

Beyond Leadership

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Abstract

The crisis of leadership, like other crises in most critical human endeavours, is not occasioned by lack of definitive theories or knowledge, it is elicited by failure to put the existing theories and knowledge into practice. Besides, the assumption advanced by most of the proponents of leadership theories, that by revealing to leaders what leadership is and what leaders should do, then inevitably the leaders will utilize the acquired knowledge and skills to impact their followers and the society, does not stand the test of scrutiny. There is a gap between leadership knowledge and practice, meaning that there are missing elements which translate leadership theories, knowledge and skills into impact. This paper (beyond leadership) seeks to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice. Beyond leadership answers the question, why are some people (leaders) more ethical and effective than other? The paper proposes and discusses 7 elements (purpose, conviction, moral authority, passion, commitment, courage and learning) which distinguish impactful leaders from the rest. Many more elements may be needed on the leadership journey but without the 7 elements of beyond leadership, any other additional element may not matter much.

Keywords

Leadership, Impactful Leadership, Ethical and Effective Leadership, Purpose, Conviction, Moral Authority, Passion, Commitment, Courage, Learning

1. Introduction

Why don't all skilled and knowledgeable business leaders turn out to be like Steve Jobs or Bill Gates? Why don't all skilled and knowledgeable activists turn out to be like Wangari Maathai or King? Why don't all skilled and knowledgeable political leaders turn out to be like Mandela or Gandhi? Why don't all skilled and knowledgeable academicians turn out to be like Plato or Newton? The above

questions allude to the fact knowledge although related to practice it is different from it, hence it is vital to establish how great leaders move beyond leadership knowledge, skills, theories and virtues to create sustainable impact in people's lives. Even some leaders without skills or knowledge of leadership, at least in the beginning, may create a sustainable difference in people's lives in the long run, it is of paramount importance to find out how they do it. Despite one's knowledge about leadership, despite being virtuous, despite understanding the environment where one operates, if one's actions do not impact people's lives, her virtues and knowledge of leadership amount to nothing (Drucker, 1996). Leadership scholars and practitioners blame the sorry state of leadership on lack of inclusive leadership theory and poor leadership development (Iwowo, 2015; Kuada, 2010; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). I think they have point, but it is not the whole point. Besides leadership development, leadership developers, scholars and practitioners are still searching for additional and effective ways to stimulate leaders to lead. Given that one can take the cows to the water point but she can't force the cows to take the water, one must find palatable ways encourage the cows to take the water. Hunger and desire for food drives us to eat more than knowledge of nutrition does, herein lies an idea for curing leadership knowledge-practice gap: raise leaders' hunger and thirst to lead. Beyond leadership is an attempt to bridge the gap knowledge and effective leadership practice.

Beyond leadership is a step above leadership, a territory where leadership is conferred to an individual even when she or he never started out seeking to lead. The individual may have a position but she leads through moral authority rather than the use of positional power. Beyond leadership is the convergence of people who get things, of value to humanity, done. It is a way of life for people, not just leaders, who accomplish great feats. It is the highest form of service to humanity. A person who exists and participates in beyond leadership arena is a consummate professional, an authority in her/his domain. She embraces and values followers and context in her quest to impact lives. Beyond leadership is the basic of impactful leadership. People operating in the realm of beyond leadership are in harmony with selves and others, they transcend position, professions, industry, race, religion and ideology to serve their constituency.

The common denominator among people operating in the domain of beyond leadership is that their leadership is impactful. Beyond leadership is the common thread that binds a mother without education or resources but with conviction that her son must go to school, a laboratory scientist who has dedicated her life to find the cure for Aids, a village elder who is serving his people with all he has, Mozart, Lincoln, Gandhi, Einstein, King, Mother Teresa, Jobs and Messi. In beyond leadership realm direct (with position) and indirect (without a position) leadership as envisioned by Gardner (2011) are both embraced. After all, I am yet to meet someone who doubts Einstein's leadership, despite the facts that he did not supervise thousands of people. Although an understanding of leadership knowledge, skills, theories and virtues (a subject of another paper by the author:

Rethinking the Leadership Theory) is a prerequisite to benefit fully from beyond leadership, the absence of such understanding may be compensated with the desire to make a difference in people's lives. After all, a person with true and deep desire to impact people's lives will do anything ethical to achieve his ends, including gaining leadership knowledge, skills, theories and virtues.

According to Drucker (1996), effective leadership is about results and not about making speeches, being liked or having certain attributes. Leadership is a lifestyle of dedication to delivering results that meet all stakeholders' needs. People operating in this mindset may start out in an established place/organization, but they soon discover the restraining forces therein, they either remake the organizations in their own image or leave to go and form organizations that make the difference they desire to see in people's lives. Leaders who define their generations have three things in common: they have a desire to make a difference in people's life (Craig & Snook, 2014); they lead with/from moral authority (Norris & Sedgwick, 2009); and they take actions daily to improve the lives of their followers (Young & Dixon, 1996). These three areas are made up of seven elements. Figure A1 in Appendix captures the seven elements of beyond leadership.

2. Leadership is the Desire to Make a Difference

People who make it in life, they look around for circumstances they want and if they cannot find them they create them—GB Shaw

Leadership has been essential for every century but it is particularly crucial for the 21st century (Deloitte Consulting LLP and Bersin [Deloitte], 2014a). Given the challenges that surround us from war, hunger, illiteracy, poverty and hate which is amplified by social media it is tempting to think that the previous generations only dealt with the symptoms while passing the causes of the problems to the subsequent generations. Nevertheless, this generation ought to do better for the coming generations. Leadership, particularly ethical and effective leadership, is a critical remedy in the ailing world (Safty, 2003). Leadership should be driven by the desire to see a positive impact in people's lives, hence, acquisition of skills and knowledge is just means to that end. If one decides to lead and along the way she discovers that she lacks some skills, then she can also decide to acquire the needed skills. Leaders who made a difference that reverberates across generations did not first acquire all the leadership knowledge and skills then they asked themselves what they can do with the acquired knowledge and skills, it is the other way round. They yearned to see better lives, they went to work and everything else followed (Graham, 2011). It is the author's contention that credible desire to make a difference is built on leaders' purpose and conviction.

