

UWTSD

Leadership and the individual

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Introduction

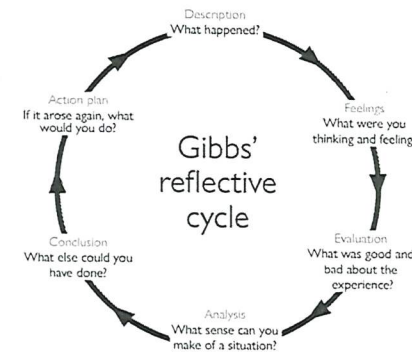
In January 2021, the Chief Officer team announced an organisational change programme to create ring fenced investigation teams, in response to recommendations made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS). This adaptation to the work force model, transferred the requirement to record and investigate crimes, prepare files for court and deliver victim updates from front line officers to dedicated crime investigation teams. The expected outcome of the change programme was that we would resolve under recording of crime, streamline the investigation process and provide a better service to victims of crime.

Thoughts about this? Was it good, would it be a challenge?

A project team had been created who presented the data sets and proposals, setting the timescale for the change to happen. A senior officer was already in place as project manager, with the senior sponsor being one of the Chief Officers. As part of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), I was required, alongside peers, to engage with my staff, sell the benefits of the change programme, identify the officers transferring to the new investigation teams and cooperate with the project team to embed the change.

Thoughts on this?

This report will examine my interactions with the project team as part of a Senior Leadership team (SLT), along with my leadership of my staff. It will consider the theory behind different leadership traits presented, the impact of the differing styles on stakeholders and the appropriateness given the circumstances. The report will also consider the motivation theory demonstrated within the examples cited and reflect on how alternative approaches may have yielded different outcomes.



I will use Gibbs's (YEAR) reflective cycle to review and analyse the examples, providing in the conclusion of this report recommendations and alternative options that could have been considered.

This essay utilises the Gibbs reflective cycle to explore my experiences and how they relate to leadership theory. I will use the model to consider how I and others could have dealt with the same situation differently. My research covered many different models of leadership, learning and motivation, with many areas of similarity, especially where leadership provides the motivation which in turns generates changes in behaviour.

There are two broad theories of motivation (Mullins 2019); the content theories that consider whether the individual is motivated by internal drivers (they want to work and do well whether for themselves or for the benefits) and the process drivers (those theories that infer intrinsic and external drivers i.e. the individuals may not want to undertake a task but do so because of external forces such as disciplinary procedures). Leadership theory starts to link into the extrinsic factors when one considers the impact a supervisor can have on the individual's motivation to carry out the work and finally theories of power emanate from leadership as we explore the dynamic between leader and staff member.

Findings

Including the 4 areas of Gibb's reflective cycle; description, feelings, evaluation and analysis

The announcement of the project

The announcement of the change programme came from left field, it had been agreed at an executive level by a small number of individuals, despite the impact being on various departments and the wider workforce model.

As a member of the SLT, I was surprised by the change programme and had many questions about how the new model would operate. There was a sense of urgency to proceedings emanating from the senior sponsor to achieve the HMICFRS recommendation, this meant I did not have the time available to ensure I understood the decisions being made and to be able to communicate the change programme properly.

How did this make you and your team feel? Would this be a challenge to your leadership?

why? I agreed that change was required however the initial delivery was transactional and autocratic; the expectation was that a decision had been made and SLT's must simply deliver. There was no recognition of the requirement to consult, explain or reassure, SLT's also hold significant responsibility and are accustomed to being included in decision making, therefore this lack of consultation created friction. *where?* These factors culminated in created barriers to the change programme being delivered. This approach did not resolve the issues being raised by SLT's, but simply buried them, *such as?* until such time that they caused issues that had to be resolved, leading to disorganisation and a shifting time frame for the change programme to address the oversights and missing information.

According to Heifetz & Laurie (1997) as cited by Flemming (2015) the role of the leader is to identify sources of conflict and lay them bare - without blame, to use as a springboard for creativity. This would have been an opportune time to have clarified oversights and reset the plan of works however democracy was not encouraged and there were active attempts to shut down such conversations and challenge. Burnes & By (2012) as cited by Flemming (2015) also stated that staff who perceived contradictions in what their leaders said and their following actions, were likely to distrust those individuals. Performance would likely decrease, or the leaders would revert to transactional motivators to gain their desired outcomes.

thoughts about this?

