

CHAPTER 8

POSITIVE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP: LESSONS FROM A UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, two academics from the Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan collaborate with the President of their university to present their experiences and ideas about positive strategic leadership. Positive strategic leadership is derived from the juxtaposition of ideas from the growing movement on positive organizational scholarship with what is already known from the literature on strategic leadership. The authors embed new views into current theoretical perspectives on strategic leadership to attempt an integrative overview and use the president's experiences during the nationally followed Affirmative Action cases as a vehicle for illustrating five themes: (1) A lifetime of experiences shapes who you are, (2) issues commonly choose you before you choose them, (3) begin with a purpose in mind, (4) appreciate divergent views, and (5) be a beacon for the future. Additionally, the authors provide practitioners with some "takeaways" on positive strategic leadership.

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1 Our goal in this chapter is to apply a Positive Organizational Scholarship
2 (POS) perspective to the scholarly literature on strategic leadership. Strategic
3 leadership is traditionally defined as a series of decisions and activities
4 by a top manager (CEOs, presidents, and senior executives) in which the
5 past, the present, and the future of the organization coalesce (Boal, 2004).
6 Strategic leadership researchers have provided remarkable insights in several
7 areas. First, much research has focused on what leaders do (Hambrick,
8 1989; Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1990). That is, how do strategic leaders go
9 about “making decisions; creating and communicating a vision of the fu-
10 ture; developing key competencies and capabilities; developing organization
11 structures, processes, and controls; managing multiple constituencies; se-
12 lecting and developing the next generation of leaders; and sustaining an
13 effective organizational culture” (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001, p. 516). Second,
14 strategic leadership researchers have focused on the role of leader cognitions
15 in strategic change (Rajagopalan & Spreitzer, 1997). That is, how do leaders
16 perceive and make sense of their environment in order to determine the
17 appropriate course of strategic action (Walsh, 1995).

18 What is largely absent in the literature on strategic leadership, however, is
19 a focus on the importance of how who the leader is shapes what the leader
20 thinks and does. We know little about how the life experiences, character,
21 and values of the leader shape his/her approach to strategic leadership.
22 Quinn (2004) suggests that the foundation of leadership is not behavior,
23 competencies, techniques or position; rather, the foundation of leadership
24 comes from who we are, or the “person within” the leader.

25 To begin to understand the “person within” the strategic leader, we seek
26 to learn from the experiences of a manifest leader – Mary Sue Coleman,
27 President of the University of Michigan and a co-author of this chapter. The
28 University of Michigan was established in 1817; it has an enrollment of
29 53,000 across three campuses with 3,700 faculty and more than 420,000
30 alumni around the world.

31 We are particularly interested in learning from President Coleman, be-
32 cause she arrived at Michigan just as the nationally contentious affirmative
33 action lawsuits were playing out in the courts. In 1997, three students filed
34 two separate suits in the U.S. District Court (Detroit), alleging unlawful
35 consideration of race in the University of Michigan’s undergraduate and law
36 school admissions policies (*Gratz and Hamacher v. The Regents of the Uni-*
37 *versity of Michigan/Grutter v. The Regents of the University of Michigan*).
38 These lawsuits received national attention as test cases for the permissible
39 use of race in university admissions and generated considerable contro-
40 versy.¹ In late 2000 and early 2001, two separate U.S. District Courts ruled

1 that the use of race in admissions in the undergraduate case was constitutional, but that the use of race in the law school case was unconstitutional.

3 When President Coleman came to the office in 2002, the Sixth Circuit
5 Court of Appeals had just overturned the earlier district court decision in
7 the law school case by ruling that the law school's use of race was in fact
9 constitutional. The plaintiffs appealed both cases to the Supreme Court for
11 a final ruling in 2002. In June 2003, the Supreme Court ruled that the law
13 school's use of race was narrowly tailored to achieve the compelling edu-
15 cational benefits of diversity, but that the undergraduate policy was not so
17 tailored and therefore did not pass constitutional muster. The court's recognition that universities can consider race in admissions to achieve a diverse student body was considered to be a big victory, not just for the University of Michigan, but also for affirmative action more generally. As such, the affirmative action lawsuits provide a "looking glass" into how who President Coleman is as a leader significantly impacted the actions she undertook in this case of national importance. In sharing her experiences, she can enrich our understanding of the "person within" the strategic leader.

