Value-Based Leadership in Organizations: Balancing Values, Interests, and Power Among Citizens, Workers, and Leaders

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The purpose of this article is to introduce a model of value-based leadership. The model is based on tensions among values, interests, and power (VIP); and tensions that take place within and among citizens, workers, and leaders (CWL). The VIP–CWL model describes the forces at play in the promotion of value-based practice and formulates recommendations for value-based leadership. The ability to enact certain values is conditioned by power and personal interests of communities, workers, and leaders of organizations. People experience internal conflicts related to VIP as well as external conflicts related to disagreements with the CWL. Value-based practice is predicated on the ability to alleviate these tensions. Leaders have 4 main roles in promoting value-based practice: (a) clarify values, (b) promote personal harmony among VIP, (c) enhance congruence of VIP among CWL, and (d) confront people and groups subverting values or abusing power to promote personal interests.

Key words: value-based leadership, business ethics, conflict management

Do we not have enough models of leadership? Have we not talked enough about values in organizations? The answer to both questions is a qualified yes. Yes, we have many models of leadership (e.g., Kluger & Baker, 1994; Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Weatley, 1992), and yes, we have many propositions about the role of values in organizations (Becker, 1998; Bergquist, 1993; Covey, 1989; Senge, Ross, Smith, Rob-

erts, & Kleiner, 1994). But with some notable exceptions (Block, 1993; DiTomaso & Hooijberg, 1996; Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996), models of organizational leadership do not always articulate the set of values underpinning practice or the complicated relation among values, interests, and power (VIP) across stakeholder groups. The main problem is that even those authors who addressed the ethical dimension of leadership, like Block (1993) and Covey (1989), appeared to undermine the nature of conflict in industry. Some fundamental contradictions between profits and values and between the interests of owners and workers are often glossed over. It seems to me that clarity with respect to these issues is crucial for ethical leadership.

Many models of applied ethics assume that given the right developmental, psychological, and cognitive capacities, individuals should be able to read a situation objectively and neutralize social influences that might interfere with the application of desirable values (cf. Garfat & Ricks, 1995; Hill, Glaser, & Harden, 1995; Neukrug, Lovell, & Parker, 1996; Pettifor, 1996; Plante, 1995; Woody, 1990). The problem is that individuals cannot read ethical dilemmas "objectively." Neither actors nor observers can remain "unaffected" by vested interests. The configuration of power relations affects a person's ability to put other people's well-being ahead of personal interests. The configuration of power dynamics also affects how a person apprehends ethical possibilities (Brumback, 1991; DiTomaso & Hooijberg, 1996). If a professional is feeling threatened, he or she might think of himself or herself prior to thinking about a client (Chambliss, 1996; Dokecki, 1996).

The application of ethical principles is not a cognitive exercise individuals can perform in isolation from the social arena where ethical dilemmas are being played (Bowden, 1997; Brown, 1997; Bursztajn, Gutheil, & Cummins, 1987; Chambliss, 1996; Dokecki, 1996). They are actors in the same play that they are supposed to analyze in a detached manner—an expectation that does not seem reasonable. Professionals' conceptions of ethics are framed within an evolving web of social relations. The application of values takes place within intersubjective spaces. It is within this intersubjective web that values are conditioned by power, interests, and conflict (Prilleltensky, Walsh-Bowers, & Rossiter, 1999). In a dramatic example of how applied ethics and values are overshadowed by conflict in hospital settings, Chambliss (1996) told us that

> *Ethical problems in the hospital reflect divergences of interest among groups.* Ethical issues … are not intellectual puzzles to be solved with the aid of clearly elaborated "principles," such as respect for autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice. They are not abstract issues, solvable by appeals to logic, through academic research, or merely with "enhanced communication," although that may help. Ethical issues are not a mere competition of ideas; they are a competition of *people*, who have their various goals and methods. They represent real problems in organizational action, constrained by legal, economic, social, and personal peculiarities. Education, sensitivity, awareness may marginally affect political alignments, but ethical prob-

lems are not solvable by changing people's thought. The problems are not inside people's heads. (p. 118)

Whereas the corpus of applied ethics consists mainly of codes of ethics and decision-making frameworks to be used by individual agents in moments of ethical despair, Chambliss (1996) argued that applied ethics has much more to do with political tension than with cognitive problem solving. In contrast to the principal thrust of applied ethics as an individual's responsibility to identify dilemmas and act according to his or her best judgment, his work situates ethics not in the heads of independent agents, but rather at the center of conflictive social relations.