When considering the leadership power theory in this scenario, the initial position was one of expert or information power, the project manager, whilst being of the same rank as the SLT's was in a more informed position, backed by the senior sponsor enabling them to initially achieve progress. Once SLT's however had been able to absorb the data sets and study the information they were provided, the power held by the project manager was quickly undermined and the challenges to the proposals were numerous. Some of the SLT's showed real moral power during this period as it became clear that they understood how the front line worked far better than others on the project whilst demonstrating a genuine interest and investment in retaining front line operability and capability. Jim Collins (2006) 5 levels of leadership considers the difference between wanting the best for the organisation and making decisions based on that premise, versus more extrinsic motivators, Collins (2006) also cites Burns (1978) quoting 'the practice of leadership is not the same as the exercise of power'; whilst the management of the project was never Machiavellian, there was a distrust created at the start which persisted throughout the change programme.

by whom & why you?

This example led me to Adair's leadership model 'Action Centered Leadership'. Adair's model focuses on balancing three aspects of leadership: achieving the task, maintaining the team and developing the individual. Whilst this report is clearly directed towards individual leadership, the impact of one individual leader on a group of officers and their dynamics is certainly relevant to the example given.



Adair (2006) identified that if a group were to become too focused in any of the areas, for example driving solely to achieve the task at the expense of one individual becoming demoralised and leaving, or the entire group deviating from the stated task, the performance may start to decrease and ultimately underperform or even

fail. The task of the leader in my example therefore was to balance the differing needs of the HMICFRS, the SLT's and wider organisation and the needs of the staff impacted by this change - against a backdrop of personalities and circumstances to ensure the best performance and outcomes for all. ✓

Adair (2006) reflecting on Maslow's Social Needs believed that members of a group who were frustrated or unhappy were unlikely to play their part within the team effort, to withdraw themselves from the group contribution.

This did not seem to be the case however as members of the SLT were highly driven, just not in the same direction as the project managers. Adam's Equity theory as cited

by Buchanan and Huczynski (2013) also becomes relevant here as he found that motivation is driven by the perceived equity, balance and fairness demonstrated by the leaders of the organisation. As an individual, I was being paid a fair wage and was protected by Police Regulations, so one could argue I was not in receipt of a fairness and equitable reward for my efforts. However I did not feel that my concerns were being listened to and as such I felt that I was in an unjust situation.

Whilst I did not feel these requirements were being met however rather than simply becoming unmotivated and disengaged, I became highly motivated to implement the change – just in the right way, almost in opposition to the project team. Adam's refers to this as a negative tension state, where individuals focus their activity on correcting the state of tension. I, along with other members of the SLT worked tirelessly to correct the project team on their data sets, understanding of response policing and methods of consultation with staff.

good but why? Had you learned something in the past?

Good action, why did you do it?

In examining the motivation behind the senior sponsor's urgency and short timescales; the organisation understandably wanted to avoid a negative response from HMICFRS by delivering the change programme on time and with the stated outcomes. The organisation was advertising for a new Chief Officer at that time, meaning there was potentially a personal impact on the senior sponsor dependant on the outcome of the project. When considering motivation theories, McClelland as cited in Mullins (2019) reported the achievement theory which can be used to potentially understand their motivation to deliver. The theory is based on motives of achievement, power, affiliation and avoidance on which an individual may act. Given their personal standing in the organisation and the stated intended outcomes to achieve a positive inspection by ✓

HMICFRS, it stands to reason that the individual was experiencing the characteristics of achievement motivation, specifically that they enjoyed a challenging goal and took personal responsibility for achieving the result. It is possible to liken this to alternative aspects of motivation theory such as Vroom's expectancy theory i.e. a good outcome would result in them appearing capable with a new Chief Officer and securing their continued position in an executive team.

How did you feel about this?

Selling the vision to the front line

Despite reservations about the change programme, I was required to commence the communication of the plan to my staff and recruit individuals into the new investigation units. I was also required to remodel the staff I was left with into a new response policing model that still met public demand.

why?

I was cautious about how I undertook this duty, whilst I understood and accepted the benefits of the change programme, I was not convinced that the method and calculations were correct. The level of unease within my peers also increased my nervousness about the process. When speaking to my staff, I chose to focus solely on the benefits of the change and the kudos of those being moved into the investigation teams, as I had limited confidence in discussing the details of the new response policing model that I needed to implement.