2.1. Purpose

A life without a cause [purpose] is a life without effect [impact]—Paulo Coelho

Many individuals and organizations have both the pictures of the future and

lists of things to be done, but that is not all they require to be impactful. For example, an organization in healthcare business may have a vision: to be the best healthcare provider in the world, but it begs the questions: Why? The questions above seek to establish why individuals and organizations do what they do. Other than making money, there must be clear reasons to all the people in the organization why they do what they do (Dik et al., 2015). Craig & Snook (2014) assert that purpose is vital for the success of individuals and organizations, also they argue that there is no other developmental task is as critical to leaders as developing one's purpose and take action to realize their purpose. Mutual needs, aspirations and values constitute purpose (Blackmore, 2011), that a given leadership exists to fulfil. Despite the centrality of purpose in leadership and the fact that purpose answers a critical question why individuals and/or organizations exist, little attention is paid to it by scholars (Russell & Underwood, 2016).

The purpose is at the heart of the organizational direction. Tactics (activities) serves strategy (plan), strategy serves vision (what individuals/organizations want to be), and vision serves purpose (reason for individuals'/organizations' existence). Manasse (1985) argues that vision is part of a larger leadership process: purpose. Purpose like vision, it is not a set of dos and don'ts, it is not bespoke, it is personal. Manasse's (1985: p. 152) view of vision applies to purpose, vision "is based on personal or personalized professional values, personal images of possibilities, and personal assessments of a situation". In this paper, vision may be used in place of purpose to the extent that the vision is in service of the purpose, otherwise, vision is distinct from purpose.

Purpose is central to any meaningful life, whether a life of an organization or an individual. Collins & Porras (1994) posit that the single most important success factor for outstanding companies is purpose. At the centre of their products or innovation is the purpose: why are we innovating (Craig & Snook, 2014). Leader Purposefulness is positively and significantly related with leadership effectiveness, $r(1711) = 0.75, p < 0.001$ (Irving & Berndt, 2017). According to Kempster, Jackson, & Conroy (2011), purpose is essential for human progress, no leader changed the world without one. Impactful leaders' undertakings are premised on fulfilling a certain purpose. Leaders with a purpose are keen in leaving a legacy, their definition of success is inclusive—the employees', the shareholders' and stakeholders' needs are all met (Russell & Underwood, 2016). The distinguishing factor between nurses that make a difference in patients and colleagues' lives is that those who make a difference are guided by the individual and corporate purpose of nursing: helping others. At the same time, those who feel trapped in the career do not subscribe to that purpose (Collinson, 2002). According to Ryff & Singer (1998), purpose in life was a key distinguishing factor between those who survived the Nazi concentration camps and those who did not. Purpose in life is critical for mundane things as it is for facing life-threatening circumstances.

Russell & Underwood (2016) assert that the common denominator among leaders who create a lasting positive impact is that they all have a clear sense of

purpose. [Graham \(2011\)](#) argues that great leaders like Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Mandela, Jobs, Oprah and Disney arrived at their place in the world (inspiring movements and changing the world) because they had a clear purpose and they dared to pursue the possibilities with so much passion. Knowing your place in the world is akin to knowing your purpose. Accomplished leaders started off armed with a purpose, other things followed later. A sense of purpose is central to successful leadership and hence, successful organization. When [Immelt \(2017\)](#) was retiring as the CEO of GE, he said, at GE, both purpose and commitment matter. Purpose creates an identity for the leaders and organizations and it distinguishes organizations ([Manasse, 1985](#)) Transformational leaders are known for instituting change in organizations, [Bass & Riggio \(2006\)](#), change is mainly possible because transformational leaders inspire a sense of purpose among the employees.

The importance of purpose to companies can be extended to individuals if people are to achieve good success it is imperative that they have a purpose. [Frankl \(2004\)](#); [Kempster et al. \(2011\)](#) contend that both happiness and good human life are a product of a worthy purpose. It is on the basis of congruence in purpose that organizations should engage employees and vice versa. Whenever there is no congruence or prospect of achieving it either party should terminate the employment relationship. Numerous scholars have differing views on what constitutes meaningful life or living a purposeful life, [Craig & Snook \(2014\)](#); [Blackmore \(2011\)](#), but they all agree that a good life must have a purpose ([Ryff & Singer, 1998](#)). Purpose is a precursor to proper time management, focused, planned life. It is inconceivable how one can lead a successful life without a purpose. Only individuals who have discovered their anchoring purpose benefit fully from developmental interventions, since development has personal context and meaning to resonate with ([Graham, 2011](#)).

Purpose is at the heart of inspiring actions, actions aimed at solving problems. [Sinek \(2009\)](#) asserts that very successful leaders and organizations have mastered the art of communication to inspire action, they begin with why (purpose), then how and finally what. The order of messages is important for it to inspire action. Jobs had discovered that people of his time were stuck in status quo, where computers were used as typewriters and phones were only used for calling and both the computers and phone were ugly designed and cumbersome. Jobs and Apple thrust themselves at the centre of the effort to liberate their generation from the jaws of the status quo. First, Jobs established and communicated Apple's purpose: Apple exists to challenge the status quo, a computer can do more than typewriters and phones can do more than make calls. Secondly, Jobs added that Apple's products were uniquely designed, pleasing to the eyes and hands. Finally, he named the products: computers, phones and others. Millions of people have been lining up to purchase Apple's computers and phones ever since. Apple is an example of an organization where purpose was both communicated and implemented seamlessly. The success of a leader depends on his

ability to communicate the vision (in this case purpose) in a way that convinces his team and other stakeholders like customers to take appropriate actions (Tichy & Sherman, 1994).

Despite the importance of purpose, Craig & Snook (2014) assert that less than 20 percent of the leaders taught at Harvard have a clear purpose. This is a clear indication that majority of leaders are yet to discover and develop their purpose. In seeking to discover and develop one's purpose, one should consider Craig and Snook's assertion that purpose is not much about your skills and experiences although it makes use of both as it is much about your identity: who you are, hence, the pursuit of one's purpose must go beyond skills and experiences. Purpose is personal in nature, it is discovered and developed from one's interests, motivations, strengths and capabilities (Manasse, 1985). Scholars argue that purpose is something that is in you, hence, the individual's role in their purpose is to discover and develop it (Graham, 2011; George, 2003). Some of the ways people have discovered their purposes include taking a reflective solitude walk into the wilderness, experiencing a life-defining/redefining moment and being guided to discover purpose by a life coach.

