



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

LEADERSHIP

Full Range Leadership Approach: An Actionable Framework for Developing Resilient Public Health Leaders

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ABSTRACT

The full range leadership theory, an actionable framework for developing resilient leaders in public health amidst global challenges like COVID-19, encompasses transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire styles. Each style fosters innovation and crisis management, preparing future leaders to navigate complex health issues effectively. Integrating these leadership styles equips professionals with the skills to thrive in dynamic public health environments, leveraging transformational leadership to inspire collaboration and adaptation during crises.

Keywords: Public Health Leadership, Management, Leadership Framework, Resilient Leadership, Leadership Style

TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Effective leadership in public health education plays an important role in shaping the future of healthcare professionals, especially during global challenges, for example, the COVID-19 pandemic. The concept of full range leadership theory, as outlined by Northouse,^[1] provides a valuable framework for understanding leadership styles. This theory encompasses transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles, each offering distinct advantages in nurturing the growth and development of future public health leaders.

Traditionally, leaders in public health education, like other healthcare training program directors, have focused on training approaches, akin to transactional leadership, emphasizing task completion and adherence to established protocols. While essential for operational efficiency, relying solely on transactional leadership may limit innovation and adaptability in addressing dynamic public health challenges.

In contrast, The full range leadership framework comprises a multifaceted framework that delineates various leadership behaviors along a continuum, from laissez-faire leadership on one end to transformational leadership on the other.^[1] This theory posits that leaders can employ different leadership styles depending on the situation, followers' readiness, and the organization's objectives.^[2] The three primary leadership styles within the full range leadership theory are

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laissez-faire, transformational, and transactional.^[2] By promoting collaboration and continuous improvement, transformational leadership training equips future public health leaders with the skills necessary to effectively navigate complex global health issues. Additionally, healthcare trainees are encouraged to adopt evidence-based practices and continuously self-improve to enhance patient outcomes. Furthermore, transformational leaders inspire healthcare trainees by fostering a shared purpose and dedication to patient well-being. In applying this style, directors recognize and celebrate the efforts and accomplishments of their trainees, cultivating a culture underpinned by motivation and achievement. Additionally, laissez-faire leadership, a component of the full range leadership, is a management style where leaders take a hands-off approach, allowing team members to make decisions with minimal supervision. Laissez-faire leadership fosters innovation, autonomy, and adaptability, empowering professionals to respond effectively to future challenges and build resilient, collaborative health systems. This inspirational full range approach empowers healthcare trainees to navigate challenging scenarios, such as high-stress work environments and daily workflow intricacies.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the urgent need for resilient and adaptive public health leaders capable of responding swiftly to crises.^[3] Leaders who employ a blend of transformational and transactional leadership styles are better positioned to manage crises, communicate effectively, and instill confidence among their teams.

To cultivate resilient public health leaders, training programs must implement the full range leadership model effectively. This involves customizing leadership styles to situational demands, utilizing case studies for practical learning, and fostering continuous improvement through feedback mechanisms. Encouraging collaboration across sectors further enhances leaders' ability to navigate complex health challenges with innovation and strategic agility.^[4] The full range leadership approach would enhance public health delivery by adapting leadership styles to specific situations—motivating staff during crises, ensuring accountability in routine tasks, and fostering innovation for long-term challenges. This flexibility ensures more effective, responsive, and comprehensive public health services.

CONCLUSION

Effective leadership in public health education requires a balanced approach that integrates transactional, transformational, and, where appropriate, laissez-faire leadership styles. Healthcare leaders and educators benefit from diverse leadership styles contingent on their team's unique

circumstances and requisites. Achieving this equilibrium can prove a formidable task, necessitating leaders to discern the appropriate moments to deploy transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire approaches. Moreover, healthcare leaders who embrace full range leadership principles invariably excel across quality and safety dimensions.^[5] Transformational leaders cultivate a culture of perpetual improvement, promoting innovation and augmenting the organization's reputation. Simultaneously, transactional leadership ensures meticulous management of processes, underscoring the need for seamlessly navigating transactional and transformational leadership. This insightful approach not only enhances the educational experience for future public health leaders but also prepares them to address complex global health challenges with confidence and innovation.

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COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

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Disclaimer

None.

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