From President Coleman's commentary on her leadership of the affirmative action lawsuits, we evince five principles of what we term "positive strategic leadership." Positive strategic leadership is derived from the juxtaposition of ideas from the growing movement on POS with what we already know from the literature on strategic leadership. POS is an emerging movement within organizational studies – drawing from the fields of organizational studies, psychology, and sociology. This perspective focuses on the generative dynamics in leadership and organizations that promote human strength, resiliency, restoration, and the extraordinary (Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003), and positive deviance (Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2004). We draw from several POS perspectives to gain insights into President Coleman's experiences with the goal of expanding the notion of positive strategic leadership.

31 We close the chapter by embedding these new views into current theoretical perspectives on strategic leadership to attempt an integrative overview. Additionally, we provide practitioners with some "takeaways" on positive strategic leadership.

POSITIVE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP: LESSONS FROM PRESIDENT COLEMAN

In this section of the chapter, President Coleman shares some lessons of experience as a strategic leader. The five themes of positive strategic leadership we evince include:

- A lifetime of experiences shapes who you are;
- Issues commonly choose you before you choose them;
- Begin with a purpose in mind;
- Appreciate divergent views; and
- Be a beacon for the future.

Following the words of President Coleman on each theme, Gretchen Spreitzer and Daniel Gruber provide a brief discussion on the links between President Coleman's commentary and conceptual aspects of positive strategic leadership.

A Lifetime of Experiences Shape Who You Are (The Voice of Mary Sue Coleman)

As a child who was raised in the South in the late 1940s and early 1950s, segregated schools and segregated daily living were facts of life. In elementary school in Tennessee and Georgia, I was not aware of the great injustice of the social system, but I certainly knew that the African-American children with whom I played in our rural neighborhood were not permitted to attend my university-operated school. Looking back, I remember how the streets in the areas of the town where most African-American families lived lacked pavements, sidewalks, and street-lamps. Like towns throughout the South, there were signs for "colored" and "white" in commercial establishments and on drinking fountains.

To those of us who were children, this façade seemed calm, but the "normality" of this way of life began to crumble with the critical, successful challenge to school segregation in the 1950s, culminating with the monumental Supreme Court decision in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case in 1954. Ironically, the consequences of that decision provided the impetus that propelled my family out of Georgia, raising my awareness of the terrible injustices segregation had wrought.

Officials in the State of Georgia did not acquiesce readily to the ruling handed down by the Supreme Court. In fact, political leaders in the state

1 entered into discussions and debates that could have resulted in the abandon-
3 ment of all public education, including the de-funding of schools in
5 order to avoid desegregation altogether. There was a genuine fear that
7 public schools would not survive, so my parents uprooted our family and
sought employment in a state where “equal education for everyone” was a
core value. We moved to Iowa in 1955 after listening to a full year of the
divisive, vicious rhetoric that followed the Brown decision.

What a contrast Iowa provided to Georgia! While the African-American
9 population in Iowa was small, it had deep roots and was fully integrated in
schools and businesses. Social justice in Iowa was not perfect, but it was
11 immeasurably more equitable than we had seen in the South. In my school,
the faculty did address issues of racial discrimination and social injustice.
13 Through their efforts, and because of the new social landscape of Iowa, I
was finally able to begin to understand the terrible legacy of slavery and
15 discrimination in our country.

My experience in college and graduate school only enhanced the lessons I
17 learned about social justice in Iowa. At Grinnell College and the University
of North Carolina, I met African-American students with a broader range
19 of first-hand experience of the inequities and humiliation of segregated
schools and towns. When I was a child in Georgia, no one I knew was able
21 to articulate the depth of feeling on this issue. The Brown decision provided
much more than the starting point for the end of school segregation. It
23 allowed us to enter the continuing public discussion that has informed so
much of the social policy of our government in the past 50 years, and the
25 decisions I have made as a faculty member and administrator. It was these
critical experiences that shaped the passion and energy in which I embraced
27 the affirmative action lawsuits as the new President of the University of
Michigan. I knew from my life experiences growing up in the South that
29 these lawsuits provided a critical response to the years of racial discrim-
ination in our country and our universities.