Value-based leadership must transcend reliance on codes of ethics and abstract mission statements (Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996). The application of values in organizations must entail an awareness of the "dynamic complexity and diversity of specific situations, and the particular needs, desires, intellectual and emotional habits of the persons participating in them" (Bowden, 1997, p. 3). As a result, people's interests have to be seriously considered in accounts of value-based leadership. Yet, they often remain neglected. Hence, my objectives in this article are to (a) analyze the interplay among VIP; (b) elucidate conflicts within and among citizens, workers, and leaders (CWL); and (c) formulate recommendations for value-based leadership.

OVERVIEW OF MODEL

The purpose of this article is to provide a conceptual foundation for the promotion of value-based leadership in organizations. The first half of this article presents a model of value-based leadership, whereas the second half formulates recommendations for practice.

Value-based leadership may be conceptualized as practice aimed at fostering cogent values in consideration of personal interests and degrees of power held by people within an organization and in the group of people it serves. This type of leadership is based on an understanding that vested interests and social power can interfere with the promotion of certain values. Hence, a leader who worries only about the cogency of a mission statement has done only half of the job. Once values are clarified and mission statements are articulated, it is the role of the leader to examine how subjective, interpersonal, and political processes either facilitate or inhibit the actualization of an organizational vision.

Figure 1 shows the three main groups that leaders should be concerned about in an attempt to realize an organizational vision (CWL). Under each group there is a triangle formed by VIP. This represents that each stakeholder group is invested in not only promoting certain values, but also protecting its interests and using its power to do so. There is a tension in each group between values, which are sup-
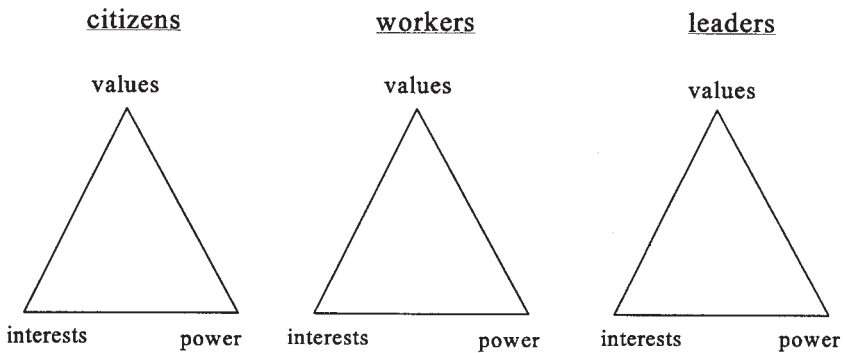
FIGURE 1   The VIP of stakeholder groups.

posed to advance collective well-being, and interests, which are supposed to advance personal well-being. Members of each group use the power at their disposal to advance both values and interests. When personal interests outweigh the pursuit of collective values, of what is good for the community at large, value-based practice is derailed (Block, 1993; Brumback, 1991; Covey, 1989; Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996).

Leaders are to understand the dynamic interaction among VIP in each of the three groups. Leaders should know that conflicts may arise within individuals, who struggle to harmonize their interests with their values, as well as within and across groups. Members of a group might differ with respect to their values and interests, and might use their differential power to get their way (DiTomaso & Hooijberg, 1996). Similarly, groups might disagree about preferred values and have conflicting interests. Leaders are to be aware of conflicts taking place at these three levels of analysis and should strive to enhance the zone of congruence among VIP as well as CWL. In the next section, I elaborate on each of the components of the model.

THE PLAYERS

Multiple constituencies have a stake in organizations. The model I present categorizes stakeholders into three main groups: CWL, served by the organization, or affected by the organization.

Leaders

Leaders are the people in charge of the organization. There are different levels of leaders, from team leaders to managers to executive directors to chief executive of-

ficers. Each one of them has needs and a vision for the organization. They can be subject to internal conflicts as well as interpersonal conflicts with other CWL.

Workers

Workers are not a homogenous group. Each organization has a variety of workers, distinguished by their level of skill, prestige, status, and the like. Gender and income differences create divisions among workers. The organizational culture determines who is more valued and who is less important. Just like leaders face internal conflicts, so do workers. Likewise, workers face conflicts with peers, superiors, and members of the public.

