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## Transformational Leadership vs. Servant Leadership

Updated July 12, 2022 by Carl Lindberg

There are many similarities but also some significant differences between [transformational leadership](#) and [servant leadership](#). Let's start with a summary of similarities and differences between these styles before we go into a deeper comparison between transformational and servant leadership.

What are the differences between transformational and servant leadership?

**The most significant differences between transformational and servant leadership are that servant leadership focuses even more on developing the organization's people, aims to fulfill a grander cause, and lacks different implementation layers. On the other hand, transformational leadership focuses on change and improvement even if there is no higher cause, inspires and develops people along the transformation journey, and has four different approaches to leading with varying levels of leadership activity.**

What are the similarities between transformational and servant leadership?

**Both transformational and servant leadership place a high focus on inspiring and developing team members. Transformational leaders and servant leaders emphasize emotional intelligence, communication, participation, and inclusion.**

## Short intro to Transformational Leadership

This short text is based on our article on [transformational leadership](#) which contains more in-depth information.

The Transformational leadership style brings change for organizations as well as the people working within them. The team members' expectations, values, ambitions, aspirations, and visions are transformed into something better and stronger. This style of [leadership develops](#) people and inspires them to reach a new level of performance and success.

The transformation, i.e., the change, is facilitated by the transformational leader who embodies the ideal others should aspire to. The transformational leader sets a moral example and a positive example when it comes to performance, adaptation ability, and many other things. Continuous improvement and challenging the present state of things is crucial for a transformational leader.

As a transformational leader, you create strong bonds of loyalty with the team members, who trust and believe in you. Transformational leadership leads to strong employee engagement when executed properly.

Sir Richard Branson, the founder of the Virgin Group, and Lee Iacocca, a former CEO of Chrysler, are two examples of famous transformational leaders.

This was just a short introduction to transformational leadership; please refer to this article for more detailed and thorough information: [transformational leadership](#).

# Short intro to Servant Leadership

The following text is an excerpt from our article on [Servant Leadership](#).

Servant Leadership is a selfless leadership style that focuses on improving both people and organizations. Great servant leaders typically have good [listening](#) skills, lots of empathy, the ability to develop others, good persuasion skills, and big picture thinking abilities. Servant leadership often leads to high employee engagement, highly motivated employees, and a strong sense of ethics. Servant leadership can sadly lead to too much focus on the individuals with less focus on the actual goals of the organization as a consequence. Furthermore, servant leadership is known to take a long time to establish, which doesn't work in all organizations. A servant leader needs to have very little or a complete lack of ego – this is an unusual trait among leaders.

Servant [leadership builds on ethics](#), emotional intelligence, participation in decision-making, and working towards a cause that means something more substantial than growing profits, such as community development or making a change in the world.

(Join our newsletter and get a free copy of our E-book “7 Tips on How to Improve Your [Emotional Intelligence](#)” by clicking here: [Newsletter Emotional Intelligence E-book](#).)

Read more about the well-reputed leadership style here: [Servant Leadership](#).

## Differences between Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership

There are two significant differences between transformational and servant leadership. There are more than this, but they are relatively minor in comparison, so let's focus on the big ones.

The primary difference between a servant leader and a [transformational leader](#) is that servant leaders develop the team members, the organization, and the community. In

contrast, transformational leaders inspire people to work towards a common goal. A transformational leader does care about each team member. However, the [time and care a servant leader](#) would take to develop **each** team member is missing.

Another difference is that Servant Leadership includes some greater cause or a greater good, such as community development, improving humanity, reducing environmental pollution. In contrast, Transformational Leadership aims at improving and transforming organizations and people in more general terms, i.e., companies, organizations, teams.

Last but not least, the transformational leadership style is part of a leadership styles model: Full Range Leadership Model, which gives additional granularity, nuance, and options for the transformational leader that the servant leader lacks. Besides four levels of transformational leadership, three levels of transactional leadership and the most passive and ineffective style of Laissez-Faire leadership is the eighth level. Servant leadership has no detailed phases or levels which to use for different organizational situations.

## Similarities between Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership

Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership are similar when it comes to the strong care of the team members and a willingness to [develop](#) them as individuals.

Both styles are highly engaging, inclusive, and motivating to team members and other stakeholders.

Transformational leaders and servant leaders have similar characteristics, such as:

- Emotional Intelligence
- Communication Capabilities

- An inclusive approach to decision making
- Big Picture Thinking

## Recommended Reading

For additional information on either of these styles, refer to our in-depth articles available through the following links:

[Servant Leadership](#)

[Transformational Leadership](#)

In case you are interested, I suggest you read about the best leadership styles model that I've come across during my fifteen years as a global leader, which is [the six leadership styles by Daniel Goleman](#).

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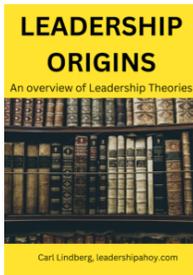
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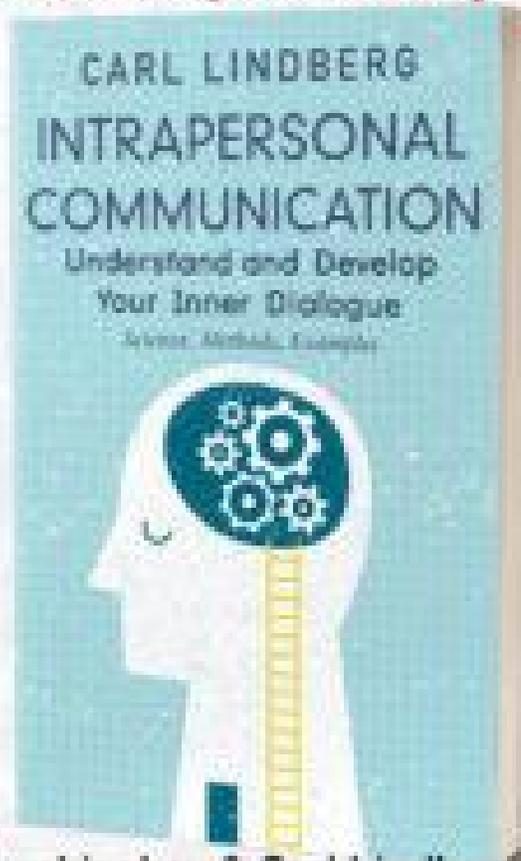
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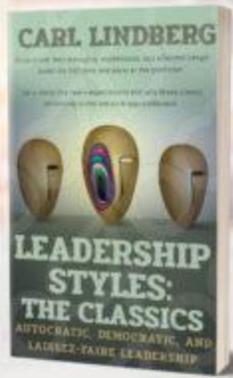


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