31 *Insights for Positive Strategic Leadership (The Voice of the POS Scholars)*

33 The positive strategic leader does not work in a vacuum, but everything that
one thinks and does is embedded in a lifetime of experiences. Positive psy-
35 chologists have defined authenticity as both owning one’s personal expe-
riences and acting in accord with the true self (Harter, 2002). Personal
37 authenticity in adolescents has been demonstrated to be positively associ-
ated with adaptive psychological characteristics including self-esteem, affect,
39 and hope for the future (Harter, 2002; Harter, Marold, Whitesell, & Cobbs,
1996). President Coleman illustrates how formative experiences, challenges

1 or triggers in life shape one's authenticity as a leader (Avolio & Luthans,
2003). These life experiences create strong impressions because they take
3 people out of their comfort zone by stretching them in new ways (Quinn,
2004). These jolts can also stimulate the leader to revise one's sense of self
5 and personal identity (Roberts, Dutton, Spreitzer, Heaphy, & Quinn, forth-
coming). The jolt President Coleman experienced in her move to Iowa as a
7 child exposed her to positive possibilities in race relations. And it is from
sensemaking about these life experiences that leaders learn about their au-
9 thentic self. For President Coleman, witnessing discrimination in the South
while growing up imparted a critical sensitivity and propensity for action in
11 her future role as a senior executive.

13
15 *Issues Commonly Choose You Before You Choose Them (The Voice of*
17 *Mary Sue Coleman)*

19 In every leadership position, new administrators need to enter with a zeal for
innovation and a responsibility for the institutional agenda that exists in any
organization. When I was approached about the presidency at the Univer-
21 sity of Michigan, I knew about the admissions lawsuits that the University
had committed to defend, and knew that it would be a major focus of the
23 presidency. The Michigan Regents and the search committee clearly indi-
cated that they were dedicated to finding a president who would be able and
25 willing to lead the final stages of the admissions lawsuits (already five years
old at that point).

27 They saw that I was completely committed to the principle and the prac-
tice of diversity in higher education, and I viewed the opportunity to provide
29 leadership for the lawsuits as a great expression of my personal and pro-
fessional beliefs. This was just one of several continuing issues that awaited
me, but it was the one with the most significant potential impact, not just for
31 this University, but also for higher education throughout the nation.

33 This University is justifiably proud of its historically strong commitment
to diversity, and it was actually one of the attributes that convinced me to
35 come to Michigan. At that time, I had no idea of how consuming these
lawsuits would become in my first year. I not only needed to become in-
37 volved with the legal complexities of the cases, but also had to become the
public face of the University on this issue. With the strong support of the
39 administrators, faculty, and students I found at Michigan, I was able to take
on this critical issue and to identify it as my own.

1 Three months after I arrived, the United States Supreme Court decided to
2 hear our admissions cases. Preparing for the oral arguments in April, and
3 the final successful rulings in June, provided me with a full docket of sig-
4 nificant and national-level matters in my first year at Michigan. Ultimately,
5 by making the institutional agenda my own agenda, I was able to work with
6 our constituencies to advance our issues in ways that productively defined
7 my inaugural months, enriched my experience, and greatly benefited the
8 University.

11 *Insights for Positive Strategic Leadership (The Voice of the POS Scholars)*

12 The literature on strategic leadership emphasizes the importance of leaders
13 crafting their own vision or agenda for change. The assumption is that
14 leaders must make their mark right away to command the respect of others
15 and the conversation rarely considers the importance of the leader, com-
16 pleting any unfinished business when they begin a role. But President Cole-
17 man explains how critical it was for her to forego setting her own agenda for
18 the University of Michigan. She put all of her energy into the Affirmative
19 Action cases and other lingering issues, knowing that it was the right thing
20 to do for the University but also knowing that it would table any agenda
21 items of her own for some time. This left her open to potential cynics who
22 could complain that she didn't have a vision of her own – that she wasn't a
23 strong leader with her own point of view. But President Coleman was ready
24 to live with that possibility, because she knew it was the right thing for the
25 institution.

