the organization, which forms the members' perception about their organization and work environment.

Top managers, by their actions and words, establish organizational norms that filter throughout the organization. They set the general climate that determines acceptable and unacceptable values, ethics, behaviors, norms, opinions, honesty, cohesiveness, commitment, and everything else

that emerges from the organization. Top management set the standards for socialization into the organizational culture and, in doing so, produce an entity in their own image.

To create a more effective and principled climate, managers need to: be a visible and appropriate model for employees; clearly communicate ethical expectations, which reduces ambiguities; provide continuous ethical and job-related training; visibly reward acceptable acts; justly punish unacceptable behaviors; and provide employees with fair and equitable mechanisms to solve dilemmas within the workplace. Organizational culture starts at the top and flows throughout the organization to the bottom, from where it then flows back to the top assimilating and changing as it progresses through the organization. A positive culture emphasizes group and individual employee strengths, rewards more than it punishes, and promotes employee career growth and development.

A positive organizational culture is enhanced and supported by workplace spirituality, which is not affiliated with any organized religious practices, but is a recognition of employees' inner emotional life as an essential element to improving organizational effectiveness. The key component in achieving this effectiveness is "meaningful work in the context of community" (Robbins and Judge 2013, 529). Spiritual organizations promote a sense of shared community and shared work goals, and are among the tenets of servant-leadership. Research indicates that the following cultural characteristics are prominent in spiritual organizations.

1. Benevolence: kindness toward others and promoting the happiness of all employees and other stakeholders.
2. Strong sense of purpose: meaningful organizational goals that include other values that exceed profit making.
3. Trust and respect: interaction between all organization members is characterized by mutual trust, honesty; openness exhibits esteem and acknowledges the dignity of each individual.
4. Open-mindedness: flexible thinking and creativity among employees. (Robbins and Judge 2013, 531)

Unfortunately, the inclusion of spirituality is not always the case in today's organizations and "Bernie's Truth" is becoming far too prevalent and accepted as a normal part of everyday organizational life. The "truth" is manipulated to suit those in positions of power to further their control and tenure within their organizations. How often do the issues of political

efficiency versus due process raised in this hypothetical yet fact-based conversation with an unscrupulous public official emerge in today's society?

In this monologue, Bernie Russo's portrayal and his mannerisms have been depicted as closely as possible to the actual demeanor of his real-life counterpart as can be done without offending an audience with vulgar language. The one-sidedness of this two-person conversation exposes Bernie Russo's true nature, in contrast to the image he intends to project. He epitomizes a controlling, self-indulgent political appointee who conceals his personal agenda behind a facade of well-meaning and efficient service to the public.

THE MONOLOGUE

Hi, my name is Bernie Russo. I'm chief of this fire department. I'm glad you came to see me, so I can straighten this whole mess out for you. I'm not to blame. These firefighters think they can run this department better than I can. Let me tell you what happened.

Peterson is a fire engineer in the department. His job is to drive the fire engine to the fire and make sure that water is pumped to the fire when and where it's needed. Well anyway, he filed a grievance over a petty matter related to job assignment. He filed his grievance over a new "duty" clause in the contract that says an engineer has to move over to the captain's seat whenever the captain is off-duty. The captain is in charge of the fire engine and its personnel and goes into the fire with the third firefighter on the machine to "knock-down" or put the fire out.

The union executive board wouldn't even represent Peterson because they approved the new duty clause during negotiations. But, we have another "due process" clause in our contract that allows him to file a grievance independent of union sponsorship. I tried to get rid of the due process clause before this last contract negotiation, but we couldn't find anything the union was willing to trade for it. Even the city manager wanted it out of the contract. He said its removal would give us more control over the firefighters. If firefighters are required to file a grievance through their union, then the union can regulate the filing of grievances; and where grievances are concerned, we would only have to deal with the union executive board. I thought it was a great idea. We wouldn't be bothered with this matter right now if we could have removed the due process clause from the contract.

