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WILLY MUTUNGA  
REFLECTS ON JUDICIAL  
REFORMS

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## CONTRIBUTING WRITERS



### BOB PATERSON

Bob is a regular writer and shares his wealth of experience spanning 34 years working for a multinational firm with readers. He has valuable thoughts on various aspects of running an organization, leading teams, dealing with stakeholders, and living a fulfilling life. Bob is currently he CEO of a medium-sized truck company in Nairobi.

Email: [Paterson@aricanonline.co.ke](mailto:Paterson@aricanonline.co.ke)

### WILLIAM ODHIAMBO

Odhiambo is the CEO of Elim Consulting, a financial and business consulting firm involved in training, research and advisory. He is an award-winning economist with a wealth of experience in the advisory, banking, insurance and investment. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the University of Nairobi and wealth of training in entrepreneurship, marketing and stock market investments. He is also a columnist with the Business Daily Africa, The Nairobi Business Monthly and is a frequent analyst with the CNBC Africa.

Email: [wodhiambo@elim-consult.com](mailto:wodhiambo@elim-consult.com)



### TOM SITATI

Sitati is currently the Executive Director of Interbrand Sampson East Africa, a branding and brand Management Company. He has actively served on three councils of the Marketing Society of Kenya (MSK) and held the position of MSK Chairman. Sitati has studied New Media and Society Masters level at the University of Leicester (UK) and has published a book titled "It's a Branded World."

Email: [tsitati@ibsea.co.ke](mailto:tsitati@ibsea.co.ke)

### PETE NJENGA

Pete R Njenga is a graphic designer, writer and online publisher who manages communication design at Complit Communications. He holds a Bsc in Mechanical Engineering from JKUAT. An avid blogger, Pete is passionate about renewable energy, mobile broadband, content marketing and online advertising.

Email: [info@peternjenga.com](mailto:info@peternjenga.com)



### CHARLES INDIAZI

Indiazi is a workshops repairs manager at Toyota Kenya Ltd, having worked at Subaru Kenya, Firestone East Africa Ltd and Marshalls East Africa Ltd. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Automotive Technology-University of East Africa Baraton. He is a certified ISO internal auditor-Bureau Veritas.

Email: [cindiazi@yahoo.com](mailto:cindiazi@yahoo.com)

### DEREK BBANGA

Derek runs Public Image, a company that helps professionals and companies enhance soft skills, professional image and communication skills. Follow his blog at [publicimageafrica.blogspot.com](http://publicimageafrica.blogspot.com)

Email: [Derek.bbanga@publicimageafrica.com](mailto:Derek.bbanga@publicimageafrica.com)



### PROF. DR. PAUL RONO

Prof Rono took his PhD in the US and was lecturer at Kenyatta University in Nairobi. He is an authority on leadership development and has published multiple articles related to leadership development in Africa with a progressive yet adoptable and realistic view. Paul is now independent consultant for leadership matters and writes articles together with Lex now over four years.

Email: [paul.rono5@gmail.com](mailto:paul.rono5@gmail.com)

### LEX LINDEMAN

Lex is the Africa Leadership Development Specialist at Human Resources Boosters, creator of the Leadership Accelerator Workshop. He has been active as a leadership consultant in over 20 African countries.

Email: [lex@hrboosters.com](mailto:lex@hrboosters.com)





## Are you a **TRANSFORMATIONAL** **LEADER?**

Transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions and motivations to work towards common goals.

By: PAUL RONO AND LEX LINDEMAN

**T**ransformational leadership fosters freedom of creativity and guided behavioural change, which has its effect on individuals, teams and the organisation.

This type of leadership style leads to positive changes in those who follow. Leaders open and supportive of transformation are energetic, enthusiastic and passionate.

Not only are these leaders concerned and involved in the organisational effectiveness, they are equally focused in helping every member of the group and teams to succeed as well. Transformational leaders can be seen when leaders and followers motivate each other to advance to higher levels of moral and motivation, thus productivity.

They are able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions and motivations to work towards common goals. Transformational leaders have a direct positive effect on a sound, healthy and productive organisational culture.

Good examples of transformational leaders of the recent past in Kenya are Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, Tom Mboya and Dedan Kimathi.

According to Bernard Bass, transformational leadership can be defined as the impact that it has on followers. Transformational leaders, Bass suggested garner trust, respect and admiration from their followers.

**The components**

Bass also suggested that there are four different components:

1. **Intellectual stimulation:** The leader encourages followers to explore new ways of doing things and create new opportunities to learn.
2. **Individualised consideration:** Transformational leadership also involves offering support and encouragement to individual followers. Leaders keep lines of communication open so that individual followers share ideas. Leaders can offer different

recognition of each follower's unique contributions.

