Servant Leadership of Dr. Paul Farmer

Posted on July 15, 2025

View this essay online:
https://academic-master.com/servant-leadership-of-dr-paul-farmer/

Dr Paul Farmer is a paradigmatic example of servant leadership, adhering closely to the Model of Servant Leadership described in Northouse's "Leadership: Theory and Practice" (p. 259); it introduces the behaviors that typical servant leaders have, such as listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (p. 259). Dr Farmer is of the mindset that it is not only to treat diseases but also to address the underlying social determinants of health. This demonstrates his level of empathy and service to the community. To give an example of his leadership and moral responsibility, his founding of Partners in Health, an organization that "provides preferred options for the poor in health care," clearly demonstrates his stewardship and concrete commitment to ethical principles in leading change.

Impact of Childhood on Leadership Development

The impact of Dr. Farmer's early experiences, riding in a bus and on a boat, and seeing a multitude of poverty and cruelty in his role development as a servant leader is very significant. These were years of education, where he had seen how unequal the society was, and he made this his mission in healthcare. As Northouse indicated, the servant leader's history and character demonstrate their affinity to empathy and care (Northouse, 2022, p. 250). From this, Farmer's background ignited within her the willingness to eradicate global health inequalities and construct systems to ensure that healthcare is devoid of economic and border limits.

Followers and Servanthood

Leadership by Dr. Farmer has brought together people of different backgrounds and professions, a combination that is steered forward by a shared vision of health equity. These are not only followers but have become servant leaders on their own by using Farmer's model as an example for them. They actively engage their followers in community-focused healthcare projects that are environmentally friendly and involve the local community, which are the key aspects of leadership disintegrated by Northouse (Northouse, 2022, p. 264). This change of followers into leaders who serve the members of the community first is a strong indicator that the quality of leadership the doctor chose is practical and inspirational.

Case 15.1: Choosing a Research Assistant

Ethical Decision-Making for Angi

Angi's decision to select a research assistant should be in line with Northouse's (Northouse, 2022, p. 437) principles of distributive justice, which consider both merit and individual needs. Through this process, the candidate with the required skills and competence to contribute to the research projects will be selected. However, the application of personalized leadership eliminates the ethical issue of justice by taking into account candidates whose disadvantage is affected by their circumstances and hence, helping to make ethical leadership practices that are fair, just and equal.

Proposed Solutions

Merit-Based Selection: Angi could opt to put in the merit system, in which they will evaluate candidates' resumes, research experiences, and academic achievements, looking out to ensure the assistant selected dares to meet the high demands of the research projects. This approach is in line with the principle of merit, the distributive justice principle, which in turn makes the appropriate individual get this position. Hence, the company will maximize the research effectiveness and productivity.

Balanced Approach: On the other hand, Angi can adopt a balanced measure that takes into account the two factors, academic merit and circumstances of an individual. For this case, the selection committee may opt for a candidate with both impressive academic performance and a solid compelling need for the position, like the economic hardship or the earlier opportunities on the contrary. This approach is in line with Northouse's suggestions for ethical leadership, ensuring that the selection process is both fair and beneficial to the individual and the organization (Northo2022, p. 437) [1].

Case 14.1: The "Glass Ceiling"

Key Barriers and Solutions

The obstacles/barriers of prejudice and limited access to networks are fundamental problems that women face, as noted in Northouse (Northouse, 2022, p. 394). Possible solutions include the development of mentorship programs for women so that they can link with the existing leaders within the organization and bridge the gap in networking. Besides, organizations can schedule and organize sessions of workshops and seminars that precisely attempt to remove workplace prejudice and unconscious bias. Moving on to this point, organizations can also elevate the visibility of successful female leaders in their internal communications, and this could be done by celebrating their achievements as well as establishing a precedent for aspiring leaders. Women can receive motivation

and inspiration by actively promoting positive examples of those women who climbed the career ladder, thus breaking stereotypes and barriers.

Promoting Leadership Effectiveness

Supporting women's participation in leadership development programs and assertiveness workshops will help them increase their competence and judgment in the organization. On the organizational level, companies can develop transparent promotion criteria and conduct regular audits regarding the level of gender equality among those in top leadership positions. These measures will help to ensure that all employees get equal opportunities. These strategies are aligned with Northouse leadership effectiveness models that emphasize organizational support, which is responsible for the promotion of leadership across the group demographics (Northouse, 2022, pp. 396-405). Moreover, organizations should put in place accountability measures that make sure the initiatives are not just performative. This could include, for instance, monitoring the fulfillment of the diversity goals, conducting exit interviews on key issues that women still face, and revising policies based on these findings. The engagement of male colleagues as allies is another critical effort that has the potential to change the culture of the organization and promote gender inclusivity at all levels of leadership.

Conclusion

The extended analysis of these cases applies theoretical frameworks from Northouse's "Leadership: From the "Theory and Practice" to practicing leadership in dilemmas; the environment has been created in which leaders make decisions grounded on ethical norms and contribute to effective leadership development. These actions not only resolve the current problems but also help develop a solid ethical leadership culture for such institutions.

Reference

Northouse, P. G. (2022). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Sage publications.