Peterson met with my deputy chief for his grievance meeting and stated that he didn't feel qualified to take the captain's place when the captain was absent. Peterson said he wasn't allowed to take the captain's promotional test last time, because he didn't have the necessary educational requirements. That is correct. He said he didn't feel he possessed the professional qualifications to perform the job, and that he didn't want to take the responsibility of the crew's safety into his hands and would rather remain in his normal position outside the fire operating the fire engine. He said he felt comfortable in his engineer's position.

When I heard this, I almost went through the ceiling. Imagine! Him telling us how to run the department. My deputy and I, we knew the real truth. We saw right through his excuse. Peterson is claustrophobic! He has been for years. This was just a ruse to keep from having to go into a working fire; and to rub our noses in it for not being allowed to take the captain's test.

Well, I called him in for another meeting where he admitted to being claustrophobic when we confronted him on the matter. I had no choice! When a firefighter admits to not being able to perform his job, I have to remove him from the department. His continued presence could have presented a danger to other firefighters. I could have been found legally negligent if I didn't take him off the department. The personnel director and city manager agreed to it too. I was just doing my job.

Anyway, Peterson filed for a duty-related disability pension when he was released from the department. He said the claustrophobia was due to a job-related experience and gave an approximate date when it started. I told him that he would have to have documented proof of that and forwarded his pension request to the pension board as I'm required to do. The board met the following month and disapproved his duty-related disability application due to a lack of documentation.

Listen carefully. I'm only going to say this once. Even though I'm a member, I did not exert undue influence on the pension board to deny Peterson's application. I know I've been accused of that, but it's just not true. And the pension board was under no legal obligation to tell him that he was eligible for a non-duty-related pension in a smaller amount. It was his responsibility to file for the non-duty-related pension. It was not our responsibility to inform him of it. He claimed he didn't know he could file for the non-duty-related pension. I don't care. I don't believe him, and I wasn't legally bound to inform him.

After Peterson left the department, a meeting took place where his situation was discussed. It was stated that he was dismissed from the department

just short of fulfilling his twenty years service requirement for a regular pension without any means of financial support. It was claimed that he did not bring up the issue of his claustrophobia; that my deputy and I brought it up and used it as an excuse to get rid of him for filing his grievance. It was said that we were using him as an example to other fire fighters in order to tighten our control over the department. Nothing could be further from the truth.

My administration has the best relationship with the union executive board of any previous fire chief. We have a participatory relationship with the union leadership where they make many important decisions for the department. The executive board helped me claim my appointment as chief. They contributed to the election fund of several city council members in recent elections and endorsed my appointment. Together we've been able to get a lot of things approved by the city council. I'm their man. That's another reason why Peterson shouldn't have filed his grievance against me.

The rank and file must learn their place in the scheme of things. The union executive board is in charge of them and only the board should represent them. The union executive board and I take care of each other, and the firefighters just have to fall in line with the program. All of this negativity doesn't help the department. We will take care of their major concerns. All they have to do is show up for work and keep their noses out of our business. We'll take care of things.

Yes, a lawsuit was mentioned in the meeting, but it had nothing to do with Peterson's reappointment to the department. The fact that an alcoholic and a drug addict are accorded protection from dismissal under the labor contract, if they admit to the problem and are willing to undergo treatment, was brought up. It was asserted that alcoholics and drug addicts are responsible for their condition whereas Peterson had no fault in his illness other than just doing his job. Yet, he was not accorded the same consideration as an alcoholic or a drug addict. He was not given an opportunity to receive treatment before his dismissal. These facts, it was said, were conducive to a lawsuit against the city.

The actual truth of the matter is that I felt sorry for the man and decided to give him a chance to earn his way back onto the department. So, we set up a schedule for him to work on overcoming his claustrophobia. We sent him through the department's confined space simulator until we and his doctor okayed him return to work. I told him I was responsible for his reappointment. In any case, I hope he's grateful to me for a second chance. I do know he hasn't been any problem since his return.