26 Quinn (2004) calls this humble approach the fundamental state of lead-
27 ership. In the fundamental state, a leader transcends his or her own ego,
28 moves outside the comfort zone, clarifies the results he or she wants to
29 create, and aligns values and behaviors. President Coleman was able to
30 transcend her own vision for the future and focus on bringing the final
31 stages of the lawsuits to a successful conclusion by taking ownership and
32 responsibility for them. Rather than laying out her own strategic plan from
33 the start of her Presidency, President Coleman had to “build the bridge as
34 she walked on it” – having faith that she would be able to shape her own
35 agenda for the University as time passed. And as time has shown, by spring
36 of 2004, almost one year after the landmark decision was issued by the
37 Supreme Court, President Coleman announced her own strategic vision for
38 the University. Thus, as President Coleman's stories have illustrated, pos-
39 itive strategic leaders often transcend their own ego and agenda, putting the
common good and welfare of the institution first.

1 *Begin with a Purpose in Mind (The Voice of Mary Sue Coleman)*

3 My entire professional life has unfolded in public universities, the character
5 of which I find fascinating and inspiring. Because these institutions were
7 created to be supported by the public and to support the public, they have
 an obligation to address important societal issues as well as to educate the
 citizens of the state.

9 The University of Michigan, as one of the oldest, largest, and most em-
11 inent of the great public universities, has always displayed a special com-
 mitment to its mission of social responsibility. A stirring example of this is
13 Michigan's stance on diversity, extending to the defense of the use of
 affirmative action in admissions at universities. Leading the University, as
15 these cases found their way to the Supreme Court, was one of the most
 important honors of my life, one that was accomplished because of the
 extraordinary talent and dedication of the entire leadership team and Re-
 gents of the University.

17 I was keenly aware of the high stakes these lawsuits represented. My
 childhood, my entire educational life, and my experience in administrative
19 positions at the University of North Carolina, the University of New Mex-
 ico, and the University of Iowa taught me the value of diversity and the
21 challenge of creating diverse learning environments when K-12 schools and
 opportunities are not equal for all racial and ethnic groups. In fact, de facto
23 segregation in some cities in our country has created a college-age popu-
 lation in which students have rarely encountered classmates from a race
25 other than their own.

27 By the time I arrived in Ann Arbor, the leadership of the University had
 been speaking openly about the importance of affirmative action to creating
29 diversity in classrooms. Additionally, several prominent faculty members at
 the University undertook social science research on the impact of classroom
 and campus diversity on learning and on our students' ability to function
31 well in careers and community after graduation. The conclusions of these
 studies were persuasive, and we felt our arguments about taking a stand on
33 this important principle were sound. Our legal team worked diligently to
 translate difficult analyses about our admissions processes into terms that
35 could be more easily comprehended by the public. In short, the University
 embarked on a comprehensive, information-based public awareness pro-
37 gram about affirmative action.

39 This meant that I also had to educate myself thoroughly about the con-
 tents of the massive amount of material that had emerged in the five years
 the two cases had been reviewed, were argued, and appealed for. Being

1 trained as a biological chemist, I had only a basic understanding of the legal
process. I spent almost every waking hour being briefed and reading back-
3 ground materials on the case. This was essential because I needed to be able
to speak with confidence on the issues with reporters, editorial boards, ex-
5 ternal organizations, and alumni groups. Almost always, I discovered recog-
nition and pride about the public defense of this issue by the University.
7 Even when members of an audience did not agree with the premise of
affirmative action, they understood that the University was taking a prin-
9 cipled stand on an issue its Regents and leadership believed was critical.
Indeed, I firmly believe that a consequence of this broad educational effort
11 by the University eventually led to a more reasoned debate in the media
about the ongoing legacy of discrimination and the importance of achieving
13 diversity in our educational institutions. This massive educational effort also
provided the impetus for a record number of amicus briefs (a brief filed with
15 the court by someone who is not a party to the case) filed on our behalf by
educational and civil rights organizations, corporations, and former military
17 officers.

