

1. Title of the Submission

Harmony between Technical and Symbolic Roles in Educational Leadership

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6. **Abstract** of Paper

This paper is the book review of *The Leadership Paradox: Balancing Logic and Artistry in Schools* by Terrence E. Deal and Kent D. Peterson. 1st ed. Hardcover ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994. 133 pp. (paper) ISBN 1-55542-648-4. Principals and other school administrators must have highly distinctive roles that consist of two: managers and leaders. The former takes care of technical/rational issues such as maintaining buildings while the latter deals with symbolic matters such as tradition and values. In order for today's administrators to survive in such complicated and puzzled school, they must play the two divergent roles at the same time. The chief purpose of this book is to help administrators such as principals see and integrate both the technical and symbolic sides of their roles with confidence, enthusiasms, skill, and insight. By harmonizing technical and symbolic aspects of their roles, school leaders are able to increase their impact on the learning and development of students who are the nation's future. The book: *The Leadership Paradox* provides educators the idea: educational administrators must intermingle the two complementary leaderships style-technical and symbolic into a more poised one with equilibrium.

Harmony between Technical and Symbolic Roles in Educational Leadership

Introduction

Principals are expected to provide vision, inspiration, and advocacy yet they must also figure out the master schedule, get textbooks delivered on time, and balance the budget.¹ How do today's effective principals deal with two different features? The book: *The Leadership Paradox* provides the answer: Educational administrators must intermingle the two complementary leaderships style-technical and symbolic into a more poised one with equilibrium. This paper is the book review of *The Leadership Paradox: Balancing Logic and Artistry in Schools* by Terrence E. Deal and Kent D. Peterson. 1st ed. Hardcover ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994. 133 pp. (paper) ISBN 1-55542-648-4. It consists of (1) purpose, (2) summary or review of the book, and (3) personal opinion or reflection about the book.

Purpose

Principals and other school administrators must have highly distinctive roles that consist of two: managers and leaders. The former takes care of technical/rational issues such as maintaining buildings while the latter deals with symbolic matters such as tradition and values. The next section mentions details of the roles. In order for today's administrators to survive in such complicated and puzzled school, they must play the two divergent roles at the same time. The chief purpose of this book is to help administrators such as principals see and integrate both the technical and symbolic sides of their roles with confidence, enthusiasms, skill, and insight. By harmonizing technical and symbolic aspects of their roles, school leaders are able to increase their impact on the learning and development of students who are the nation's future.

Summary

This section shows brief review or summary of the book. This book consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 tells there are two types of managership: one that emphasizes technical side and another that focuses symbolic side. Two diverse directorships create the tension at school or school district. The following is a typical instance. There was a conflict between a principal of Guadalupe Elementary School and the superintendent with regard to the replacement of old school fence. The former persuaded adobe wall because it imitates the architectural milieu of the village, reinforces the values and traditions of the school, and symbolizes the intimate connection between the school and its community while the latter insisted a chain-link fence from the logical point of its functional requirement, short construction time, and the least possible cost. By emphasizing one orientation, school leaders may lose connection with the other. Consequently, only one guidance method does not create a better school.

What are technical leadership and symbolic counterpart? Chapter 2 expands in more detail the ways two dissimilar school leaders enact two paradoxical roles. The former, on one hand, highlights the technical, rational, instrumental and goal oriented phases. The technical roles include:

- (1) Planner (setting long-range goals and short-term objectives)
- (2) Resource allocator (distributing resources to be the most appropriate place)
- (3) Coordinator (arranging the appropriate blend of vertical and horizontal linkage of the staff)
- (4) Supervisor (observing work to ensure quality and to provide helpful feedback)
- (5) Disseminator of information (keeping everyone informed of significant schoolwide issues)
- (6) Jurist (resolving any conflict at school)
- (7) Gatekeeper (selecting employees and sharing proper information with the outside world)
- (8) Analyst (using systematic, rational logic to diagnose complex symptoms and ordering them into solvable problems or intractable ones)

The latter, on the other hand, puts emphasis on intangible, expressive, and value-laden issues such as tradition, belief, ritual, and ceremony. Their primary motivation is to instill a profound sense of meaning that makes school a place of the heart as well as head and hands. The symbolical roles include:

- (1) Historian (connecting a school with its ancestral roots and cultural beginning by telling stories of past heroes, heroines and leader)
- (2) Anthropological detective (assessing existing norms, values, and beliefs by listening to the key voices of the present)
- (3) Visionary (identifying and communicating hopes and dreams for the future of the school and refocusing the purpose and mission of the school)
- (4) Symbol (affirming and reinforcing the basic values and purposes of the school through his or her demeanor, behavior, concerns, attention, and routines)
- (5) Potter (shaping school culture by articulating the shared values, celebrating school heroes and heroines, observing rituals and ceremonies and nurturing important school symbols)
- (6) Poet (sustaining motivation and focus through messages or language to reinforce values or communicate educational beliefs and support cultural norms)
- (7) Actor (reaffirming cultural ties with school community by improvising key roles in the ongoing human dramas, comedies, and tragedies of the school)
- (8) Healer (overseeing regular transitions, painful losses and change in the life of the school and healing wounds of past and current conflict to keep the social fabric whole)

Chapters 3 through 5 give how schools can combine technical and symbolic angles of the organization to become more balanced and successful. The contrasting headships have strong points, but also have deficiencies. Overly technical schools are able to produce outcomes but often lack clear values, strong commitment, and broad support while deeply beloved schools can be consequential, value-driven communities that nevertheless fail to produce tangible results. Although each role from both technical and symbolic conceptions is important, single conception of schools without harmony between the two has pitfalls. The following table shows the deficiency of the only conception of schools.