I've heard rumors that his time off the department almost destroyed his marriage, and caused him a lot of mental anguish. I can't be held responsible for that. His personal life is his own concern, as long as it doesn't reflect negatively on the department. I know some of his supporters have accused me of some personal misconduct in the past before I became chief of the department, but if so, how did I become chief? I took what I felt was the most effective course of action in the situation, and the department hasn't been hurt by it, has it?

Now, if you'll excuse me, I must get back to the business of running this department. I'll conclude that this conversation closes the matter, and we'll move on to something more productive. You do understand the situation as it should be understood, don't you? Good, it's been a pleasure explaining the truth to you. Good Day.

DISCOURSE VERSUS DIALOGUE

As illustrated by his demeanor, Bernie Russo's' leadership style is one of discourse rather than dialogue. His incessant verbal onslaught denies any opportunity for interactive discussion, so that his version of the truth is the only allowable truth. Additionally, things may not always be as they seem. Organizations that may project an outward image of harmony and cooperation among its members may internally dispense an autocratic culture based on oppression and the elimination of individuals deemed a liability to the regime in power. Such is the case with Russo. His tenure in office is based on a pubic perception of efficiency and effectiveness, while the organization is actually decaying into a culture of deliberate groupthink that demands complete compliance of its members regardless of organizational effectiveness.

An organization's culture serves many beneficial purposes. It enhances commitment from employees and effectuates consistency in their behavior by reducing ambiguity (Robbins and Judge 2009; Robbins 1997). It creates basic assumptions that are shared between management and employees that become a mechanism of social control within the organization (Schein 1993). However, if it becomes dysfunctional, organization culture becomes a liability not only to due process but also to organizational efficiency and effectiveness.

Schein (1992, 231) lists primary cultural embedding mechanisms as:

1. What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis;
2. How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises;
3. Observed criteria by which leaders allocate scarce resources;

4. Deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching;
5. Observed criteria by which leaders allocate rewards and status;
6. Observed criteria by which leaders recruit, select, promote, retire, and excommunicate organizational members.

He describes "Formal statements of organizational philosophy, values, and creed" (ibid.) as secondary mechanisms in building and maintaining strong, effective culture within organizations. Hence, leadership plays a more important role than organizational structure in the nature of an organization's culture.

Bureaucracies exist to promote "technical efficiency" (Merton 1957). In order to maintain a high degree of efficiency, Merton insists an organization must strive to eliminate "personalized relationships or nonrational considerations" such as "hostility, anxiety, and affectual involvements" (ibid., 104). Bernie Russo violates the trust of his positional authority to manipulate the "framework of pre-existing rules of the organization" (ibid., 103) in an attempt to eliminate any perceived threats to his control over the department. In the process, he corrupts the formality of his office, which is intended to facilitate interaction between organizational members despite their personal attitudes toward one another, as a means of positional dominance.

Cooper says that the "common good" should never be used as justification for actions that undermine the "constitutional guarantees of a minority" (Cooper 1984, 354). And, that, public administrators must be mindful and accountable for the values they "profess" or "avow publicly" (ibid.). In this regard, Russo uses the guise of the common good of his fire department to violate the constitutional protections guaranteed to the department's employees. He does so to promote his self-interest in control over the common good of the organization and its employees by forging a culture of fear and intimidation, where any dissension is ruthlessly eliminated by dictatorial misuse of the power of his office.

THE DELINEATION OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP AND BERNIE RUSSO

How often do the issues raised in this account of a conversation with an unscrupulous public official emerge in today's society? Bernie's Truth is becoming far too prevalent and accepted as a normal part of everyday organizational life. The truth is manipulated to suit those in positions of power to further their control and tenure within their organizations. Public

administrators can, through a lack of concern, abuse the power inherent in their positions as long as they maintain outward appearances of cooperation and efficiency. Not challenging inappropriate methods of exercising power can result in institutionalized suppression of individual interests in the guise of serving the common good. A counterphilosophy has emerged that replaces dogmatic principle with one of service (Chawla and Renesch 1995).