Citizens

This is the generic name for the public served by an organization. Depending on the type of organization, citizens served or affected by the organization may be circumscribed, as in the case of a children's mental health clinic, or more broad, as in the case of a community health department or an insurance company. But whatever the case may be, organizations are to serve the public. Citizens have varying degrees of participation in the management of an institution or agency. Levels of participation might range from complete exclusion to input at annual meetings to meaningful collaboration in the running of the organization (Racino, 1991). In addition, clients might have harmonious or conflictive relations with the agency. Consumers of mental health services, for instance, have sometimes acrimonious relationships with psychiatric hospitals but collaborative dealings with community-based services (Chamberlin, 1990).

Leaders are concerned with the impact of the organization on the well-being of its workers and of the public it serves. They are also concerned about their own material and psychological satisfaction. In general terms, these are the three groups that leaders worry about. Together, they constitute his or her main stakeholder groups.

The model is based on the assumption that organizations exist to serve a purpose larger than their own existence. Institutions that exist for their own sake become a liability instead of a resource to the community. The model further assumes that people are in organizations to give and take. This applies to leaders as well as workers. These are basic assumptions needed to proceed with our analysis of the main parts of the model.

THE PARTS

A value-based model of leadership begins with value clarification but by no means should end there (Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996). Articulation of values is only the

beginning of a process. Implementation of values is conditioned by personal interests and social power. Unless we examine carefully each of these components, we risk fostering values in a vacuum.

Values

Values may be defined as principles of action that benefit other individuals and the community at large. Kekes (1993) defined values as "humanly caused benefits that human beings provide to others. … By way of illustration, we may say that love and justice are moral goods" (p. 44). Values guide the process of working toward a desired state of affairs; they are precepts that inform our personal, professional, and political behavior. But values are not only beneficial in that they guide behavior toward a future outcome, for they also have intrinsic merit. We espouse values like empowerment, caring, and solidarity not just because they lead toward a good or better society, but also because they have merit on their own (Kane, 1994; Kekes, 1993). Indeed, according to Mayton, Ball-Rokeach, and Loges (1994), "values may be defined as enduring prescriptive or proscriptive beliefs that a specific mode of conduct (instrumental value) or end state of existence (terminal value) is preferred to another mode of conduct or end state" (p. 3). Schwartz (1994) pointed out that values "serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity" (p. 21).

Based on previous research on the values needed to promote personal and collective well-being (Prilleltensky, 1997), I suggest three sets of values to guide individual and organizational behavior: (a) *values for personal wellness* (e.g., self-determination, autonomy, health, and personal growth), (b) *values for collective wellness* (e.g., social justice, support for community structures), and (c) *values for relational wellness* (e.g., respect for human diversity, collaboration, and democratic participation), whereas wellness is defined as a satisfactory state of affairs brought about by the fulfillment of basic needs (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2000). These categories reflect the need to balance individual and social goals, as well as the need for dialogue in resolving conflicts of interests. There is a dialectic between values for personal and collective wellness; one kind cannot exist without the other. Although this dialectic has been amply recognized (e.g., Bauman, 1993; Sandel, 1996), what is often missed in the literature is the need for values for relational wellness that mediate between the good of the individual and the good of the collective, a need that is often invoked in feminist (Frazer & Lacey, 1993; Hernández, 1997; Hill Collins, 1993; Lorde, 1993) and native writings (Gunn Allen, 1993). Neither personal nor collective wellness can exist without mechanisms for connecting between them (Habermas, 1990; Putnam, 1996).

Examples of values for personal wellness include autonomy, health, and personal growth. Social justice, a central collectivist value, calls for the fair and equitable allocation of bargaining powers, resources, and obligations in society, whereas support for community structures ensures that we have in place public

sources of support. Two examples of relational values include collaboration and democratic participation and respect for human diversity.

These sets of values are premised on the assumption that strong communities benefit everyone. Whether we like it or not, the fulfillment of the self is linked to the contentment of the group. Violent neighborhoods and families constrain personal well-being. Poorly resourced communities limit opportunities for health and development. High-quality public institutions like schools and hospitals benefit the community at large. Support for community structures and social justice in allocation of resources are examples of values for collective wellness because they enhance the quality of life for all citizens.