The following anecdote does not only demonstrate one of the ways of discovering one's purpose but also highlights what a person with purpose can do. While presenting a medal of honour to Vietnam army medic, veteran James McCloughan, Trump (2017) said that Jim worked for more than 24 hours straight, rescuing his colleagues under very difficult circumstances, where he was shot but luckily he survived. Despite personal suffering and danger, Jim continued to pull his shot colleagues to safety while offering first aid as bullets continued to fly over him, in the midst of the battlefield heat and while carrying one of his colleagues in his arms, Jim thought "I have never said to my father, I love you", there and then in his heart he made a promise to God, if God helped him survive the battlefield, he could say to his father for the first time in his life "I love you" and he could also be the best coach to junior teams and father to his kids. With that prayer, Jim was not only energized to carry on rescuing his colleagues, he had discovered the purpose of his life, he had a reason to endure the fire of the battlefield and go home to accomplish his purpose. Trump asserted that for the 22 years that Jim's father lived after the war, Jim never missed an opportunity to say to his father, "I love you." Besides loving his father, Jim coached high school teams in football, wrestling and baseball for 38 years and alongside that he raised a successful family.

The ideal situation is that your job serves your purpose, however during Winfrey's (2013) Harvard commencement address she added another angle on the debate about jobs and purpose. You may be good at your job, you may love your job, you may be the best in your industry, but your job may need to be combined with something else to bring out your complete purpose. Winfrey combined TV job with Angel (a philanthropic organization she founded when she discovered that her purpose is to help communities build or rebuild their lives) to fully live her purpose. Her purpose became clear when she discovered

that she is here “to use television and not to be used by it”. She learnt, in her words, “to use television to illuminate the transcendent power of our better angels”.

How to establish congruence among individual, organizational and societal purposes is a puzzle among many leaders (Deloitte, 2014b). The question of how do the three purposes work together for the common good remains largely unanswered. However, it is difficult to find great leaders of great organizations who have different individual purposes from their organizations’. Leaders turn out to be impactful merge their personal and organizational purposes. If your purpose is whom you are, as Craig & Snook (2014) observe, then, in the long run, it is not sustainable to be one thing and do another thing for your organization, hence the need to merge what you do and whom you are. It is not surprising that after two years of search and research that Google discovered that the five aspects that characterize successful teams include: team member feel that their work is meaningful (personal significance), teams believe their work is purposeful and makes a difference in the society, successful teams are dependable, they have well-defined structure and clear roles and they offer psychological safety (Schneider, 2017). The first two aspects of Google’s findings speak to the congruence between individual and team purposes. An individual will only be truly passionate and/or happy with his work if the work connects with a deeper sense of being (meaning or having a sense of purpose). Immelt (2017) argues that top performers, “want do work that matters, and they want to be part of something bigger.”

Purpose is the pillar upon which all other characteristics are built, without it other characteristics make little or no sense at all. Purpose is the object of other characteristics. It is hard, if not disastrous to imagine a person who committed, passionate or has deep conviction but without a purpose. What is she committed or what are her convictions about?

2.2. Conviction

Strong convictions precede great actions—James Clarke

The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts—Bertrand Russell

A leader’s purpose and deeply held beliefs (convictions) cannot be far apart if he aims at achieving a lasting impact for humanity. It is not fashion or trend that drives purpose, it is convictions. Conviction is deep believe in the rightness of objectives to be pursued and the methods to be employed in the pursuit of the same. Conviction is not about “I am right and you are wrong”, conviction is about, “from the knowledge accessible to me, this is the right thing to do, this is the right way to do it and this is the time to do it, join me if you can, but even if you don’t I will move forward, hoping to convince you one day”. According to McGregor & Marigold (2003: p. 838), “conviction refers to clarity and certainty about self-relevant topics”. Convictions are results of laborious work; it is this investment of time and energy that gives one confidence in their beliefs. Donlevy

& Walker (2011: p. 93) argue that professionals', I dare say leaders', convictions are "founded on research-based understandings, reasoned arguments, and well thought through experiences".

Given that conviction is about certainty attached to one's beliefs, it is paramount that such beliefs should have a moral compass to steer the owner in a culturally and socially acceptable direction. Moral conviction is strong and absolute believe in one's pursuits. Attitudes that are entrenched in moral convictions are more likely to be acted upon unlike those based on preferences, social conventions or other non-moral tastes. Moral conviction has three characteristics. First, universalism—believe that all people irrespective of the culture and context should believe in similar ideals. Secondly, experiences of fact—good and bad are distinguishable as easily as it is to distinguish day from night. Thirdly, emotion—intense feelings towards a pursuit (Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005). Moral convictions are not individual preferences, they must be socially and/or culturally acceptable. Convictions that move humanity forward are based on universally accepted and espoused beliefs; they are moral in nature (Skitka, 2010).

Convictions propel actions, it alleviates fear and paralysis. Convictions together with leadership strength are the two key requirements to make tough decisions, especially decisions that are right but not popular (Srikantia & Pasmore, 1996). Donlevy & Walker (2011) agree with President Johnson that if people do not sense your conviction in the argument you are making, not any amount of reasoning or logical presentation wins them over. A leader loses an argument and his agenda on the basis of his conviction. Leaders must show conviction in their communication to win the trust of their followers and support for their undertakings (Elder, 2016). Yew (2000) asserts that as an impactful leader "you must have a deep message and you must put it across with total conviction". One should have near-messianic convictions about his ideas and message. One must convince self that his pursuits are the best way to bring about impactful change. You may be wrong, but what if you right?

Leaders who make a difference are convinced that their ideas, their methods and their timings are right. When every reasonable man and woman in Martin King's time thought that King's ideas, methods and the timings were not right, King responded, "perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, wait. But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will" [you cannot have the luxury of waiting] (King, 2000: p. 92). He further said, there comes a time when waiting to take action is aiding the oppressor to commit more injustice. Ambivalence and convictions are not best of friends, Moens (2013) argues that three years in Obama's term, he had given a clear American foreign policy direction, he had signalled that multi-lateral will take precedence over unilateral mode but his was a foreign policy change without convictions. Leaders must have conviction and they must also show conviction to move their agenda forward.

Putrow (2002) asserts that it was Josephine Van Dyke Brownson's fidelity to

her convictions that propelled her to succeed in the era when very few women succeeded. By the time of her death in 1942, she had popularized children Christian education, written 11 books and established 75 centres of instructions with 14,000 children. She believed that a healthy church and society depended on children who are educated in matters of intelligence and matters of faith. She was meticulous about the content, how it is organized, how and when it is presented to the children for maximum effect. Brownson's convictions were that it mattered how the stories for children are told, hence in 1918, she wrote a book: "To the Heart of the Child" to shape how children were taught. Leavy (2003) argues that "leadership that truly transforms is deeply rooted in values, convictions and principles of a more transcendent nature", among other qualities Josephine Van Dyke Brownson held deep convictions, which was instrumental in her pursuits.