Robert K. Greenleaf founded a movement during the 1970s based on his idea of servant-leadership, which blossomed into a deeply rooted and innovative reformation during the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century that has culminated into an influential mainstream movement of the present day. Servant-leadership is very different from leadership by control. Servant-leadership centers upon "service to others" (Lee and Zemke 1993). The model promotes a belief in the connection of work to spirituality for the successful integration of equity into the workplace. By following the tenets of servant-leadership, a leader can create a learning environment where productivity and employee satisfaction are enhanced by institutional structural renovation (Greenleaf 1975; Vecchio 1997).

As an institutional model, servant-leadership is applicable in all workplace organizational institutions, which includes both the private and public sectors, and a wide range of employees (Spears 2005). It replaces the current emphasis on individual leadership with a group-oriented approach to managerial decision making and promotes persuasion and consensus seeking over autocratic rule. Continuous and total quality improvement combined with organizational systems thinking are integral components to the success of servant-leadership. Leaders are viewed as institutional trustees with the responsibility for the welfare of both the organization and the individual employee through implementation methods that include both depth and quality.

The servant-leader concept is linked with experiential education (Spears 2005), referred to as both *learning-by-doing* and *service-learning*, wherein the student actively applies research to actual issues in the local community, thereby providing a service to the local community by doing real world research projects. Since 1990, the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) has utilized this method as a major program area. Several publications concerning their activities in this area can be obtained from them.

Returning to leadership education and transformation to the servant-leadership movement (Spears 2005), both formal and informal paths of instruction and training should be used in coordination with other leadership models such as total quality management, systems thinking, and community

building, for "servant-leadership operates at both the institutional and personal levels" (Spears 2005, 6). This suggests a personal growth that can translate to society at large in a more holistic way of being that raises the quality of life for all. Interest in and the practice of the servant-leadership philosophy are currently at an all-time high.

Since servant-leadership is intrinsically opposed to the ruling emphasis on individual leadership, a conversion from an individual leadership decision-making process to a more democratic or communal decision-making process will be disruptive in nature due to the fact that all systems fundamentally resist change (Serrat 2009). Disequilibrium and stress within organizations will dominate as with any transformational change, but can be overcome with adaptive efforts such as persuasion and consensus. Serrat stresses the importance of leadership groups, in contrast to individual leaders, in what he terms "distributed leadership" (ibid., 3), which views leadership as a social contract. Distributed Leadership rejects a focus on top management and heroic leaders, which places value on individual leadership, in favor of group relationships that result in decentralized, principled change. He also promotes the practice of Larry Spears's (2010) ten characteristics (or behaviors) as central to the development of servant-leaders. The ten characteristics consist of listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP AND BERNIE RUSSO'S ACTIONS

Listening

Listening attentively to others is fundamental to an interactive dialogue, which in turn is fundamental to all mutual interaction and respect on every level of human contact from personal friendships to professional associations (Spears 2010; Robbins and Judge 2009; Robbins 1997). Robert Greenleaf says that a servant-leader responds to a situation by listening first, and in doing so, is seen as servant first. True listening, he says, builds strength in other people that leads to more effective interpersonal communication. Bernie Russo, in the story, provided a contrasting singular philosophy. His leadership style was one of discourse rather than dialogue. Rather than demonstrating interest and caring, he was incessantly verbal, denying any opportunity for input. A servant-leader, however, fosters diverse, receptive communication pathways that are supportive of equal expression among the participants. Lines of communication are reciprocal in nature.

Empathy

Empathy is an awareness of, and sympathy to, the thoughts and feelings of others (Spears 2010; Staub 1997). It is essential to the receptive listening skills of the servant leader (Cangemi et al. 1998). Through empathy one is able to accept the good intentions of people and recognize them for their uniqueness. Robert Greenleaf (1977, 20) remarks that "[t]he servant always accepts and empathizes, never rejects. The servant as leader always empathizes." He maintains that empathy implies acceptance of other people and tolerance of their imperfections. Bernie Russo possessed no empathy for others and thus was not concerned for their welfare. His only concern was the unimpeded continuation of his own administrative tenure.