If we did not have values to protect communities and individuals, the incidence of harm would increase. If we did not have regulations against intoxicated driving, more innocent people would be killed. If we did not have norms against smoking in public spaces, more children would be affected by secondhand smoke. These and other collective norms are needed to protect citizens against potential abuses of power and excesses of individual rights.

In some cases, personal and collective wellness come into conflict. Smokers demand self-determination and the right to engage in the habit, public health officials uphold the public good by imposing smoking bans; unprepared teenagers want to have babies, preventionists strive to avert teenage pregnancy. Ideally, personal and collective wellness would be mutually enhancing, but it is often the case that conflicts arise. This is why we should promote values for relational wellness, values that uphold conflict resolution and collaboration (Nelson, Prilleltensky, & MacGillivary, in press; Putnam, 1996).

Good and just societies cannot thrive in the absence of any of these three groups of values. The absence of social values leads to the individualism we are all too accustomed to in the West, whereas the absence of personal rights is conducive to dissatisfaction with collective regimes. A most delicate balance between values for personal and collective wellness is needed to promote a society in which the good and just life is not counterindicated with the good and just society. This is why it is imperative to pay attention to the values for relational wellness, values that are supposed to bring a measure of peaceful coexistence among groups with varied interests.

Table 1 provides guidelines for promoting a balance among values for personal, collective, and relational wellness in organizations. These are aspirational statements that leaders should strive to enact. However, as we shall see later, their implementation is less than simple because of interference by personal interests and power dynamics.

Interests

Whereas values promote the welfare of others in society, either single individuals or groups, interests represent an investment in our own well-being. Workers, lead-

TABLE 1
Guidelines for Promoting a Balance Among Personal, Collective,
and Relational Wellness in Organizations

Values for	Guidelines
Personal wellness	
Self-determination	Promote the ability of workers and community members to pursue their chosen goals in life *in consideration* of other people's needs.
Health	Promote the physical and emotional well-being of workers and community members through acquisition of skills and behavioral change *in consideration* of structural and economic factors impinging on the health of the population at large.
Personal growth	Promote the personal growth of workers and community members *in consideration* of vital community structures needed to advance individual health and self-actualization.
Collective wellness	
Social justice	Promote fair allocation of bargaining powers, resources, and obligations in community and organization *in consideration* of people's differential power, needs, and abilities.
Support for community	Promote vital structures that meet the needs of workers and communities *in consideration* of the risks of curtailing individual freedoms and fostering conformity and uniformity.
Relational wellness	
Respect for diversity	Promote respect and appreciation for diverse social identities *in consideration* of need for solidarity and risk of social fragmentation.
Collaboration and democratic participation	Promote peaceful, respectful, and equitable processes of dialogue whereby citizens have meaningful input into decisions affecting their lives, *in consideration* of need to act and not just avoid conflicts.

ers, and community members have their own economic, material, social, and psychological interests to protect. It is a very basic fact that human beings strive to survive and derive personal rewards from their social activities. For as long as personal interests are not threatened, and vision and values are clear, individuals are likely to engage in value-based actions. But once their interests are at risk, violated, or in conflict with values and organizational missions, it is likely that their commitment to values will diminish (Brumback, 1991; DiTomaso & Hooijberg, 1996).

Instead of hoping that colleagues, workers, and client groups will pursue values just because they have been clearly articulated, leaders should be mindful of the ways in which interests may interfere with value-based practice. It would not seem realistic to expect human beings to suppress their subjectivity in the name of altruistic causes that may jeopardize their occupational standing or emotional well-being. Similarly, it would not seem reasonable to expect leaders to stand above personal interests of their own. As we see later, mechanisms to ensure the accountability of leaders are crucial.

Power

Power can be defined as the ability and possibility to influence the course of events in one's life. The ability to promote personal well-being depends on one's economic, social, and psychological power. If a person commands sufficient power to fulfill and protect his or her personal interests, chances are that he or she would be more inclined to pursue value-based actions (see Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996, chap. 3). This argument contends that personal security is a prerequisite or antecedent for the promotion of others' welfare. The power to protect personal interests may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the promotion of values, for some people may use power to achieve more power, instead of using it to share resources with others (DiTomaso & Hooijberg, 1996). In either case, power is a mediating force between interests and values because the person decides how to use his or her power to balance personal interests with the well-being of others.

