

I will discuss Dana Zohar's leadership model which is based on the concept that we each have a spiritual intelligence quotient, or "SQ"¹, and Kevin Cashman's theory that one's ability to develop as a leader depends on one's ability to develop as a person². These two leadership models are similar in that both focus on the need for personal awareness and development as the most fundamental elements in effective leadership, although they differ in the language and emphasis used.

These authors see things similarly, but Cashman as an experienced executive coach has chosen a subtle way to communicate his message to executives in a form that is perhaps more accessible and acceptable to them. Zohar is a physicist, philosopher and management "thought leader", and is willing to use the "S" word (spiritual). I will also refer to Debra Meyerson's concept of "everyday leaders" who can be found at all levels of any organization, and whom she identifies as "tempered radicals" who change the organization simply by being and acting authentically in ways that challenge the norms.³ I think this is an interesting concept that is complementary to the two others.

Zohar believes that the ability to lead people through change depends on vision, and the reason it is difficult to find visionary leadership is that our society places too much value on "material capital." She identifies two other forms of capital that she holds more important for creating real change and sustainable growth, social and spiritual capital. She defines social capital as the amount of trust, empathy, and commitment in a community, and spiritual capital as that which reflects what an individual or organization "exists for, believes in, aspires to, and takes responsibility for." While she concedes that

¹ Danah Zohar. (2005). Spiritually Intelligent Leadership. Leader to Leader. (Fall 2005). No. 38.

² Kevin Cashman. Leadership from the Inside Out. Minneapolis, Minn.: Leadersource, 1998.

³ Debra Meyerson. (2002). Everyday Leaders: The Power of Difference. Leader to Leader. (Winter 2002). No. 23.

leaders need IQ (rational intelligence) which she relates to material capital, and EQ (emotional intelligence) which she associates with social capital, she states that SQ (spiritual intelligence) is the foundation for the other forms of intelligence, and builds spiritual capital. She defines SQ as “an ability to access higher meanings, values, abiding purposes, and unconscious aspects of the self,” that inform both a leader’s life and work. She believes the ultimate power of a leader with strong spiritual intelligence is his ability to inspire others, to give them a sense of purpose. She designates twelve principles for developing spiritually intelligent leadership:

Self-awareness	Knowing beliefs, values, motivations
Spontaneity	Being responsive to the moment
Being vision and value led	Acting from principles and beliefs
Holism	Seeing larger patterns, relationships, connections
Compassion	Deep empathy
Celebration of diversity	Valuing people for their differences
Field Independence	Standing up for one’s own convictions
Humility	Sense of one’s true place in the world
Tendency to ask why	Need to really understand
Ability to reframe	Seeing problems in a wider context
Positive use of adversity	Learning from mistakes and setbacks
Sense of vocation	Feeling called upon to serve

Cashman thinks that most leadership development programs focus on desired behaviors and actions for leaders, or “external manifestations”, and that it is much more powerful for a leader to become conscious of his own character, values, use of power, and sense of purpose (“internal source”). He believes that leaders must evolve by increasing their awareness of their own identity, purpose and vision so they can function in a more awakened and intentional manner.

His model describes seven categories of self-mastery:

Personal	Explore deeply our personal belief system
Purpose	Ask why and explore how
Change	Learn to trust ourselves to focus and learn through change
Interpersonal	Understand the importance of relationships
Being	Learn to access the true self
Balance	Maintain work-life balance
Action	Develop authenticity, true self-expression, and create value

The basic idea behind Meyerson's theory of everyday leaders is that there are individuals throughout every organization at every level who, while they want to succeed in the organization, are somehow at odds with the dominant culture there. She calls them tempered radicals, because although these individuals have perspectives that cause them to feel outside the norm within the organization, they walk a tightrope between the pull of existing norms and that of their own needs, consciences, and views, tempering their differences enough to remain within the organization while remaining true to themselves.