Healing

By having a healing influence on those one comes in contact with, a servant-leader is able to help others overcome deficiencies that prevent them from being a whole person. Striving toward wholeness is the goal of healing. It may never be reached, but the journey is a shared journey between the servant-leader and the person that seeks healing (Spears 2010; Greenleaf 1977). A servant-leader would have approached Peterson's grievance as a call for help in the form of a grievance in a manner beneficial to both Peterson and the department. Treatment would have been sought instead of dismissal. Had he sought healing for Peterson, Russo could have improved the working environment of the department; resulting in better service to the community.

Awareness and Persuasion

Awareness is making a commitment to understanding issues involving ethics and values (Spears 2001). It enables leaders to be receptive to the challenges about them in a strengthening fashion of interconnectedness (Fairholm 1991). It is obtained by an unconscious, intellectual journey inside of one's self that is infinite in its magnitude but "blocked" by one's conscious losses and errors through one's life-learning experience (Greenleaf 1977). Only by giving up one's inhibitions can one gain true awareness that allows one to take in sensory experiences and other environmental signals needed to relate to others. Bernie Russo did not perceive himself as being connected to others except in relationships that could further his desires and

ambitions. He disregarded any need for persuasion over positional authority in his decision making. Servant leaders convince rather than coerce and seek to build consensus within groups regardless of their positions of power and prominence.

Reliance upon persuasion rather than positional authority in decision making is a characteristic of servant-leaders (Spears 2010; Spears 2004). Consensus is sought over coercion. Persuasion is a chief distinction between authoritarian leadership and the servant-leadership model. A persuasive leader would endorse a due process clause as a mechanism of personal expression of concern. Russo viewed the clause as a challenge to his authority and an obstacle to control.

Conceptualization and Communication

The ability to conceptualize is central to one's ability as a leader (Spears 2010). Dreams must be dreamt and visions visualized for abstractions to become reality, and this is the domain of the leader. Accordingly, servant-leaders seek to conceptualize in both operational and broad-based perspectives where short-term necessities can be achieved while balanced with long-term visionary functions (Spears 2004). Russo concentrated on the day-to-day operations of his department without due regard for the effects of his actions on the long-term health of the working environment. By squelching any discontent in an ironfisted fashion, he impeded any development of a learning environment where management and employee could work in cooperation.

Communication abilities are crucial to the realization process of concept to application. Leaders need to be able to transfer their conceptual perspectives to the reality of operational functioning. In doing so, an ability to transfer an understanding and an acceptance of the concept is an integral part of leadership responsibility. This begins with the ability to listen first, and then communicate on an equal basis (Greenleaf 1977). Russo's singular communication philosophy impeded any opportunity for a mutual dialogue toward a consensual reconciliation of any issue.

Foresight and Intuition

Foresight is an innate ability to forecast the outcome of a situation with relative accuracy through an analysis of past, current, and future considerations (Spears 2010). It is intuitive in nature and varies from individual to

individual (Spears 2004). Bernie Russo displayed little or no concern for the consequences of his actions, which would indicate that he lacked the foresight so necessary for effective leadership performance and compassionate service to others.

Related to foresight and intuition is Greenleaf's (1975) concept of "strength of aim." He considered one's strength to be an important ethical aspect of leadership that grants a leader a trusting, accepting, and positive nature. Strength is the ability to take notice of choices, choose correctly, and pursue that option persistently. He said a leader's arrogance and power-wielding tendencies were roadblocks to achieving strength of aim.

Stewardship

Servant-leadership embodies a commitment of service to others (Spears 2010). As stewards, leaders hold the welfare of others in trust (Spears 2004; Block 1996), which contributes to the beneficial advancement of society in general. A servant-leader envisions service to others as a sacred charge. Bernie Russo knew of no such responsibility to others. He envisioned his own wants and needs above all others. He held his own welfare to be his only obligation. Even his pretense of commitment to the department's operational fitness was only a vehicle of convenience to advance his public image. Russo's reference to the questioning of the normal order of business by firefighters as negativity reflected his lack of stewardship toward the firefighters. If they would just show up for work without questioning conditions on the fire department, he would take care of the operational concerns of the department in a manner suitable to him.