In organizational settings, power suffuses every aspect of the collective endeavor. As Bradshaw (1998) clearly indicated, the power of those in authority can be exercised through overt or covert means. Although some democratic gestures may be explicit, more powerful dynamics of system maintenance occur at deeper symbolic levels of analysis. There is always the risk of pretending to be democratic and sharing power with employees on minor issues but retaining a tight control on major issues. The pretense of democracy and power equalization at the surface is undermined by deeper mechanisms that reproduce the status quo.

THE RELATION AMONG VIP

Conflicts among VIP can take place within individuals, within groups, and across groups. Individuals may experience a tension between what they regard as ethical and good for the community on one hand, and what they regard as beneficial for their own well-being on the other. An organizational consultant may identify serious problems with management; the good of the workers and the public may be advanced by changing managers or leaders, but such recommendation would put his or her contract in jeopardy. Is the consultant to protect his or her occupational interest above the interests of the community and the workers? This is not an unlikely scenario for many people whose income depends on pleasing those with power.

Within-group tensions occur all the time. Coworkers argue about how to serve the public best and how to allocate burdens and resources within the organization. Conflicts can be strictly of values (how to promote the well-being of a client population) or related to power (how to distribute the workload among professionals). When power differentials are introduced, conflicts within organizational groups

are very pronounced. Physicians order nurses, psychiatrists tell social workers what to do, supervisors control interns, and the like. Interdisciplinary teams are known for power struggles related to values and interests (Chambliss, 1996; Salhani, 1997).

Conflicts across groups of CWL are also very common. These three groups can and often do disagree on values and interests. The degree of power commanded by each group typically determines the outcome of the conflict, an outcome that is not necessarily the most ethical, just, or fair. Survivors of the psychiatric mental health system, for example, have battled long and hard against the dominance of psychiatry over their well-being. They have opposed the unrestrained use of medication on them and the degrading treatment they received in "mental hospitals" (Chamberlin, 1990). This is a case of a community against an organization (the hospital) and a particular group within the organization (psychiatrists). Consumers or survivors claim to have been abused by psychiatrists who have not heard their voices and who have ignored their pleas for more humane forms of treatment and community rehabilitation.

Conflicts between leaders and employees revolve around working conditions, salaries, benefits, organizational structures, and many other items that are part and parcel of collective agreements. Management can be empowering of workers, affording them an opportunity to express their needs and changing the setting to accommodate workers' request for more flexible time, better physical facilities, or monetary compensation. But organizational leaders can also be oppressive, neglecting workers' need for recognition and respect (Burt, 1996). Most leaders fall somewhere along this continuum.

The role of the leader is to facilitate in himself or herself, the organization, and the community it serves congruence among VIP. His or her objective should be to enhance the zone of congruence among the various groups. This is a very difficult task to accomplish, not unlike the struggle faced by every citizen to live with integrity and congruence between stated values and personal actions. In the next section I provide four directions leaders can follow in their attempts to enact value-based practices.

THE ROLE OF THE LEADER IN PROMOTING VALUE-BASED ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICE

Leaders are in a position to promote values for personal, collective, and relational wellness. Table 2 provides some concrete suggestions for enacting the three sets of values within organizations and communities. These are directions that leaders can follow, but always in consideration of the interests and the level of power of the multiple stakeholders involved. To facilitate initiatives of the sort described in Table 2, there is a need to analyze carefully the role of leaders, specific tasks to be car-

TABLE 2
Policies for Value-Based Organizational Practice

Values for	Policies
Personal wellness	
Self-determination	Devise organizational policy in consultation with workers and communities.
Health	Promote healthy environments for workers and communities and establish networks of support.
Personal growth	Facilitate workers' acquisition of skills for personal and occupational growth.
Collective wellness	
Social justice	Implement policies for the fair and equitable allocation of burdens, gains, and resources within the organization and within the community.
Support for community	Create awareness and support for creation and preservation of effective formal and informal supports.
Relational wellness	
Respect for diversity	Promote inclusive organizational policies that do not discriminate on basis of marital status, gender, ability, sexual orientation, class, culture, or any other source of social power.
Collaboration and democratic participation	Consult with diverse groups of stakeholders and develop inclusive and culturally sensitive partnerships with the community.

ried out, facilitative factors, potential subversions, and measures of accountability. Table 3 provides a synthesis of the four major roles identified for leaders. In the next four sections I explain each of the main tasks for leaders along with their respective challenges and possibilities.