Cathy, the founding CEO of Chick-fil-A, was forthright about his convictions and it has paid off. He believes that Sunday is not a day for work, hence his restaurants remain closed on Sunday but on average each unit restaurant makes more money than those who open daily. Along with his business journey, he was pleasantly surprised to learn that people respect leaders who live by their convictions and who are consistent in their convictions (Cathy, 2007).

Conviction like most good things must have limits. Whereas convictions are critical in propelling leaders into action, too much of it eliminates doubt and invites complacency, because without doubt there is no need to explore alternatives. Progress is made when there is a right mix of conviction and doubt (Srikantia & Pasmore, 1996). Good ideas are often hijacked by extreme elements amongst us, for example, cults pick one aspect of a religious text and give it a twist to suit their agenda. The same thing happens with fanatics—their pursuits always have certain elements of truth but that truth is then bent to achieve certain ends that do not reflect the initial truth (Walzer, 2002). Just because a few radical elements have hijacked moral conviction, we shouldn't surrender it to them. It is possible to believe in the universality of certain ideals with the hope of convincing (and not beating or killing) those who do not believe the same ideals as you do (Skitka et al., 2005). It is possible to believe that genocide is wrong and peace is good for all humanity and at the same time persuading those who are yet to accept those facts to come to the same side as you. It is possible to have strong affect or have strong emotion towards certain beliefs without being unreasonable or take on impulsive behaviour. Besides the danger of over conviction, McGregor & Marigold (2003), argue that some people use compensatory conviction (rigid and extreme convictions) to cover up their inadequacies or personal uncertainty-threats. All extreme forms of convictions must be shunned.

3. Leadership is Moral Authority

1963, *because of the sense of moral authority the civil rights movement had, we were able to get people to respond*—John Lewis

Become the kind of leader that people would follow voluntarily; even if you

had no title or position—Brian Tracy

Different leadership experts conceive leadership differently, some conceive leadership as based on position, [Gergen \(2000\)](#), while others like [Sharma \(2010\)](#) argue that leadership is not based on position. I think each side of the divide is half right because leadership in its totality comprises of both positional and non-positional leadership. Whether leadership is positional or not, sustainable ethical and effective leadership is powered by moral authority.

Moral Authority

Our moral authority is as important, if not more important than our troop strength or our high-tech weapons—Robert Reich

[Northouse \(2016\)](#) argues that a leader influences others to achieve set goals, while, [CLS \(2015\)](#) asserts that power is the ability/potential to influence. It follows that leaders need the power to influence others. The issue is which power is required and is acceptable for ethical and effective leadership. The power required to influence must go beyond legitimacy, namely authority ([Norris & Sedgwick, 2009](#)). It must also go beyond referent and expert power to encompass a moral aspect, which is the moral authority. Unlike management that is about formal authority, leadership is about moral authority. Whether a leader has a position or not the ultimate authority is the moral authority. Leaders with positions can be more impactful if they lead from moral authority perspective than just from legitimate authority perspective. A leader with purpose and convictions needs a moral compass to steer him away from self-serving into serving of humanity. When morals are removed from the equation of leadership, very little is left to distinguish between Hitler from Mandela; they were both effective in what they did, excellent communicators and beloved by their followers. Leadership is not only about effectiveness, leadership is embedded in morality, hence, leadership without morality is almost inconceivable. [Safty \(2003\)](#) argues that leaders must always take the high moral ground. Moral leadership is good leadership is because it is built on both ethical and effectiveness of the leaders ([Drouillard & Kleiner, 1996](#)). Some scholars use morality and ethics interchangeably, [Rothlin & Haghirian \(2013\)](#); [Bi, Ehrich, & Ehrich \(2012\)](#), this paper will also use both terms interchangeably but with more emphasis on morality.

[Bi et al. \(2012\)](#) argue that a leader with moral authority in a community is a leader who espouses and lives by the ideas, beliefs, values that a community possesses or aspires. The way she lives her life, in itself is an invitation for the followers to rise to a higher level of performance. A leader who leads from moral authority derives his authority from adhering to, among other things, fundamental truths, universal standards or principles ([Mihelič, Lipičnik, & Tekavčič, 2010](#)). A leader, whose life is guided by values and principles that a people have regards for, is a leader with moral authority. Character/reputation (like trustworthy, accountability and fairness) is the foundation of leaders with moral authority. Like, level 5 leaders in [Maxwell \(2011\)](#), leaders who lead from moral au-

thority are followed because of who they are and what they represent. Moral authority is “an authority that is real but is divorced from power [power as often conceived]” (Norris & Sedgwick, 2009: p. 85). The moral authority figure is the conscience of the nation, community, organization or whatever the unity of analysis that such leaders may be part of.

People trust a moral authority figure to make decisions that are good and right. By the virtue of their work, actions, or experiences over time they have earned the right to speak about certain things and influence people to see those things in a new light or take action. Leaders with moral authority lead by example, they are moral agents that followers aspire to emulate (Gabriel, 2015). According to Brown (2009: p. 270), moral authority is “the license to argue convincingly about how the world should be”, unlike experts who argue about how the world is. “Moral leaders are leaders who are trusted because they have proven to be worthy of trust—by colleagues, subordinates, clients, and customers” (Rothlin & Haghirian, 2013: p. 23). According to Dalton (1969), Gandhi is regarded as one of the most effective leaders of his time because, he understood that moral authority is above all other human authorities, and he relied on it to inspire Indians towards a non-violent independence. An individual who embodies “shared values, beliefs, and attitudes that shape and ground a community”, Norris & Sedgwick (2009: p. 86), is able to lead from moral authority.

Leading from moral authority paradigm makes a lot of sense since most followers expect that at the very least their leaders to have higher standards of morality than other people because leaders’ moral failing may bring down the organization (Gabriel, 2015). “Moral leaders are aware of the tie between the core values of their company and their personal value commitment. In adopting the moral point of view in all their actions, they develop moral character and become shining examples for their subordinates” (Rothlin & Haghirian, 2013: p. 21). In some leadership positions like the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the power of the position holder is limited by the governing documents, hence the Secretary-General has to rely on her/his moral authority to move the United Nations forward. This is a case where individual’s moral standings are very critical for the effectiveness of the organization. Hammarskjöld, arguably the most effective United Nations Secretary-General, derived his morality from Christian ethos and sought a wider application of those values in service of humanity (Kille, 2007).