A Learning Environment and a Commitment to the Growth of People

A learning environment is created when servant-leaders promote an authentic dedication to the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of both individuals and institutions (Spears 2010). To accomplish this, organizations must develop a capacity to continuously adapt and change, to the point where organizational learning is institutionalized as culture (Senge 1990). Conversely, autocratic leaders strive to suppress autonomous tendencies in favor of manipulation of behavior to suit their desires (Cangemi et al. 1998). Both Russo and the city manager in the narrative were guilty of manipulation when they attempted to restrict the personal freedoms of

the rank and file firefighters by limiting the grievance process in order to increase their own operational control. A servant-leader encourages worker participation and is truly interested in balancing collective concerns with individual interests.

Building Community

Building community involves creating a sense of belonging and participation, which the servant-leader fosters through actions of participatory example. Servant-leaders confer community ownership by allowing workers to develop individually distinctive characteristics that also define their organizations as unique. In doing so, a servant culture is formed that is collectively individual, and yet exhibits a common heritage and values (Spears 2010; Fairholm 1998, 1997). Even though Bernie Russo boasted of his participatory management style in his dealings with the union leadership, he restricted participation to only those entities beneficial to his personal welfare. No sense of community was built within the department, but rather, a culture of blind obedience and distrust of authority. The servant-leadership model is not bound to only the aforementioned leadership characteristics, but instead reflects a kaleidoscope of leadership behaviors that unfold from these basic foundational elements, which advances the central principle of service to others (Greenleaf 1977, 1975).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Leadership theories are as numerous and diverse as the theorists who propose them (Northouse 1997; Burns 1978; Petrullo and Bass 1961), with more than 1,500 leadership courses being taught yearly on college campuses (ILA, 2012). Each is championed by its author as the epitome of explanation. Yet, no single model is embraced by all as the undisputed explanation of the leadership issue. Servant-leadership is just one model whose practice advances an ethical foundation from which all leadership ideology can benefit and flourish. Through *strength of aim*, leadership qualities are molded into a doctrine of leadership characteristics (Greenleaf 1977, 1975).

All those concerned with an organization's well-being should beware of the leader who practices autocratic control under the auspices of participatory management. Political expediency in the appointment of a public administrator contributes to the erosion of due process rights (Lowell 1995), which in turn fosters an organizational atmosphere detrimental

to building community. An examination of an individual's background (professional and personal) prior to assuming a leadership position should provide an indication of that individual's inherent leadership convictions. A servant-leader will possess an active history of commitment to the key servant-leader tenets.

In seeking a servant-leader, consider the candidate who will cultivate genuine participation and individualism within an organization's community; for legitimate stewardship will result in a learning environment in which worker involvement contributes to the betterment of the organization. Consider the candidate who exemplifies the ethical nature desired of both individual and organization, for the ethical qualities of the organization's leader will exist as a model for the organization's working culture. Finally, remember that servant-leadership begins with putting people first. Consider the candidate with a tradition of service to others.

IMPLIED RESPONSIBILITY RECOMMENDATION

John Rohr's (1986) concept of "Regime Values" insists that government employees take an "implied oath" when they accept government employment to support the values of that government. I contend that public officials also have an "implied responsibility" to the public they serve to value "unbiased patronage" above partisan considerations in the appointment of political appointees. And that, furthermore, a concept of unbiased patronage implies competency over political convenience.

The Bernie Russos of the world do exist, and they occupy positions of authority and power throughout government, business, healthcare, education, and in fact, all fields. Public administrators, as public servants who serve as stewards for the public's well-being, have a constitutional obligation to ensure that the individual rights of all citizens are protected through adherence to due process (Cooper 1983; Rosenbloom 1993a, 1993b; Rohr 1985, 1986). The best way to ensure this solemn responsibility is through the cautious selection and retention of individuals of character and competency at all levels of public service. In doing so, the Bernie Russos will become fewer and farther between, and thus, the fortune of work and service will attain a higher level of wholeness.

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