	Technical	Symbolic
1	Means become ends.	Ends-goals are not ignored or stressed.

2	Work becomes routine.	Ritual replaces work.
3	People do only what is required.	People do only what is fun
4	Commitment to organization is minimal.	Overattachment to organization is common.
5	Tangible rewards become symbolic prime motivator.	There is overreliance on motivation.
6	There is too much focus on short term, preoccupation with results and loss of big pictures.	There is overemphasis on long-term vision; important details are overlooked.
7	Attention to parts supplants the whole	Whole overwhelms the parts.
8	Creativity is minimized.	Control is undermined.
9	Membership is ephemeral.	Membership is addictive.
10	The relationship with the community; we will supply resources if you provide outcomes.	The relationship between the community and school is contingent on common values and beliefs.

In order to avoid such pitfalls, tomorrow's school leaders need to move beyond their dualistic either-or thinking to create schools that momentous "factories" as well as productive "temples" by balancing and harmonizing technical and symbolic facets in dynamic equilibrium and constant interplay. The subsequent table presents a good example of mixing the two conceptions of roles of leadership forms. The former refers to technical aspect while the latter shows symbolic equivalence.

1	Budgeting as a Statement of Values
2	Planning as a Cultural Event
3	Supervision as Cultural Reinforcement
4	Hiring as an Initiation Ritual
5	Transference and Dismissal as Cultural Ex-communication
6	Retirement as Anointing
7	Coordination to Build Cultural Networks
8	Communication as Cultural Signals
9	Teacher Promotion as Cultural Celebration
10	School Closing as Function and Ritual
11	Seasonal Actions as Symbols

This segment refers to blend of budgeting and statement of values on below as one situation. Budgeting is a formal process of rationally allocating resources to priority goals and activities, requiring careful and prudent fiscal accountability as technical point. On the contrary, it also communicates values, beliefs, and expectation as symbolic equivalence. Funding allocations signal what is important and what is valued by putting resources one place or another. For instance, one high school provides additional funds for computer and staff development to implement new learning technologies. The display of additional resources makes concrete the school's stated commitment to technology. Mixing the two sides makes school better productive and substantial.

This portion describes balance between supervision and cultural reinforcement on below as another instance. Technical purpose of supervision is quality control, coordination, and feedback for on-the-job improvement. On the other hand, it also serves as an important ritual; it bonds teacher with exemplary role models and the values of their

profession as well as provides an opportunity for the sharing stories, metaphors, and other linguistic forms that carry and reinforce intangible cultural archetypes, images, and implicit values. Harmonizing the two approaches leads school to a better place.

In Chapters 6 and 7, as a result, the authors offer the paradoxes and challenges of improvement efforts and ways that school leaders can integrate roles to increase the likelihood of successful educational change as well as forecast the future challenges of becoming a bifocal principal. They conclude that the leaders need to accept change using the two conceptions and look for improvement for their schools.

Reflection

The direction of personal opinion or reflection goes to agreement with the authors. Although at first view, nature's poles present themselves as opposite and mutually antagonistic, on closer inspection, they are complementary, in other words, one cannot exist without the other. Without a female, there could be no male because no baby can be born. The lungs both expand and contract continuously. Man would never know joy without knowing sadness; without the experience of failure, he would know no success; without knowledge of sickness, he would be unaware of good health. Even though a baseball pitcher can throw a ball somewhere between 90 and 100 miles per hour, there is no guarantee that they can be successful. One of successful keys is their wonderful combination between fastballs and slow balls. Nolan Ryan, whose fastball used to be the best in the major, was a good example. He became one of the greatest pitchers after New York Mets traded him to California Angels, and then learned how to throw effective curve balls. That was when he became an excellent pitcher of all time. Those instances teach effectiveness requires the two contrasting mingled characteristics.

Educators can apply the same principle to the leadership. As Deal and Peterson mentioned in the book, tomorrow's school administrators need to have flexible insight to balance and harmonize technical and symbolic leaderships, which seem to be opposite, to have successful schools instead of stressing only one consideration. The ability to approach from difference angles creates better schools instead of just one correlative. The structure of two approaches can be soft vs. hard, left vs. right, up vs. down, inside vs. outside, innovative vs. conservative, and so forth. One approach complements the other, and both together heighten the effect. This book claiming this dual approach is highly recommendable for school administrators. The ensuing comments from the other readers back up the recommendation. A University of New Orleans Educational Administration student named Paula supports that after reading this book, principals will be better equipped with some cognitive templates and action repertoires that will help them respond effectively to issues as both a technician and artist. An anonymous reader found this [book] to be a thoroughly worthwhile work to read-despite its (un)remarkably (extra)ordinary thesis.² Again, this book is essential for educational leaders to manage schools in an effective manner by conducting two distinctive roles.

Suggestions for Further Reading³

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Endnotes

¹ Amazon. Editorial Reviews. Retrieved August 20, 2002 from <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1555426484/102-8176248-2876923>

² All Customer Reviews. Retrieved August 20, 2002 from <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1555426484/102-8176248-2876923>

³ Explore Similar Items. Retrieved August 20, 2002 from <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/sim-explorer/explore-items/-/078795541>

³ Explore Similar Items. Retrieved August 20, 2002 from <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/sim-explorer/explore-items/-/078795541>