Gardner (2011) argues that extraordinary leaders not only communicate through stories but they also embody the stories—the story is relied/communicated through the leaders’ lives. They inspire their followers through living and reliving the stories they tell. “People who do not practice what they preach are hypocrites, and hypocrisy mutes the effectiveness of their stories”. Both EU and Russia accuse each other of supporting breakaway states or regions that are seeking independence, hence Russia questions the moral leadership of EU (Headley, 2015). Credibility gap erodes moral authority. Leaders must be aware and avoid double standards because it undermines one’s moral

authority. It is not sustainable to call on others to embrace values that you are not observing yourself. Sometimes, some leaders act amoral not because they are amoral or they are unaware of the right thing to be done, but moral neutralization or justification propels them act unethically (Kvalnes, 2014). Leaders who lead from moral authority perspective should be keen not to fall into the trap of moral neutralization.

4. Leadership is a Daily Choice

The secret of success is determined by your daily agenda—John Maxwell

*If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, **do more and become more**, you are a leader—John Quincy Adams*

Bennis (1997: p. 14) asserts that “leadership is the capacity to translate [purpose and] vision into reality”. Action is the currency of leadership. Having a purpose is a good starting point but having a purpose that is not implemented is of no use to humanity (Howie, 1968). Leaders together with their followers they must act upon their purposes and convictions to move society forward. Leadership is a daily decision, it is a daily undertaking. It is not action for its own sake, it is daily action to make a difference in people’s lives. Leaders who define their times cannot afford to bask in their past glory, they have no room for complacency, so should you. A leader is as good as her current decision. Leaders lead in the present, not in the past.

West Point, arguably the world’s best leadership development institution, has summed up its leadership philosophy in three instructive words: be, know and do (Snook, Nohria, & Khurana, 2012). The “do” (action) part gives life to the first two parts, if you are of good character (“be” part) and you know about leadership and its practices (“know” part), your character and knowledge is only useful if it is put to good use (“doing” part). Just like lawyers and medics have a phrase for an active member of their respective professions: practising lawyer or practising doctor respectively. Leadership profession should also think of “practising leader”, but it should be reserved only for leaders who are exercising leadership in the present and it can’t be any leadership, it must be ethical and effective leadership only.

According to Drucker (2004), successful leaders identify what needs to be done, then they establish if it is them to do it or someone else is better at it. Whether it is the leader or his followers who are better at the task, effective leaders ensure that the task is done. There is no other way of achieving greatness apart from working at it daily. In order to take daily actions that make a difference in people’s lives, a leader must embody passion, commitment and courage. The three and action are inseparable, for example, you cannot say that Desmond Tutu is courageous if he has not demonstrated or he is not demonstrating courage. Courage is a practices/action, it is lived. Learning is the final characteristics. Learning may involve both acquiring knowledge and skills yet do nothing with the acquired knowledge and skills but learning may also occur while pursuing one’s goals, which boosts performance and arouses more curiosity for fur-

ther learning. This latter learning is the kind of learning that impactful leaders engage in and it is the kind of learning that is envisioned in this paper.

4.1. Passion

Passion is energy, the power that comes from focusing on what excites you—Oprah Winfrey

Desire, burning desire, is basic to achieving anything beyond the ordinary—Joseph Wirthlin

The question, “what is your passion”, assumes that you know your purpose and that you are using your passion to serve your purpose. Passion without purpose is of little value if any. It is absolutely difficult to expect a person who isn’t in service of his purpose to be passionate about what she does. Lasting passion serves purpose but it is not the purpose itself. Passion is the driving force that makes things happens. Passion is a persistent itch, a great enthusiasm, a burning desire to accomplish planned goals. Passion brings leaders’ values and purposes to life. Passion “is the connection to a deeply held set of values and to a purpose beyond our self-interest” (Loehr & Schwartz, 2003: p. 2). Vallerand et al. (2003: p. 756) define passion “as a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy”. Passion is a strong feeling that it is referred to as consuming passion. Passion comes with a healthy dose of obsession. Passion is contagious, a passionate leader is more likely to inspire passion in his/her followers and the converse is true. Both passion and motivation move individuals to exert force, but passion is an “intense, positive inclinations aimed at specific tasks” (Murnieks, Mosakowski, & Cardon, 2014: p. 1587).

Manasse (1985) argues that leaders can only invest long hours and other important resources if they love (they are passionate about) what they do, they enjoy doing it and they derive satisfaction out of it. Immelt (2017) attributes his success as General Electric’s CEO for 16 years to his love for work, without which he couldn’t have survived and thrived. Without passion, you cannot enjoy continued success. Passion is a stronger influencer of behaviour among many disciplines. Passion energizes and inspires entrepreneurs to overcome challenges of starting and growing a business (Murnieks, Mosakowski, & Cardon, 2014). Miller Jr. (2016) asserts that passion affects both activity engagement and the quality of the outcome.

Leaders must have an inner drive to overcome people who benefit from the quo and resist change. Leaders must have the daily inner drive or “fire in their bellies” to bring about change. The inner drive gets the leaders past the naysayers and enemies (Gergen, 2014). Research has revealed a positive relationship between harmonious passion and expert performance in the activity, psychological well-being, sustained engagement in the promotions of a cause likely to help one’s society and the development and maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships and intergroup relations (Miller Jr., 2016). Harmonious passion predicts individual’s adaptive ability, high and sustainable performance (Jowett,

Lafrenie're, & Vallerand, 2012; Vallerand et al., 2003; Bonneville-Roussy, Lavigne, & Vallerand, 2011).

Murnieks, Mosakowski, & Cardon (2014) argue that since passion predicts performance, then it is imperative to know what constitutes passion and how to develop it. Given the confusion that occurs in conceptualization and definition of purpose and passion, when people argue that passion is discovered and not developed, they may be referring to purpose and not passion. Peters (2003) says leaders are dealers in hope, but enthusiasm cannot be taught easily yet very critical for leadership. Passion can be developed although it is a difficult task. Passion grows as the consonance grows between personal interests, identity and the goal to be achieved (Miller Jr., 2016). Passion is also triggered by the centrality of certain identity (the importance that is attached to an identity, say, entrepreneur) and salience—readiness to enact a certain identity (Murnieks et al., 2014).

