

Chapter 29

Triple A Leadership Dynamics of a Self-Empowering Women Group: The Case of Mabogo Botshelo Bakery

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ABSTRACT

From the Triple A Leadership model, this chapter shares a story of four women who gained economic empowerment through a bakery project whose success can be attributed to the application of the three tenets of this model, namely; accountable, attitude and approach. The first A denotes that 'Accountability' is an indispensable aspect of leadership while 'Attitude' is the other basic element. The theory further highlights that 'approach' is fundamental to good leadership. The four women displayed self-reinforcing attitude that gave rise to increased interest in the project resulting in self-empowerment. It is clear that when people's personalities display leadership skills such as awareness of individual differences, responsibility, conflict resolution, tensions can be avoided as was the case with women who owned the bakery. In reality different situations call for different leadership styles, different actions, different strategies and this case illustrates that Triple A leadership was the appropriate approach.

BACKGROUND

The Botswana government as a member of the United Nations and other global stakeholders has agreed that it would take responsibility to reduce poverty amongst Botswana (Republic of Botswana, 1997). Through its different policies such as Long Term Vision 2016 for Botswana (1997) and the Millennium development goals (Republic of Botswana, 2004), the processes for empowering Botswana are clearly stated.

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The theoretical concept of empowerment can be understood from a dimension of a value orientation for working amongst a community or working hard to improve individual personal status. The empowerment model is designed to assist individuals to understand “the process and results of such efforts to exert control and influence over decisions that affect one’s life, organizational functioning and the quality of community life” (Zimmerman & Warschausky, 1998, p.2). Empowerment as a value orientation is said to reflect issues such as goals, aims and strategies for implementing change in general terms. The establishment of ‘Mabogo Botshelo bakery’ reflects that individuals in the case projected their vision in order to have control of their lives. This change is consistent with triple A leadership which advocates for individuals or groups to change their way of managing their lives to become superior leader who can influence themselves and others to see a bigger picture (Misirian, 2013).

Management and leadership processes applied by “Mabogo Botshelo Bakery” appear to be organized around the Triple A leadership model. This model was established by three ladies namely Sollenberger, Honaman & Dotts (n.d.). The proponents’ main aim was to provide leadership solutions to individuals and organisations to develop superior leaders. They develop a Triple A leadership model which comprises of three A’s. This forms a triangle that has three levels (<http://www.ishrgroup.com/hr-leadership-consulting>, 29 October, 2014). The first A represents accountable. This means that any manager who wishes anything to be done should take responsibility to ensure that things shall be done as per planned. The process of ensuring that things must be done is also coupled with credible delivery. The second, A is attitude. It refers to the positive attitude that a manager or leader should possess and also have a proactive inclination towards her/his and the group work. Additionally the manager or leader should have a positive attitude towards the skills development of every employee. The third A and third level is approach. This is about the skills required for leaders to have appropriate leadership skills to lead others and ensure that all drive to achieve organizational goals (<http://www.ishrgroup.com/hr-leadership-consulting>, 29 October, 2014).

Misirian (2013) states that Triple A Leadership coaching is good as it can increase leadership effectiveness and therefore it is a prime factor in the success of an organization. Dahlke (2013) concurs that a leader needs to be constantly aware of the needs of her/his fellow employees and to plan how these could be accounted. These three A’s have been used by the owners of Mabogo Botshelo bakery.

EMPOWERMENT/SETTING THE STAGE

The Botswana government in its first millennium development goal states that it will “eradicate extreme hunger and poverty” (Botswana government, 1997, p5.) This quest has driven the Government to come up with a number of policies and strategies aimed at empowering the poor, especially those living in rural areas. These include the Revised Rural Development Policy, The Poverty Eradication Strategy among the many. Such policies are meant to encourage those living in rural areas without access to employment and women to have access to Government programs that deal with poverty reduction.

The Government strategies are and will continue to be necessary because people live in different contexts and have backgrounds that are used to classify them into two values of social and knowledge base statuses (Friedman, 1992). The social status usually is the one linked to the individual ability to live a socially acceptable life. The acceptability of one’s life is value based because what is acceptable to one group is not necessarily acceptable to another. This view is consistent with Friedman’s (1992) view that “poverty is viewed as a condition of social, political and psychological disempowerment with respect to the household access to bases of social power” (www.cabdirect.org/abstract, 18 August

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