19 *Insights for Positive Strategic Leadership (The Voice of the POS Scholars)*

21 President Coleman had a clear purpose in mind as the leader of a public
university. She believed there was a social responsibility as a public univer-
23 sity to take a stand on diversity – her actions began with a purpose in mind.
It might have been an easier road not to undertake the controversy and
25 expense of the affirmative action lawsuits, but this leader lives out her pres-
idency with clear purpose because she takes the mission of a public uni-
27 versity to serve the public so seriously.

Authentic leaders are grounded with a purpose and a mission – living
29 their values and using discipline and commitment to achieve great results
(George, 2003). They know the true north of their moral compass. Quinn
31 (2004) describes this as being purpose-centered. The leader clarifies the re-
sult they want to create, are committed and engaged, with unwavering
33 commitment to pursue that purpose. Cameron (2003) talks about purpose-
fulness as leading with virtue for human impact, moral goodness, and social
35 betterment. And being purpose-centered is the engine of personal empow-
erment for leaders to take action and have real impact (Spreitzer, 1995).
37 Thus, a hallmark of the positive strategic leader is leading with purpose.

1 *Appreciate Divergent Views (The Voice of Mary Sue Coleman)*

3 The affirmative action debate also provided ample opportunity for me, as a
5 new president, to engage with campus stakeholders who held widely diver-
7 gent views. While we enjoyed broad campus support for our position, we
9 also realized that like any university, strongly held views would be part of
11 our community discussion. Prominent faculty members and some student
13 organizations at the University had reservations about using affirmative
15 action as a tool for admissions. At the other end of the spectrum, other
17 faculty members engaged in social science research to investigate the impact
19 of a diverse student body on the educational environment of the University.

21 Students also held widely divergent opinions about affirmative action.
23 Large numbers of students supported the University and its stand on this
25 issue. Some believed that the leadership was not aggressive enough in de-
27 fending these lawsuits. A number joined the effort as interveners in the
29 lawsuits, attempting to create a more activist defense of the lawsuits. On the
31 other side, some students were opposed to the policies of affirmative action.
33 Public debates among students were vigorous throughout the six years the
35 lawsuits traversed the court system.

37 Alumni, likewise, expressed intense interest in the cases, mirroring the
39 range of opinions found on the campus. What held us together was our
dedication to the ideals of the excellent academic traditions of the University
of Michigan, a dedication on which I promised never to yield. I knew then,
and I continue to see in our post-decision era, that we can be both diverse
and excellent in our academic endeavors.

From my arrival on campus in August 2002, there was intense interest in
my stance on the Affirmative Action cases. I was questioned vigorously by
students, by faculty, and certainly by alumni groups. In each instance, I
talked openly about my beliefs and often referred to my own background
and experiences in segregated communities and in preparing for a field of
study not common among women. With personal stories, I attempted to
explain my strong support for diversity on the campus. I always listened to
divergent views and invited people to share their perspectives with me. But
in the end, sometimes we had to agree to disagree.

35 *Insights for Positive Strategic Leadership (The Voice of the POS Scholars)*

37 Quinn (2004) describes positive strategic leaders as being externally open.
39 Like President Coleman, they move outside their comfort zone, appreciate
others' points of view, and are open to learning from others who hold
different conflicting perspectives. By seeking to understand the perspective

1 of others, particularly those who hold divergent points of view, the positive
strategic leader can not only demonstrate empathy, but can also learn im-
3 portant things from others that may strengthen the leader's own perspective.
And in some cases, their openness can also create openness to those with
5 divergent views to temper or even change their perspectives. Recent research
has indicated that respectful engagement with others is critical for personal
7 growth (Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, & Grant, 2005). Positive
strategic leaders can display respectful engagement with others by conveying
9 presence (i.e., "just being there"), being genuine (i.e., reacting from a real
and honest place), and confirming affirmation (i.e., actively looking for the
11 positive core in another) (Dutton, 2003). So while the positive strategic
leader may not agree with others, they seek to hear, understand, appreciate,
13 and learn from divergent perspectives.

15
Be a Beacon for the Future (The Voice of Mary Sue Coleman)

17
The University of Michigan undertook a unique role in advancing diversity
19 and civil rights. The six-year journey of the admissions lawsuits, and the
landmark decision of the Supreme Court, placed us in the center of the
21 public debate about affirmative action. Because we staked out such a public
presence with our defense of the lawsuits, our subsequent actions are re-
23 ceiving intense scrutiny, and we need to turn that scrutiny to our advantage
as we move forward, continuing to lead the way on the issue of diversity.