Clarify Position of Organization With Respect to Values for Personal, Collective, and Relational Wellness

It was argued earlier that values for personal, collective, and relational wellness should exist in a state of balance. The needs of the individual have to be in harmony with the needs of the collective. To achieve a balance between individual and collective needs and values we require relational values to mediate between conflicting interests. The role of the leader is to help the organization clarify its values and suggest a process for how the organization is to balance values for personal wellness of workers with values for collective well-being of the organization and the community at large.

The task of value clarification requires the engagement of CWL. The leader is to facilitate a participatory process whereby representatives from these three

TABLE 3
The Role of the Leader in Promoting Value-Based Organizational Practice

Role of Leader	Tasks	Facilitating Factors	Potential Subversions	Measures of Accountability
1. Clarify position of organization with respect to values for personal, collective, and relational wellness.	Engage stakeholders in dialogue about ways to balance personal, collective, and relational wellness.	Knowledge with respect to need for balance among values and with respect to process of consultation.	Confuse personal preferences with values and remain at level of abstraction without translating values into action.	Consult with others about limitations and contradictions in values selected.
2. Promote state of affairs in which personal power and self-interests do not undermine wellness or interest of others.	Develop critical self-awareness of how personal interests and social power suffuse leadership and may undermine collective wellness.	Creation of safe space for dialogue about value and ethical dilemmas.	Replace need for personal change with self-acceptance or distort values to coincide with narrow personal interests.	Subject personal and organizational process of consciousness-raising to scrutiny by other stakeholders.
3. Enhance zone of congruence among citizens, workers, and leaders.	Create partnerships among public, leaders, and workers.	Prolonged engagement in the organization and community and establishment of mutual trust.	Engage in token consultative processes that do not afford public meaningful input.	Create leadership structures with meaningful input and representation from various stakeholder groups.
4. Confront people and groups subverting values, abusing power, or allowing self-interests to undermine the well-being of others in the organization or in the community.	Engage in constructive conflict resolution with individuals or groups undermining vision and values.	Clear procedures for conflict resolution, and a culture of openness and critique.	Use power and legitimacy to confront people to suppress opposing views or use conflict resolution to avoid excluding people from organization.	Subject to scrutiny of partners the efforts by leader to confront people and groups subverting visions and values.

groups dialogue about their vision and values for the organization. A participatory process of value articulation encourages collective ownership over the mission of the organization (Maton & Salem, 1995; Racino, 1991; Senge, 1990). An open forum for the community of workers and clients is an adequate vehicle to start the process of value clarification. A balance is needed in such a process between the principles arising from the group and some knowledge about the need for harmony between personal, collective, and relational wellness. It is possible for a group of people to choose primarily values for personal wellness. This way, the group may unwittingly and unknowingly foster individualism instead of collaboration between citizens and communities. Given the dominance of individualism within our culture, this is not an unlikely scenario. In the case of skewed preferences for either personal or collective wellness, or in the case of neglect of relational wellness, it is the role of the leader to suggest a more balanced approach.

Although leaders might be sincere in their desire to formulate a collective mission statement and a cogent set of values, their good intentions are threatened by a number of risks. The first risk is to remain at a level of abstraction that makes for an internally coherent set of values but that is of little use in practice. Values have to be articulated in such a way that they can be translated into concrete policies and guidelines. Table 2 provides some examples of concrete initiatives designed to enact values. Table 2 complements Table 1 in that the first one remains at an abstract level of analysis. I recommend testing the usefulness of values by trying to translate them into concrete practices.

Another risk inherent in the process of value clarification is confusing personal preferences with morally legitimate principles (Becker, 1998). Some management books outline a process of value clarification that relies primarily on what workers prefer but not necessarily on what is morally legitimate (Senge et al., 1994). Values derive their legitimacy from grounded input by people but also from moral philosophy. Values proposed by citizens have to be scrutinized for their ability to promote personal, collective, and relational wellness. Unless they are morally defensible, statements of values amount to no more than preferences (Becker, 1998). Citizens are known to have wished on others reprehensible things, like sterilization in the name of racial purity or segregation in the name of racial superiority. Collective opinion does not automatically translate into legitimate policies and practices.