3. **Inspirational motivation:**

Transformational leaders have a clear vision that they are able to articulate to followers. These leaders are able to help followers experience the same passion and motivation to fulfill these goals.

4. **Idealised influence:** Transformational leaders serve as role models. Followers trust and respect their leader, emulate and compete with the leader and internalise his or her ideas. The leaders instil pride, gain, respect and trust.

**Organisational culture**

Transformational leadership is quite popular especially today because it is based on vision and direct influence on the organisation's culture. The transformational leader is an inspiring figure who works with followers to achieve the organisation's objectives. In this culture, everyone helps each other

to reach greater levels of achievement. Trust is an essential bond and those who follow voluntarily 'buy into' these goals. The organisational culture also 'transforms'.

Transformational leadership has become a fundamental necessity, particularly in the concept of getting others to enthusiastically support the necessary changes in the work place.

One positive outcome of this approach is a true development of its goal emphasis.

The relationship between the leader and other members of the team is of primary importance. Building trust and getting cooperation and 'buy-in' is far more difficult than traditionally giving orders and monitoring processes and activities. The leader must continuously be an inspiring presence. The leader leads by example and is responsible for motivating others, (Eric Yaverbaum and Erik Sherman (2008).

#### Behavioural competencies

Yukl (1994) draws some behavioural tips for transformational leaders to be:

1. Develop a challenging and attractive vision, together with the employees.
2. Tie the vision to a strategy for its achievement.
3. Develop the vision, specify and translate it to actions.
4. Express confidence, decisiveness and optimism about the vision and its implementation.
5. Realise the vision through small planned steps and small successes in the path for its full implementation.

Transformational leaders are always visible and will stand up to be counted rather than hide behind their troops. They show by their attitudes and actions how everyone else should behave.

They also make continued efforts to motivate and rally followers constantly doing the rounds, listening, stimulating, soothing and enthusing.

It is their unwavering commitment as much as anything else that keeps people going, particularly through these darker times when some may question whether the vision can ever be achieved. The transformational leader seeks to

infect and re-infect their followers with a high level of commitment to the vision.

Working for a transformational leader can be a wonderful and uplifting experience. They put passion and energy into everything they undertake and do. They care about their subordinates and want them to succeed.

The leaders view to the future should and will excite and convert potential followers. The vision may be developed by the leader, by the senior team (Board) or may emerge from a broad series of discussions.

The important factor is that the leader buys into it, line and sinker and 'sell' that vision to his/her team. Through this kind of leadership, leaders construct with their own new culture a new realigned company culture. The quality of the organisational culture is in fact generated by transformational leaders and their teams.

Overall, they balance their attention between action that creates progress and the mental state of their followers. Perhaps more than other approaches, they are people-oriented and believe that success comes first and last through deep and sustained commitment by their subordinates.

However, young transformational leaders are often charismatic and their followers will be the product of their transformation desire. Transformational leaders often have large amounts of enthusiasm, which, if relentlessly applied, can wear their followers. They tend to see the big picture than details, where the devil often lurks.

Fitting the transformational leader in Maslow:

If you are familiar with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, transformational leadership would fit into the higher levels, as it requires a high level of authenticity, self-esteem and self-actualisation. Ideals are



higher in Maslow's Hierarchy, which does imply that lower concerns such as health and security must be reasonably safe before people pay serious attention to the higher possibilities.

Transformational Leadership behaviours are and should show genuine concern and respect for others. These leaders continuously invest in developing themselves and others. In addition to this, they develop a culture of collaboration rather than command and control where change is welcomed as an opportunity rather than a threat.

They bring the best among individuals and teams; with a shared and inspiring vision of an organisation's future. They increase the awareness of what is right, good, important and beautiful when they help to elevate followers' needs for achievement and self-actualisation.

Some examples of these leaders are Gandhi, Mandela, Luther king, Elizabeth I, Washington, Jefferson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Gorbachow, etc.

#### Future development

In transformational leadership, James MacGregor Burns illuminates the evolution of leadership structures from the chieftains for tribal African Societies, through Europe's absolute monarchies, to the blossoming of the enlightenment's ideals of liberty and happiness during the American Revolution. Transforming leadership will arouse discussion and controversy in classrooms and boardrooms throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century in a global world we are operating.■

Email: [lex@hrboosters.com](mailto:lex@hrboosters.com)  
[paul.rono5@gmail.com](mailto:paul.rono5@gmail.com)