The reason all of these models appeal to me is that I believe that true leadership requires that a person be able to learn from experience and willing to work to better understand herself or himself and others, and develop strong and clear values that are evident through her or his actions. Clearly, however, there is more to leadership than authentic behavior and clear values, since it could be argued that the leadership at Enron was acting authentically according to its values, although most of us find their values repugnant. Adding spiritual values to the mix, however, requires real introspection and actions based on moral principles. Knowing oneself is the exploration of a lifetime, and acting courageously on uncompromised principles a constant challenge. Once a leader

has recognized the need to develop this capacity, his consciousness has already been altered, and his understanding of his world is more comprehensive.

Cashman distinguishes leadership that comes from character from leadership that comes from what he calls “persona”. He describes character as the “essence of who we are” and persona as the external personality we have created to cope with life. He says that the more extensive the persona is, the more difficult it is to access true character, but that a person who is guided principally by character will have a “thin, flexible and permeable” persona allowing him to function from a deeper level. He believes transformation comes about from actions emanating from character, which he says includes authenticity, purpose, openness, trust, congruence, compassion, and the creation of value.

Zohar takes this one step further, stating that the way to lead real change is by elevating motivations. She thinks the primary way to lead transformation is through inspiration, by finding one’s own purpose and then inspiring others to participate in the vision. Doing this requires the same type of introspection and reflection that Cashman advocates, as well as the same courage to behave authentically according to lifelong values and principles. She believes that business itself should become a vocation, and include a higher moral purpose as well as a desire to benefit not only those who create the wealth, but the community and even the world as well. She believes business leaders who support this transformation should be like knights, “taking a vow of service to something higher than themselves”.

Debra Meyerson believes that the most essential element of leadership is “to push groups and systems to confront their adaptive challenges,” and that that most true

organizational change is slow and incremental. She identifies “tempered radicals” who are invaluable to every organization in achieving this. They are a hidden source of leadership found throughout and at every level of the organization comprised of individuals who do not fit the dominant norms in the organization. By virtue of who they are, they bring different perspectives, whether from their values, nationality, gender, religion, race, age, or sexual orientation.

They are people who have the courage to act authentically, but the reason she calls them *tempered* radicals is that most of the ways in which they challenge the status quo are subtle, and occur simply because they are acting as much as possible in accordance with their own values, while managing to compromise enough to remain part of the organization. Over time, their behavior actually changes the organizational norms. An example is women who find ways to honor their duty as parents while working full-time, beginning at first as exceptions to the rules and over time changing the rules themselves, e.g. flexible schedules, telecommuting, childcare at work.

She believes it is the responsibility of organizational leaders to identify these people and to protect and support them. She emphasizes rewarding “truth telling.” If people understand it is safe to communicate what they really see and think, an organization can learn and grow more quickly and appropriately. She cautions, however, against shining a spotlight on the activities of tempered radicals, as that will defeat the very way in which they are most effective, and could even undermine the progress they are making in doing what they are doing on a smaller scale. Interestingly she uses the same metaphor as Zohar, but in reverse. She says “They lead not as white knights out in

front of bloody battles, but as normal men and women who speak their truth and seize opportunities to create learning and make a difference where they can.”

The way I would apply all of these theories with a client would be through coaching, since I see them all as touching on deeply personal themes that have the potential to affect the person being coached profoundly, and therefore help to transform the organization as well. They are applicable to leadership at all levels, and so could be used with people who are ready to be receptive to such ideas no matter where they sit in the organization. I think it is important to proceed with care, however, when coaching on this ground, and would certainly not assume it was appropriate to every client.

I find that authenticity is part of my coaching with everyone, and values work is necessary for those who have not yet clarified their values or haven't yet applied them to decisions. However, working on purpose is a challenging and somewhat rarified coaching experience that is most effective when the client has reached a point where they cannot move forward until they grapple with this. Perhaps it is most pertinent at the highest levels of leadership within the hierarchy of an organization, simply because those people have achieved many of their professional goals already, and have a significant amount of power over others. It seems logical to me that they need to focus on getting to know themselves better and aligning their efforts with a higher purpose.

I recently coached an executive with this program:

Purpose: To develop a clear understanding of your core strengths and values, and explore the true meaning of leadership.