To enhance the level of accountability in the process of value clarification, I recommend that leaders consult with colleagues and others knowledgeable in the area of values. Just as leaders consult with peers and other professionals with regard to technical aspects of the organization, they should also seek consultation with regard to vision and values. I do not think we can assume that all leaders possess the experience to distinguish between values for personal, collective, and relational wellness or the knowledge to balance them in theory and practice.

Promote State of Affairs in Which Personal Power and Self-Interests Do Not Undermine Wellness or Interest of Others

This role entails, first of all, the development of leaders' awareness of how personal power and vested interests suffuse all aspects of their leadership (Boonstra & Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 1998). This is an awareness that should be spread throughout the organization. Workers and leaders are to reflect on how their personal lives and subjective experiences influence what they deem ethical or valuable for the organization, themselves, and the public they serve. Awareness, however, is only the first step in meeting the challenge of restraining or modulating vested interests. The satisfaction of personal needs is another important requisite. Workers are more likely to abide by collective values and norms when they feel that their personal needs are met by the organization. Therefore, leaders are to procure worker satisfaction as much as they can. Lack of satisfaction can result in disengagement from the organizational mission and in restrained commitment to service.

Research consistently points to the need for a safe space where workers and leaders can disclose their ethical dilemmas without feeling judged (Goleman, 1998; Prilleltensky et al., 1999; Rossiter, Walsh-Bowers, & Prilleltensky, 1996; Weisinger, 1998). Professionals yearn for a space where they can dialogue with peers about their internal and interpersonal conflicts. An organizational climate of openness and acceptance can foster disclosure of problems and paths toward resolution. The need for mutual support cannot be underestimated in work settings. Many workers suffer a great deal from isolation and wish that they could have peers and supervisors with whom to confide their inner struggles.

The process of balancing interests with values can be subverted in various directions. One possible subversion is the development of a discourse on values that legitimizes self-interests. For example, the notion of a "self-made person," which is quite prevalent in North America, can lead to a justification of leaders' privilege on the basis that they earned it (Prilleltensky, 1994). The value of personal merit can be distorted into a pretext for not sharing power or resources. Self-determination, skills, and perseverance may be desirable values, but when they come to justify dominance over other people, they lose their moral strength. Caution should be exercised not to promote distorted values that confer legitimacy to disempowering or unjust practices. This is a serious risk.

Another potential subversion is the creation of safe space that does not challenge participants to change but rather appeases their guilty conscience. A safe space for the discussion of value dilemmas is not to turn into a confessional exercise in which people are absolved of personal responsibility. Rather, these spaces are to foster open dialogue about ethical struggles from which different practices can emerge. The object of safe spaces is not to repent but to found changed personal and organizational practices.

It is not easy to moderate personal power or vested interests. Serving others' needs is an admirable goal that is forever plagued by personal interests. To enhance the accountability of leaders, their efforts should be scrutinized by stakeholder groups with more and with less power than the leaders themselves. Admittedly, this is a radical proposition that may encounter a great deal of resistance. This idea would require leaders to "put on the table" their personal interests and declare what they are doing to make sure that their own needs are not superseding the needs of CWL. Scrutinizing leaders' efforts at balancing personal with collective interests would require people in position of authority to tell CWL what they are doing at a personal level to practice from a value-based philosophy.

This recommendation is particularly problematic because it demands serious commitment to values, a commitment that goes beyond adherence to mission statements. Whereas leaders may wish to appear to operate from a value-based perspective and share power, they may use covert strategies to maintain unjust practices. In other words, there are many ways to support the status quo, and ironically, sharing power may be one of them. When power on rather minor issues is shared, there is a diminished likelihood that workers will demand equality or democracy on major issues (Bradshaw, 1998).

Enhance Zone of Congruence Among CWL

The VIP–CWL model of leadership is based on expanding zones of congruence. First, leaders try to establish concordance among their own personal VIP. Then, they spread this process throughout the organization to ask workers to do the same thing. The next step is to enhance the zone of congruence among CWL. Leaders are to create partnerships among these three stakeholder groups to achieve concordance of values and objectives. The primary task in the creation of partnerships is the establishment of trust (Block, 1993; Nelson et al., 1999). This is achieved by meaningful and collaborative participation of workers and communities in decision-making processes affecting their lives. Democratic and participatory processes among multiple stakeholders require a prolonged involvement of leaders in the community. There are many examples and guidelines for the successful and meaningful engagement of communities in organizations (MacGillivary & Nelson, 1998; Nelson et al., 1999; Ochocka, Nelson, & Lord, 1999).