25 An outstanding university that is diverse has a strength that comes from
the hybrid vigor of a multitude of ideas and perspectives. I expect us to have
27 a university that continues to provide an intellectually engaging and chal-
lenging environment that other universities will want to emulate. We are
29 committed to the core principles that will inform our next steps: a real
commitment to a welcoming climate, accountability to diversity on both an
31 institutional and an individual level, and the recognition that the vigor of
diversity will create a better and more intellectually rich university.

33 There are several areas we are exploring as we bring these principles to
life. We must develop institutional best practices to create a diverse aca-
35 demic community and a truly welcoming environment. We need to focus on
aggressive recruitment and retention efforts for diverse and exceptional
37 faculty, students, and staff, and we need to understand better how issues of
climate are affecting those who decide to join us, or to leave. We also need to
39 infuse our curriculum with a multicultural and interdisciplinary content, so
the richness of our intellectual environment is deepened. To accomplish all

1 of this, we need to establish a broad strategy for an institutional commitment to a diversity that is effective and long-lasting.

3 I have said on many occasions that the true impact of any landmark decision is determined by the actions taken in the eras between decisions. I
5 will continue to advance the principles of the University by reminding our many constituents that we can never rest, and we must continue to reinvent
7 the meaning of diversity at this University and in our broader society.

9 *Insights for Positive Strategic Leadership (The Voice of the POS Scholars)*
11 Positive strategic leaders are bullish on the future. They lead with a hope for a better tomorrow, even when tomorrow is potentially threatening or disconcerting. Rather than dwelling on the negative, positive strategic leaders
13 see opportunities rather than threats (Jackson & Dutton, 1988). They invent possibilities for the future (Zander & Zander, 2000). They discover and
15 dream about their positive destinies through techniques, such as appreciative inquiry – a positive methodology for strategic organizational change
17 (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2003). For example, after the successful decision on the lawsuit, it might have been easy to take a breather on
19 diversity issues after the frenetic pace of her first year. But President Coleman worked hard to keep the University community focused on creating a
21 community that would be welcoming to people from all backgrounds – how Michigan could become the university of choice for minority students. In
23 this way, positive strategic leaders are resilient (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003) and keep their sights looking forward with hope rather than cynicism (Spreitzer
25 & Mishra, 2000).

27 29 CONCLUSION

31 When we started to work on this chapter on the Affirmative Action cases with President Coleman, we thought that our focus would be on addressing
33 rather esoteric questions, such as: “How do leaders create and sustain identity when they are managing multiple divergent stakeholders?” or “How
35 do leaders manage to craft their own agenda while tending to the inevitable fires that flare up unexpectedly?” These kinds of topics are embedded in the
37 more traditional strategic leadership literature. However, as we spent time with President Coleman and learned more about her, we expanded not only
39 our perspective on her as a person and as a leader, but also our perspective on the larger issue of strategic leadership.

We began to see how we could juxtapose a growing body of research on positive organizational scholarship with current frameworks on strategic leadership. This pointed us toward the idea of the person within – that who the leader is as a person matters. For example, in defining strategic leadership, Boal (2004, p. 1,503) states: “Strategic leadership forges a bridge between the past, the present, and the future, by reaffirming core values and identity to ensure continuity and integrity as the organization struggles with known and unknown realities and possibilities.”

If we look at the same passage of Boal’s definition from the perspective of “who the strategic leader is as a person,” we could adapt the definition to define who positive strategic leaders are. Positive strategic leaders bridge the past, the present and the future by reaffirming their core values and identity to ensure their own continuity and integrity as they struggle with known and unknown realities and possibilities. In this way, positive strategic leaders are themselves strategic about bringing their whole person – past experiences, values, purpose, and personal vision – to their role as a leader who contributes to the collective good.