It would have been neither constructive nor useful to cite my reservations at this stage and felt that I was the 'safety buffer' between the project team and my staff. This did not feel like the *right* thing to do however I felt it was the *best* option at the time; I did not perceive myself as an authentic leader; I was not able to be entirely honest with

*good here on your actions.
Don't leaders have to carry out
instructions of superiors & even
when they disagree, why do we sell to subordinates? Team cohesion?*

staff when discussing the new roles within the investigation unit and those remaining on response.

I struggled personally, with the leadership and attitude demonstrated by some members of the project team. I found their view of response staff was simply that they were 'exchangeable resources', to be moved from one post to another. These were staff that I knew personally, and I understood the impact the potential changes could have on them.

what was your style of leading?

I also felt the pressure from the senior sponsor and believed that if I did not deliver against the next stage of the project, or held up the timeline, then I would be ostracised and potentially held responsible for any negative feedback from HMICFRS. I knew however that my peers were in the same position, so I was mainly able to ignore this fear.

My motivation became a drive to protect the frontline staff from an ill-conceived change programme. This was an intrinsic motivator – there was no tangible reward, it was solely for the benefit of the staff themselves, to protect their numbers within the new response model thereby securing their individual safety whilst in work and providing the public with a better service.

*a leader can be true
to themselves in difficult
situations, remember it is your
style and characteristics that
get them through!*

I recognise, reflecting on the work of Shamir and Eilam (2005) as cited by Roe (2014) that I was trading on my personal authenticity and that reputation which I have built on over several decades as an authentic leader.

There is little academic research that can be cited and many definitions making it difficult to assess what is - and is not – authentic. Roe (2014) cites Avolio and Gardner (2005) who identified that only the individual can really know what is authentic to them.

Although most agree that to be authentic is to be open, displaying your morals and core values, which was not something I felt able to do on this occasion for fear of the change programme with staff.

I, alongside peers, were potentially a risk to the change programme, as the enthusiasm of the senior sponsor and project manager to deliver the change, did not translate well via myself or others. There was a significant risk that my reputation as a leader would be undermined, as the realities of the change programme unfolded, and staff recognised that I had not been authentic.

Creating the investigation unit

Due to the gaps in information about the new investigation roles being created, most staff avoided asking any questions, not wanting to demonstrate any interest in the new unit and risk being nominated.

I countered this by recruiting enthusiastic supervisors for the new unit and then worked with them to identify the most suitable officers to transfer across as investigators. On speaking to these members of staff individually, I ensured they were aware they had been handpicked due to their ability and skill sets, unfortunately I still faced some upset and in one example purposeful use of extended sick leave. I agreed to a tenure for the role of a maximum 18 months before Officers could be rotated out of the investigation unit.

*Participative leadership with supervisors?
Coaching leadership with those selected?*

This felt like a huge leadership challenge, knowing that staff were unwilling and unhappy but complying because I had instructed them to do so. I pondered the

effectiveness of the investigation unit moving forwards and was concerned with how I could keep my reduced staffing on response safe and motivated in their work.

The situation was a challenging one as I prefer to make changes with the support of the staff involved however, I can utilise Police Regulations which allow enforced changes if needed. I recognised that it was 'fear of the unknown' about the new roles that was driving staff behaviour rather than a broader reluctance to undertake the work involved.

It became apparent that staff found themselves on different points of Maslow's hierarchy of needs as cited by Buchanan and Huczynski (2013). This appeared an attempt at maintaining their psychological safety and affiliation needs in an existing role within which they were familiar and comfortable, alongside colleagues with whom they felt they belonged.

Vroom's expectancy theory again becomes a valid means to increasing the staff motivation to undertake the role by reassuring them about the role tenure, the additional training they will get and reminding them that they were chosen due to their existing skills and ability. Whilst not a reward for performing, setting a time limit for remaining on the unit was agreed as a 'sweetener' and motivator to commit to the role.

There is a shift in the bases of power being used in this example. My preferred position aligns with referent power according to Elias (2008) citing French and Raven (1959), who recognised that managers must be able to influence their subordinates to undertake a task successfully. Referent power was defined as the power held due to someone's capability to persuade. I was ultimately left in a position of using legitimate

/ position power – the leverage I can use due to my position within the organisation as a senior manager. That said, French & Raven identified the topic of reciprocity within legitimate power, and this is reflected in the introduction of the tenured post within the unit – I was able to use this as a reciprocal favour, almost veering back into referent power as I informed them to report for their new duties and that I would let them rotate back out onto response again in 18 months.