Corner (2016) contends that the relationship between passion and reason is contested, where passion is blamed for manipulation, misinformation and diversion in the name of deliberation. As a result, a discussion of passion is incomplete without discussing of fanaticism. This paper in any way does not call for single-mindedness passion. Any passion that cannot subject itself to the scrutiny of impartial minds is a step too far, a recipe of the destruction of self and others. When passion goes beyond the realm of sound reason into distorted reason and rationally indefensible territories, it becomes fanaticism. In that territory, the worst amongst us fuel ethnic and religious conflicts (Walzer, 2002: p. 618), the list of destructions is not exhaustive. Vallerand et al. (2003) contend that harmonious passion is good for well-being while obsessive passion creates internal pressure in people who harbour it since people participate in activities because they have become part of their rigid identity, not because they like the activities. While recognizing the shortcomings of excessive passion, Walzer (2002: p. 632) argues that passion is a must have in pursuit of goals, “there is no way to join the parties and movements that are struggling for social change, and to support the ‘good’ passions and convictions against the ‘bad’ ones, except to do so—passionately”.

4.2. Commitment

When confronted with a challenge, a committed heart will search for a solution.

The undecided heart searches for an escape—Andy Andrews

It is not that leaders do not face moments of doubt or discouragement, but, even if they do, leaders have to soldier on. When a leader has sacrificed for his people but the people cannot see his contribution, what propels him forward? Some days the leader may be discouraged, without energy and with little hope, only commitment can push him forward. Commitment should be summoned to work. When passion ends or wears out, commitment pushes the leader over the finishing line. Commitment is constant, passion may oscillate. During moments of little or no passion, commitment carries the leader through and reconnects him to his passion. If a leader commits to developing a new generation of ethical

and effective leaders for the troubled world, there is no reverse gear on commitment. Success or failure, none can stop the leader, each is a stepping stone. A leader may fail today but tomorrow he has to be up; making a difference is not a single shot, the leader has to be at it until it is done or he is done. A committed leader's ideas and actions may be disproved with time but they will have created a new reality, a new way of thinking and doing something. A leader may succeed today, but just as it is for failure, tomorrow he must be up. Impacting people's lives is not a one-hit wonder. It is not a 100 M dash, it is a marathon. Leadership is not an event, leaders have to stay the course irrespective of the hurdles, they never give up (Immelt, 2017).

Committed leaders are dedicated and obligated, they pledge loyalty to the course, they are non-quitters and they carry with them a substantial level of stubbornness in their pursuit to impacts lives. Commitment is a psychological contract between the leader and her followers which leads to followers' better lives. It is not about being committed, it about being committed to what makes a difference in peoples' lives, it is about what you are committed to. It is important for the leader to know clearly what she is committed to because commitment does not only define the leader's life but it impacts others. Nowadays organizations seek to earn employees' commitment, which is a good thing, but it important to note that whether the organizations seek to earn employees' commitment or not, any engagement between employer and employee without total commitment will lead to mediocre results. Leaders who seek to make a difference do not go into assignments half-heartedly, it is 100% or nothing. DeShon & Landis (1997: p. 106) define goal commitment "as the degree to which the individual considers the goal to be important, is determined to reach it by expending effort over time, and is unwilling to abandon or lower the goal when confronted with setbacks and negative feedback". Although the definition is about goal commitment, it captures the essence of the commitment which is absolute dedication.

Meyer & Allen (1997); Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky (2002) argue that commitment is an affective attachment to an organization or goals and the desire for continued identification with one's organization. It is having a sense responsibility towards one organization. They argue that commitment can be classified into three categories. First, affective commitment, where an individual has an affective attachment to the purpose of the organization, they are happy to identify themselves with the organization. Secondly, continuance, where an individual has no alternative, she has to stay with her current organization or project, the cost of leaving is so prohibitive. Thirdly, normative, where the individual has the responsibility to stick with the organization. I contend that all the three form of commitment (affective, continuance and normative) are required for commitment to go beyond romance but affective is particularly important because one sees the current project, assignment or work as what he ought to be doing, the attitude is "this is my time, this is my place and this is my assignment". Affective commitment reinforces the importance of purpose because it is purpose, goals, beliefs and values that people, in this case, leaders

identify with. Some of the bases of commitment are “identification, value congruence, involvement, socialization, reciprocity norms, investments and lack of alternatives” (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004: p. 998). Walzer (2002) also argues that commitment is not a baseless dedication, it is a product of shared interests and convictions.

In a national survey of human resource managers in the UK, 11, 72 and 17 percent of the respondents said that commitment is the most important issue, a very important issue and important issue to their organization respectively (Shepherd & Mathews, 2000). Commitment yields tremendous benefits to the organization, it minimizes intentions to quit and lower turnover while promoting organizational citizenship behaviour, attendance increased performance (Meyer et al., 2002). Westerberg & Tafvelin (2015) argue that leaders’ commitment to change affects the outcome of changes process and the levels of commitment may be maintained or increased during change period with constant support of leaders. Commitment is important in pursuit of desired outcomes in all fields, in teaching, teachers’ commitment is directly linked to students’ learning outcome (Sun, 2015).

Committed people ignore distractions and remain steadfast on the main objectives. There is too much good that need to be done, too many different needs to be met in people’s lives but a single leader can’t meet them all, hence, the need to “maintain disciplined attention” as proposed by Heifetz (1994). Leaders keep their eyes on the ball, avoid sideshows, and also ensure that the team is focused. Besides choosing a niche, a leader has also to decide on how to deal with criticisms and/or attacks that are thrown at him. King (2000) says that if he had paid attention to all the criticisms that were levelled against him, he couldn’t have been left with any time for important issues like fighting injustices.

4.3. Courage

Courage is the most important of all the virtues because, without courage, you can’t practice any other virtue consistently—Maya Angelou

The courage envisaged here is courage embedded in grit, whether physical, moral or psychological, it must be an unyielding resolve to stop at nothing until the objectives are achieved. It is continued embodiment and show of resilience until one’s purpose is served. Note that it is continued and not continuous because at times the spirit or the body may be weak but the overall assessment must be a trail of courage. In the past courage may have been synonymous with taking to the battlefields with unwavering resolve, today, courage still involves an aspect of resolute display of physical strength in the face of enormous danger but it is much more. Moral and psychological courage are competing for the front row with physical courage. You must have the courage to understand where your detractors are coming from (why do they behave the way they do) not just blow them up. Treasurer (2008) argues that if courage is the virtue that makes all other virtues in life possible, then courage is most important virtue of

leadership. Courage is divided into three aspects: the courage to try (something you have never done before), the courage to trust (take others by their word) and the courage to tell (or speak the truth to power and also listen to the juniors). Leaders have to do the right things, but many times what is right is not what is popular, hence leaders need to have the courage to forge forward, Bass (1990), calls this courage, inner-strength. Courage does not mean that the emotion of fear does not apply to you as it applies to other human beings, but it means that the fear of your inaction overpowers the consequence that you might face if you take action.