Token consultative processes subvert the intent of true partnerships. Leaders are to refrain from community consultation exercises that are only a semblance of what serious partnerships should be all about. When consumers realize that their voice is only minimally respected but maximally exploited for public relations purposes, a great deal of damage can ensue. Adulterated attempts at collaboration leave an enduring bad taste that may take months or years to undo and may cause a serious backlash.

Partnerships can flounder because of two primary reasons: lack of honesty or skills. If leaders wish to form partnerships merely for strategic purposes and do not really endorse a collaborative philosophy, consumers and workers are bound to find out and withdraw. But partnerships can also falter because of lack of skills. As in the case of expertise about values, it is not reasonable to expect that all leaders would possess, by virtue of their position, the skills that are needed to nurse a process of collaboration among stakeholders with differing interests.

A measure of accountability can be achieved by creating horizontal forms of collective leadership and by ensuring meaningful representation from the various stakeholder groups in steering committees (Racino, 1991). Equal and meaningful representation in advisory committees are not easy to achieve because many community members lack the skills, the confidence, or both, to make their views and their experience count. To make sure that consumers' voices are heard, leaders are to facilitate an empowering process whereby people are made to feel comfortable and they receive training in expressing their needs. Physical presence of consumers in leadership committees is only the beginning of substantive participation; trust, training, and respect for diversity are to follow.

Confront People and Groups Subverting Values, Abusing Power, or Allowing Self-Interests to Undermine the Well-Being of Others in the Organization or Community

Efforts by leaders to promote value-based practice notwithstanding, chances are some people will behave in ways that contradict the vision and values of the organization. This is when leaders are to engage in conflict resolution with the person or group undermining organizational values. A culture of openness and critique facilitates the resolution of conflict. In a climate of healthy and respectful debate, the opposing parties can come to an agreement that is in line with the vision of the organization. But there may be occasions in which such a healthy climate will not prevent serious conflict. If the conflict is about ideas and differing interpretations of values, chances are that a resolution may be easily reached. But if the conflict is about personal interests or power, chances are that differences may be irreconcilable.

Confrontation may be used for the good of the organization and the public, but it may also be used to suppress legitimate voices of discontent. In the latter case, leaders can exercise their power simply to silence opposing views. This is an example of how conflict resolution can be subverted in the interest of enhancing the power of leaders. But confrontations can also be used by workers and clients to undermine legitimate leadership. When consumers have unreasonable demands, they may launch a complaint against workers or leaders that is not necessarily justified.

Leaders are to be accountable to the various stakeholder groups about their efforts to confront people abusing power or undermining the values and interests of

others. In an effort to avoid conflict, some leaders sweep under the carpet or be-nignly distort unethical behavior of colleagues. In essence, leaders are to be cautious about hyper- or hypoconfrontational styles. Whereas the former may be just an expression of defensively attacking others who have dissimilar views, the latter may be a manifestation of fear. Leaders need the advice and feedback of others to find a middle way between these extremes.

CONCLUSION

The application of the model presented in this article may be more appealing to organizations committed to equality than to organizations that are traditionally hierarchical. Although the latter may also proclaim adherence to democracy and power sharing, one should question whether their commitment to these principles is based on sincere adoption of values or strategic aims to appease the work force (Bradshaw, 1998). Many organizations fall somewhere between the two poles of unquestioned hierarchy and commitment to equalizing structures, and there is room for value-based leadership in all types of organizations. It is not realistic to expect that leaders of organizations with rigid power structures will readily adopt the model proposed here, but it is not entirely out of the question. Some companies adopt policies to shorten the gap between the highest and the lowest paid employees, and some others take a commitment to collective wellness seriously.

Ultimately, value-based leadership is a series of balancing acts. The first balancing act is between personal and collective wellness. This dance is mediated by values for relational wellness. Balancing act number two is between pulls to help others and to help ourselves. This conflict is mediated by the amount of power we have to advance personal well-being and the welfare of others. The next balancing act is between the values and interests of the public, workers, and leaders. Harmony among these three groups is fostered in safe spaces for dialogue and in meaningful partnerships. These intrapersonal, interpersonal, and group balancing acts require practice. Just like any other dance, the dance of VIP requires practice and coordination among dancers. Like good dancers, all players in value-based practice are interdependent. Like good choreographers, leaders are to model value-based practice.

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