Outcomes:

- ◆ You will trust that your talents, skills and values will lead you to the next right thing.
- ◆ You will clarify what matters most to you and let that guide you.
- ◆ You will gain faith in your ability to succeed at whatever you choose.

After working with him for a couple of months I could see that he was much clearer than most people about his life values, but had not explored his purpose in relationship to his work. He had considered primarily the need to provide for his family and the definition of success that the external world provides, so he felt he should be higher up the ladder although it might conflict with some of his other values. He was also dealing with some pretty primal fear about what would happen to him if he made any changes, including discovering and then pursuing his true interests. I got the Kevin Cashman book for him to help him focus on how he defines success as opposed to how he thinks success is supposed to look to the outside world. My hope was that through this process that he would find more freedom to explore options for his future, and find work that is meaningful and congruent with his interests, talent and values.

It occurs to me that while my work with this client included elements from both Cashman's and Zohar's theories, what I do not see called out explicitly in either of their models is courage. While you can say that courage is needed to adopt either model, I think it is what prevents people from living authentically, according to their values and purpose. I find myself working with people's deep-seated fears about what will happen if they say what they think and do what they want to do. If I were to create a model, I think I would emphasize the need to deal directly with the underlying fears that sometimes prevent people from even knowing what their values and purpose are, and what behavior is authentic for them.

I believe I changed as a person through what I learned about leadership in my career. I started out at the bottom in the business world, and was definitely one of those tempered radicals, only not very tempered. I learned by doing, and moved up from

administrative to director-level positions in high-tech over ten years. One of the most lasting lessons happened for me as a middle manager, in the first couple of years in that role. I have since seen many managers struggling at the same turning point, and at all levels, and some never get the understanding they need to evolve past this point, although often they continue to get promoted.

In the beginning I thought I was creating a new little world that I was in charge of and totally responsible for. I wanted badly to prove that I could be successful, which to me meant improving things, creating things, making things different and better. However, although I was very good at hiring talented people, I thought of them as “my people”, and thought that their job was to fulfill my vision, and my job was to take care of them. Within the organization, I became so attached to manifesting my vision of how my function should work that I fought some hard battles and alienated some people.

So while I developed some model groups with high standards and reputations, I was leading only my group. Moreover, I was patronizing them without realizing it in imposing my ideas on them. Once I felt more secure in my ability to manage, I started to see the value of collaboration, and to understand that I could only succeed through others. I also learned that the only way to nurture people and allow them to grow is to let them have responsibility, do it their way, and risk the occasional “failure.”

I would say I had two major turning points in my development as a leader; the first was when I learned to trust the intelligence and creative power of true collaboration with my own group, and the second came much later when I came to understand that to truly lead I had to be more in touch and in tune with the larger organization, and more open to the ideas of others. I had to learn that building relationships all throughout the

organization and making necessary compromises was critical to succeeding in a larger sense, and doing a service for my group as well by connecting them in a positive way to the entire organization.

Further along this continuum, I came to understand the importance of the broader network and how to manage people who did not report to me. The experience I had in the past few years was invaluable in that I functioned as an individual contributor, with the responsibility of leading big global initiatives working with people in all functions all over the world. While I love having a small diverse group to back me up, and can accomplish more that way, I treasure the skills I developed in achieving goals without this support. To succeed, it is necessary to find a compelling mission, to present it in a way that inspires people to want to contribute, and to facilitate necessary interactions without the ability to require them. I think what I was learning in the earlier phase of my career was how to become a good manager, and what I learned more recently is what it takes to become a leader regardless of position or role.

I believe that no real change can take place without internal changes in the people who want to realize these changes. I think this is true at all levels of any organization, but has special importance for those who wish to lead change, and not merely adapt to it. Even in situations where change is imposed, those who must implement the change need to find a way to understand it that enables them to do so. This in itself requires a shift in perception, which amounts to an internal change. However, to truly transform an organization in any real and important way, I believe the leaders need to be willing and able to continuously evolve, which demands an ongoing search into an understanding of their own values, principles, biases and blind spots. In this way, leaders can develop an

awareness that change is constant, and skill in guiding change in a positive and productive direction.