King (1968) reminds leaders that what is right is not necessarily safe, good for politics or popular but leaders must show courage by choosing what is right above everything else. Leadership like life is about making decisions but unlike decisions made in individual life, leaders' decisions affects many stakeholders and sometimes the decisions although important they may be unpopular, hence the need for courage. Today's leaders face more scrutiny, at the click of a button the whole world lets you know that you are such an imbecile, the leader may recoil to politically correct pronouncements only if he or she lacks the fortitude to press on, hence leaders need courage to function. The leader needs courage to share real power with his team, the leader needs courage to tell the truth to power and to accept the truth from her followers. The first test of courage a leader faces is with his family. No place where courage is needed more like with one's family, the leader need courage to ignore with love some of the rhetoric coming from the family members. Leaders must remember that they need family all the time, more when things seem not to be working, the leader can go home receive a hug and wait to fight another day. Although I was aware of JF Kennedy's "Profiles in Courage" for over a decade, I did not give it much thought until it occurred to me that most leaders' decisions and actions are not popular, at least in the initial days, hence leaders need courage in order to take action.

McHale (2012: p. 4) posits that leaders who make a difference in their communities and the world "do not let anything stop them, least of all themselves". Such leaders do not live their lives seeking trouble, they do not find personal pleasure in suffering, but they do not let personal suffering stop them in pursuit of a better society. They are just devoted to the course. They give themselves to the course. Anything that tries to stop them is fought with all the life left in the leaders. In the Rivonia Trial, Mandela was prepared to die if that is what it took for the blacks in South Africa to be liberated. Leaders who make a difference know that they can do more when alive than dead, but when they are being blocked, they throw everything they have left at the barricade, including their own lives. King (2000: p. 87) asserts that he could not just sit in his office in Atlanta, while Blacks in Birmingham were languishing under the yoke of injustice. He literally walked into burning fire of hate so that the Blacks could enjoy the cool shade of justice. He could not just close his eyes and wish that the suffering of Blacks in the United States will go away by itself. Whenever there was injus-

tice in America and even beyond, King did not say that the suffering was too far for his action but he responded that, “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”.

Leaders must portray moral courage, they must refuse to engage in unethical activities and at the same time, they must undertaking ethical activities irrespective of opposition from others (Rothlin & Haghirian, 2013). Moral courage is doing what is right for others through the lenses of one’s inner principles irrespective of the consequences that may arise due to the actions taken (Sekerka & Bagozzi, 2007). Gabriel (2015) argues that followers expect their leaders to have the moral courage, more so in face of opposition and ridicule, leaders must stick with their beliefs. I agree with Hannah, Avolio, & Walumbwa (2011) that moral judgement may not translate into taking moral actions, although it is the basis for moral actions, but I disagree with their quest to establish whether moral courage predicts ethical behaviour. Moral courage is not a stepping stone to ethical behaviour, it is the ethical behaviour itself. Moral courage is not something you do, it is who you are. By portraying moral courage, you are behaving ethically and the result of this behaviour is impacting lives positively. Sekerka and Bagozzi also assert that moral courage is malleable, hence it is influenced by many things which include the context.

Courage without humility is a recipe for pride on the leader’s part and a source of resentment for the followers.

4.4. Learning

The best leaders are always learning—Gina Sanders

I don’t think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday—Abraham Lincoln

After 16 years at the helm of GE, Immelt (2017) retired with his final words, “learning is a part of the DNA for all good leaders”. One only remains an impactful leader if one remains an effective learner. Whether informal or formal, learning is a must for leaders. Often we hear of tycoons who say I made it without a college degree, but what they do not often say is that they have never stopped learning. You can make it without a college degree but you can’t make it without learning. Since sometimes learning happens in school it doesn’t mean that learning only and always happens in school. A school is mainly a place for people who haven’t learnt how to learn. Once Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Steve Jobs and Richard Branson had learnt how to learn they dropped out of school but they never dropped out of learning, by and through continued learning they have built some of the most successful companies in their generations. This is not to say that school is not important in developing leaders. Majority of the current crop of leaders in the world have been to school, a few of them turned out to be more ethical and effective leaders while majority whet the world’s craving for better leadership, one may wonder how worse could those leaders have been if they had never been to school. School is important but continued learning is supreme. Looking at the landscape of ethical and effective leaders it

may be difficult to conclude that school or dropping out of school made them, what is easy to conclude is that continued learning made them. Learning is the only insurance for continued growth, especially in the changing world. It is not entirely about learning new things, as it is also seeing the old things in a new light.

Ever learning ensures that leaders are able to anticipate and respond to emerging challenges in ways that will ensure continued organizational prosperity (Keating, Heslin, & Ashford, 2017). The half-life of today's skills is hardly five years on average. Learning enables a business to connect dots, to see around the corner (predict the future) and prosper in a changing and competitive world (Mikkelsen & Jarcho, 2015). Baldoni (2009) asserts that leaders thrive on figuring out things. When leaders stop learning, misalignment between the organization and the environment is likely to occur to the detriment of the organization they lead. Leaders and organizations are in constant state of becoming, hence constant learning is a permanent companion of both (Mikkelsen & Jarcho, 2015). Through learning, individuals who make a difference seek to expand their boundaries of knowledge and practice. However, Manasse (1985) warns that effective leaders are never under the illusion that they can learn everything, hence they can't do everything. They understand their limitations and know how and what to delegate so that they can leverage their strength. The same observation was made by Bennis & Nanus (1985) when they stated that impactful leaders discover their weakness and strength and most importantly they orchestrate their lives to make use of their strength. Companies that desire to be learning organizations must have leaders who love learning because leaders who see themselves as learners are more likely to build firms that value and practice learning (Manasse, 1985).

Organizations are not fully benefiting from over 24 billion dollars that are spent on leadership development annually, hence the need to enhance leaders' learning modes and one of the modes that has been proven as the best is learning from experience. Leaders to benefit fully from experience they must go through such experience with a 'wanting-to-learn-mindset' in order for the experience to be beneficial. Mindfulness in learning is achieved by taking into account the three components of mindful engagement experiential learning cycle: the setting of challenging learning goals, experimenting with alternative strategy and finally, conducting fearless after-action reviews (Keating et al., 2017).

