Transformational Leadership and Business Growth.

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Business organizations in Zimbabwe and Africa at large are under pressure from global competitive forces. The other dimension that intensifies this pressure is the highly dynamic environment. In order to attain business growth in such an environment, there is need for transformational leadership. There is definitely no reason to remain static in a dynamic environment. If you are not transforming your organization, your competitors are and they will win at your expense.

The effects of globalization are far reaching to many organizations and may have severe consequences to most organizations. Those that suffer are the ones that find extinction in the face of competitive challenges. Many would agree with me that the marketplace for almost all products is now open to global players. There is no excuse and you have to create competitiveness at a global scale. It is those organizations that see the globalization effect and act accordingly that will be the companies of the future. Africa and Zimbabwe in particular is not spared in this competition game and as a result there is need to transform organizations to suite the current and possibly modern trends.

There is need for a crop of business leaders that should transform organizations towards global competitiveness. The thrust for attaining this status may be through pursuing World Class principles and effectively implementing them. Transformational leadership is required as we now live in a very dynamic environment. The dynamism has been necessitated by the developments in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as well as other related technological advancements. These developments call for a paradigm shift and with all these developments, the human capital remains at the centre of development or causing any such developments. As such leadership skills are important.

Leadership is a subject that has attracted many debates relating to what skills constitutes a good leader. Some have talked about leaders who lead from the front and others who lead from the back. Whichever position you are leading from, good leadership skills will ensure that your organisation will grow and rise to the challenge. One author once mentioned the issue of people “who watch things happen” and those who “make things happen”. Those that “make things happen” are good leaders. They have the sense and knowledge of what resources they have and how to organize them towards their goal. Most importantly they influence other people to help them achieve their goals. This is what good leaders do.

As Zimbabwe, we are currently faced with a lot of organizations that need to transform. It is not a matter of just transforming but there is need to move towards firstly improved capacity utilization which is a factor of demand. When your products are in demand, you have reason to make many products and hence improved capacity utilization. The human capital that your organization has, need to be mobilized and motivated to consistently contribute towards the organizational Vision and Mission. This cannot just happen without good leaders.
Why I chose to write about this important topic of leadership is because there is a looming platform for business leaders to improve their leadership skills through networking. The National University of Science and Technology (NUST)’s Graduate School of Business will be hosting leadership experts, scholars and researchers at the Elephant Hills Resort in Victoria Falls. The first International Conference on Transformational Leadership will be held from the 17th to the 20th June 2013. This international event will have over 30 research papers on Transformational Leadership being presented and the concepts discussed by experts and business leaders.

One thing that we are lacking in Zimbabwe is to harness research output for the benefit of the nation. There is evidence that what happens in academic institutions is regarded as being academic and the industry fail to realize that there are critical lessons to be learnt from such endeavors. In much the same way, scholars and academics blame industrialists for not consolidating theories that are developed. Now our challenge is that we try to blindly adopt theories developed in environments that are different from ours. This is a gap that research should close. As such I advocate for industry and academia to work together to resolve problems that are in our environment. This conference is meant to bring together partners that are capable of developing solutions to their unique environments.

The conference to be held in Victoria Falls incorporates research results that indicate massive gaps that need to be addressed in the area of Business Transformational Leadership. Business Leaders need not focus or be obsessed with profits ONLY without addressing the important leadership skills that they require in order to deliver. The skills can be obtained through formal training as well as through networking and discussion. Organizations that transform in a dynamic environment require visionary and transformational leadership. The world is changing and it will continue to do so.

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