Chapter 4
Leadership, Public Values, and Trust in Emergency Management

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ABSTRACT

In today's environment, emergency managers get things done through team leadership. Good leaders know how to follow others when the situation calls for it. Being the right kind of leader is critical to getting committed and engage followers. The chapter argues that managers build trust into decision making during emergencies; when managers set up the right conditions for the team to thrive, it results a better outcome. The chapter further argues that when managers share information both up and down the chain of command and make their intention clear about what winning looks like, team members are able to use their own discretion and make decisions that support the mission. The chapter concludes that an effective expression of the manager's intent must be clear and concise of what the team must do to succeed and achieve the desired end state. The manager must build trust in decision making among the team to achieve better results.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most universal cravings of our time is the thirst for compelling and effective leadership. The crisis for leadership today is the mediocrity of men and women in Public Agencies and institutions involved in emergency management and public safety. Emergency management at the state and federal levels pose significant challenges to the ablest of public managers. Emergency managers need to align the values of the Agencies, institutions, private organizations, non-governmental organizations and citizens to their own values, build teams and trust in their assignments. Hence, those taking on leadership of these organizations must appreciate the difficulties in managing risks because emergency management involves responding to and managing risks within the environment.

In today's environment, emergency managers get things done through team leadership. To make it happen, team members must trust each other and their leaders. Managers build trust into decision-making and when emergency managers set up the right conditions for a team to thrive, it sometimes results in a harder job with a better outcome. To do so, they share information both up and down the chain of command and make their intentions clear. In the emergency management world, unanticipated situations and opportunities arise, requiring the team to exercise its own initiative. When managers are clear about public values of what winning looks like, they are able to use their own discretion and make decisions that support the vision and mission of Public Agencies and institutions.

BACKGROUND

For two millennia at least, the concept of leadership has been in literature long before modern study of leadership grapple with the "vexing problem of the rulers versus the ruled" (Burns, 1979, p 2). Plato analyzed not only philosopher–kings, but the influences on the rulers upbringing. Thinkers were busy examining the concept of leadership in moral teaching. Long before modern biography, Plutarch was writing about the living of a host of Roman and Greek Rulers and orators, arguing that philosophers "ought to converse especially with men in power" (Burns, 1979, p. 2). Arish literature on leadership and followers flourished in the classical and middle ages. Later – for reasons we would examine in this chapter, the study of rulership and leadership ran into serious intellectual difficulties. Leadership as a concept has dissolved into small and discrete meanings. Immense reservoir of data, analysis and theories have developed but no central concept of leadership has yet emerged, in part because scholars have worked in separate disciplines and sub-disciplines in pursuit of different and often unrelated questions and problems.

Hence, it is time that the study of leadership be lifted out of the anecdotal and the eulogistic and placed squarely in the structure and processes of human development, public safety and political action (Burns, 1979). This is because leaders have a critical effect on society in the present and future. They can determine on the success or failure of a society, country and community.

The need for emergency or disaster management came to fore in Nigeria as a result of the impact of extreme natural disasters globally . There have been reports that natural disasters forced 26 million people into poverty, cause $520 billion loss annually (World Bank (2016); Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) (2016) .

In Nigeria, the impact of flooding and Boko Haram insurgency activities that displaced men, women and children motivated the Federal government to establish National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). NEMA formulates policy on all activities relating to disaster management functions. It coordinates the activities of other stakeholders in disaster management. Through the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), a national disaster management framework was established. The framework objectives are to establish functional disaster management institutions at all levels of governance to prepare for, prevent, mitigate, respond to and recover from disaster events in Nigeria. The framework also develops capacity of relevant institutions and stakeholders for effective and efficient disaster management in Nigeria. NEMA facilitates the establishment of enabling legislation and monitor the activities of State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and Local Emergency Management Authority (LEMA).

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that leadership is nothing if not linked to collective purpose and trust of the led. Therefore, the chapter focuses on collaborative leadership which includes

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