Baldoni (2009) reminds accomplished individuals, but I think this challenge is for all leaders, that they should not let their ego stop them from learning, leaders must also discover how they learn, otherwise they will waste a lot of time learning through methods that are not suited to their individual abilities, finally leaders thrive on asking questions. If you are not asking questions you are not growing. Today's work must be done faster and smarter, hence, today's and future learning must be agile, that is, learning which is based on speed, flexibility and open to diverse points of view or ideas (Mikkelsen & Jarcho, 2015; DeRue, Ash-

ford, & Myers, 2012). Leaders and organizations do not have all the time under the sun to learn, the competitors are daily improving their learning. Leaders and their organizations that want to win in the market they must be ahead of the learning curve. The million dollar question is what should leaders learn? Leavy (2003) has an idea about what leaders should be learning, he argues that leaders like Immelt read biography and history instead of reading management books and consuming management consultants' contents because those leaders are not looking for prescriptions but they are looking for perspectives.

The questions of who is the leader listening to, what is she reading and what is she exposed to are critical to a leader and they cannot be rhetorical questions. They reveal what the leader is learning if at all she is learning. Channels and opportunities for learning include, one, leaders and organizations must learn from failure. Failure must be turned around, it must be embraced as an opportunity to learn what not to do and do next time. "This type of innovative learning is important to an organization because it is the type of learning that can bring change, renewal, restructuring, and problem reformulation" (Manasse, 1985: p. 161). Two, great leaders learn through performance review, through which they establish what worked, what didn't work and why it didn't work. This leads to bettering some and dropping some courses and/or methods. Effective leaders honestly review their performance (Drucker, 2004). The review may take many forms, but one sure form that many leaders apply is self-reflection, where leaders look into themselves and see if they are making a difference or not. You cannot take actions without looking back to see if the actions taken have served the purpose. Three, ethical and effective leaders reflect to ensure that lessons learnt stick, they identify shortfalls and correct them (Lakhani, Benzies, & Hayden (2012). Four, consummate leaders seek and welcome feedback and act on it (McHale, 2012). Finally, all impactful learning is self-learning, whether taught or self-taught a leader must reach a point where she has to recall, to synthesis and to apply what she learnt. Nobody can do this for the leader, hence the ultimate learning is self-learning.

Borrowing from Srikantia & Pasmore's (1996) argument that for the learning to thrive in organizations it must be accompanied by the right dosage of doubt, leaders must enhance their capacity to not only accommodate doubt but actively discover it. Leaders must be happy that there are things they aren't sure of and they are seeking solutions to. Doubt is the best companion for a soul destined for greatness. If a leader is at the level where everything around him is familiar, it is time for a change or he will become an impediment to the progress of both himself and the organization.

5. Implication

Impactful leadership is not an inevitable consequence of leadership development and/or knowledge of leadership theories. Whereas leadership theory reveals what leadership is about, beyond leadership reveals whom a leader needs to be in order to practice ethical and effective leadership. Beyond leadership provides

elements that enable leaders to make use of leadership knowledge and skills to impact humanity. Organizations and individual should first establish their purpose before they define their vision and outline their objectives. Employer-employee relationship should be based on congruence of purposes rather than the exchange of skills for money. Morals and its variants like ethics should be at the heart of every leadership undertaking. The attention and value attached to passion must be extended to commitment and courage since leadership is a demanding engagement. Training and schooling is important but learning is supreme. Further research should be carried out to test and consolidate the proposed beyond leadership model.

6. Conclusion

Beyond leadership, the essence of impactful leadership is a blend of the desire to make a difference, moral authority and actions taken daily to realize the desires. People (leaders) who impact their generations have a purpose, convictions, moral authority, they lead with passion, commitment, courage and they are ever learning. Whereas each of the seven elements of impactful leadership is essential, without purpose it is impossible to explain conclusively reasons for the leader's convictions, the basis of the leader's moral authority, the basis of the leader's passion, what the leader is committed to, the reason why leader is courageous, and why the leader is learning continually. An impactful leader is armed with purpose and convictions, powered by moral authority and driven by passion, commitment, courage and learning.

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Appendix

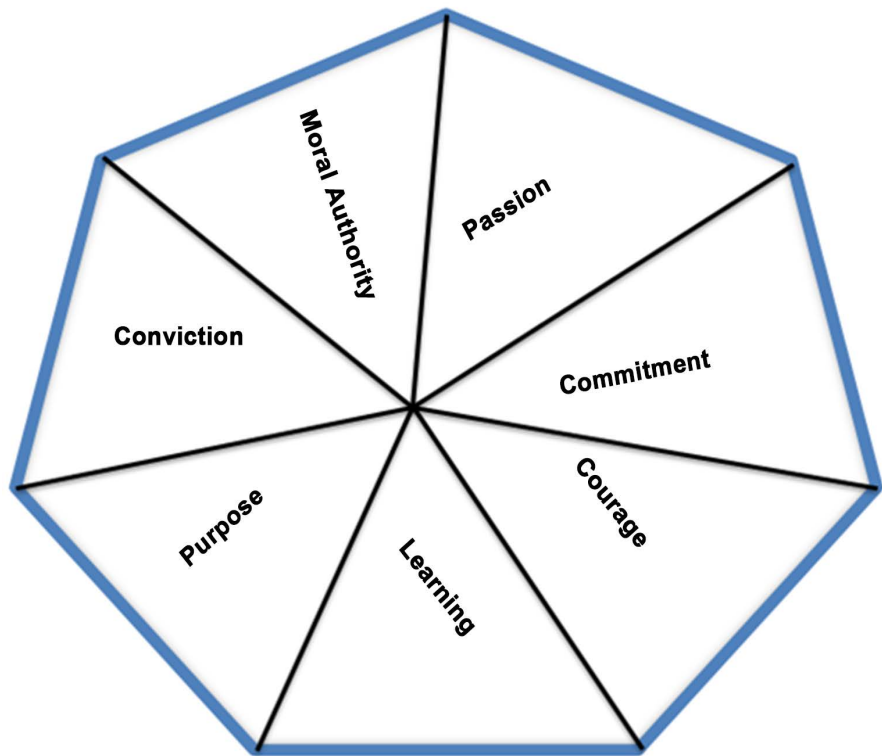


Figure A1. The seven elements of beyond leadership.