In order to illustrate how positive strategic leadership informs the strategic leadership discussion, we have adapted Rajagopalan and Spreitzer’s (1997) integrative model of strategic change. Their original model (see Fig. 1) demonstrates how an organization and its environment are perceived by the leader and influence the actions that he or she takes. Those actions

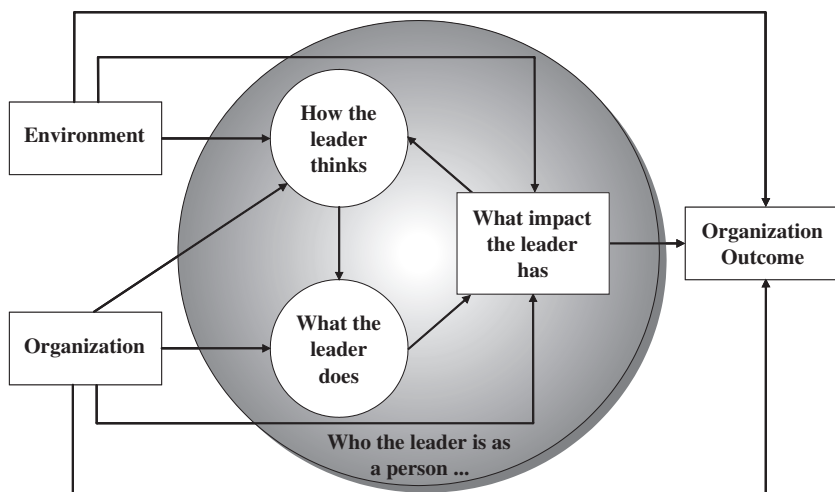


Fig. 1. A Model of Positive Strategic Leadership.

1 then determine the impact that leader has and ultimately the organization's
outcome. While their model goes far in helping us understand strategic
3 leadership, we believe it is incomplete. What is missing is who the leader is as
a person – how they are shaped by their life experiences, their character, and
5 their values. As such, we add the shaded circle to their model to reflect the
role that the person within the leader plays in strategic leadership. The
7 person within their experiences, character, and values underlie the thoughts,
actions, and ultimately the impact of the leader. By adding these charac-
9 teristics to the model, we are not suggesting that they are an additional node
and/or step the leader takes in his or her leadership process, but rather they
11 illustrate the gestalt of who they are as a person, or what Quinn (2004) called
the fundamental state of leadership. As we have described throughout the
13 chapter, we believe that President Coleman's life and leadership experiences
enabled her to adroitly guide the University at such a turbulent and critical
15 time.

It is our hope that by using Mary Sue Coleman as a learning vehicle we
17 have not only offered new insights to the literature on strategic leadership,
but also to the POS body of knowledge. In the foundational book on POS
19 (Cameron et al., 2003), there is only one chapter related directly to the topic
of leadership (Avolio & Luthans, 2003), and none that focus specifically on
21 senior-level leadership in organizations. Future work can move beyond this
kind of qualitative work to more quantitative work that measures positive
23 strategic leadership. This work could explore how these kinds of leaders may
bring significant value to their organizations in terms of more effective
25 strategic change and organizational performance. Additionally, future case
studies and academic/executive collaborations focused on understanding the
27 strategic leader and their impact would help to develop these theoretical
ideas in greater depth.

29 We believe that practitioners can also learn from these ideas on positive
strategic leadership. Whether a senior executive, a middle manager or a
31 front-line employee, life experiences, personal character, and values shape
how people think and what they do. Only when the person within a leader is
33 congruent with their behaviors can leaders feel authentic. And we know
from a growing body of research in POS that authenticity is critical for
35 people to feel empowered, engaged, and be able to relate to others (Avolio &
Luthans, 2003; Quinn, 2004). The five themes also provide practitioners
37 some direction about how to create more alignment and authenticity be-
tween who they are and what they do as leaders. These lessons are relevant
39 not only for themselves, but for also regarding how leaders can develop and
grow their employees into positive strategic leaders.

In closing, our hope is that this work will inspire a new direction for strategic leadership research as well as leadership at all levels of the organization. Paraphrasing perhaps the most famous positive strategic leader, Mahatma Gandhi, positive strategic leaders must take the initiative to “be the change they wish to see” by becoming more humane and authentic leaders (Quinn, 2000).

NOTE

1. The former University of Michigan President Lee Bollinger, a constitutional law expert, helped to craft the admissions policies to pass constitutional muster.

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