*How did you
feel doing this?*

Implementation phase

As the date for the implementation approached, I provided instruction for my remaining staff on how the new response police model would work, refreshing patrol plans, moving staff to central geographical locations, and streamlining briefings. Speaking to the first shift on duty after the change had been implemented, the most experienced officers from this shift had been transferred to the investigation unit leaving only student officers. It was clear they were not prepared; they had not been briefed, nor had they transferred stations as they should have done.

I felt frustrated, as a leader I would not personally choose to ignore such change and leave my staff in this position – I could not understand how their supervisor felt it was acceptable. I considered their perspective of the change and the added uncertainty this would have introduced.

I felt frustrated as a senior leader that neither myself nor the supervisor's line manager had picked up on the lack of engagement prior to that point.

I was not willing to wait for the feedback to filter through the intermediary supervisor and addressed the line manager directly. It became clear he had been relying on his experienced officers to 'carry' the shift and was allowing staff to 'muddle through'. He

had no buy-in to the new response model and was not invested in the change programme.

why?

From a learning and behaviour perspective, it was important to me, as part of the senior management team, that this supervisor improved their performance. In line with the behaviourist approach to learning, I provided immediate feedback to the individual and continued to check and test the readiness and preparedness of all the supervisors over the proceeding weeks. I did this by starting early in different stations to check if staff had been briefed and deployed – where this had not happened, I provided immediate feedback until I observed the position where this was no longer a problem. I.e., I started my shift early to coincide with a staff briefing – to find there was no staff briefing being conducted, I would reprimand the supervisor and task the staff directly. This challenged the inactivity and reinforced my expectations with staff.

Considering Watson's description of behaviourism (as cited by Buchanan and Huczynski 2013). I was using punishment to modify the staff behaviour and ensure compliance with the newly introduced change programme.

Burns (1978) as cited by Walsh and Vito (2019) argues that individuals are motivated by one of two leadership methods – transactional or transformational leadership. The scenario I have described aligns to the transactional leadership style; I have motivated staff into behaving in the desired way by bargaining – they comply with my requirements and I will desist in turning up early every shift to check in on them.

The alternative can be seen in the research by Murphy and Drodge (2004) who found that within transformational leadership there were '4 I's' relevant to police leadership;

- Idealised influence; do I represent or promote activity that my staff aspire to?
- Inspirational motivation; do I inspire my staff to work together and towards a common goal?
- Intellectual stimulation; do I encourage staff to challenge the status quo and consider other options.
- Individualised consideration; do I treat all staff as individuals and work to their needs?

Applying the 4 I's approach to the same scenario I could have influenced and inspired the supervisors prior to the implementation of the change programme by meeting with them as a cohort and talking through the plan and my expectations. Outliers would have been identified at this stage, the opportunity to recognise their misaligned position would more likely have enabled them to engage much earlier and without the need to be 'punished'. Secondly, I could have followed up with individual meetings to encourage them to raise concerns discuss their personal needs within the change programme. Aligning my leadership to the 4I's transformational model could have resulted in the same outcome or better – without requiring the use of punitive measures.

*How would this make you feel?
would this help referent power?*

Herzberg's two factor (motivation-hygiene) theory according to Mullins (2019) also appears to explain some of the behaviour demonstrated with the supervisor. They are seemingly not motivated by doing their best to achieve the change required or advancing the new response model. It is possible that the supervisor had picked up on the poor management of the change programme however there was enough

evidence to suggest that their poor supervision had been in place for some time prior to the change programme. This created poor hygiene factors impacting on staff such as low-quality supervision, poor communication including briefing and tuition and unclear work objectives thus preventing them pursuing the changes required.

Another explanation could come from Vroom's expectancy theory (Mullins 2019) He considered valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. Had the same individual been working within an average private sector job, under the instrumentality aspect of Vroom's theory, the individual would likely have been more motivated to act appropriately. They could have been financially rewarded for performance rather than automatically being paid just for 'being present'. Given the public sector role with alternative performance targets (i.e., money saving not profit generation), and police regulations providing a high level of protection, there was not the same motivation to perform to a high standard as they would be paid the same wage regardless, even if facing disciplinary measures for poor performance. This is certainly an area Mullins (2019) suggests should be considered by managers, as to how we identify performance measures and the process of how staff we evaluate staff against these. Mullins (2019) discusses the motivational force being the combination of the three factors, clearly any value being zero in a multiplication will lead to the motivational force being zero!

Creating the new 'normal'

The new Chief Officer had been duly appointed and chose to work their first tour of duty in one of my stations, on a nightshift with my front-line response officers. The

Chief Officer was vocal in their feedback from that tour of duty that the change programme had left the frontline under resourced.

Both my Officers and I felt privileged that the Chief Officer would not only choose to work on our division, but also to work the graveyard shift alongside the staff. I finally believed my concerns might be listened to and I felt acknowledged for the first time within the change programme.

The Chief Officer took an opportunity to demonstrate their leadership skills and principles, demonstrating where their priorities lay. This appealed to the frontline staff, as a senior officer in the Force was happy to 'get their hands dirty' and truly understood the job from their perspective.

It also appeared to represent a very literal method of challenging the change programme and the outcomes that had been delivered.

The use of legitimate and referent power was at play here. The Chief Officer was able to use their position to make a point and apply pressure on the project team without directly highlighting any failure in front of the organisation.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs was once more highly relevant as the Chief Officer cited the inability of officers to 'double crew' whilst on duty, highlighting the inability to meet one of the most basic needs within the hierarchy. Affiliation and esteem within the new investigation units and response model could not be met until the most basic of needs have to some degree been met (Mullins 2019).

Participative?
Team Building
Motivation?

why was this?

was this good?

There are also elements of behavioural modelling as presented by Bandura (cited in Buchanan and Huczynski (2013)). The Chief Officer was leading by example and made clear that respectful and legitimate challenge was acceptable. Bandura's theory of behavioural modelling suggests that staff would copy the Chief Officer's approach, however this would only lead to longer lasting changes in behaviour if the adapted behaviour led to positive results. As a member of an SLT, I felt I was now able to highlight my concerns with the project manager and senior sponsor as they were more likely to accept and acknowledge.

were you motivated?

Conclusion

I have reflected on the developing experience of delivering a change programme within the organisation, as I conclude I will assess the effectiveness of the different approaches.

From the outset of the change programme an alternative approach by the project manager could have achieved better buy-in and support. Had the senior sponsor taken a democratic and transformational approach – allowing the SLT's to consult on the proposal, this would have reduced the concerns and allowed for an agreed way forward. Whilst there were tight timescales to achieve the HMICFRS requirements, SLT's had demonstrated during the covid pandemic that they could work effectively and efficiently at pace and still create positive outcomes.

why are they able to do this?

Argyris and McGregor as referenced by Adair (2006) found that worker's need for self-actualisation could be at conflict with those needs of the organisation however there were practical means to successfully merge these. When transposed onto the change

programme, the project manager and senior sponsor may have had personal ambitions or perceptions which conflicted with the organisational requirements. However, it should have been possible to overlay and manage matters such as personal progression within their role whilst overseeing the change programme.

The project manager or senior sponsor could have changed the leadership approach at this early stage and still retained engagement with the programme, by acknowledging the short comings and gaps in the information and working with SLT's to address these.

would this have helped with authenticity?

When considering my personal leadership style, I could have been more effective had I taken a transactional approach. I could have appointed the supervisors and staff to the new unit - without consultation - and directed them to commence their new duties. Ultimately, their levels of motivation may not have been much different, as by trying to be inclusive and fair, I may simply have extended the pain; much like a sticking plaster, I could have just ripped it off quickly! In terms of learning behaviour, I had experienced numerous change programmes by this stage in my career and had learned something new from each process. I felt that my learning on this occasion took a humanist approach (Maslow as cited in Mullins 2019) whereby I was self-motivated to learn and improve myself; the learning was not on a forced schedule but rather my choice of where to focus my time and observations.

why did you choose this?

The Chief Officer's approach to addressing concerns for staffing levels was very effective, creating an immediate desire by the project manager and senior sponsor to review data sets and staffing numbers. The approach was non-confrontational and

provided a 'learning opportunity' for the project team to adjust not only the figures but also the attitude towards other internal stakeholders. This was a real moment of strong leadership creating the motivation to change behaviour within the organisation very quickly.

Action Plan

I have reflected on several alternatives that could have been considered during this change programme however, one aspect that repeatedly came to the fore was that of managing younger officers.

Those officers born into Generation Z / 'Gen Z' or from 1997 onwards have far different expectations of their leaders than those that have come before them – many of whom are still present in the workplace. As a leader, I have felt out of my depth at times when I have needed to use transactional leadership styles only to find younger staff react very differently and often have less resilience to manage that style of leadership. Older staff, myself included, have felt frustrated in their inability to 'just get on with it' without recognising the reasons for why there is a difference in behaviours. In essence, I have learned from this experience that having the time to use transformational leadership to its full potential reaps benefits for all staff but particularly those of Gen Z.

good

That said, transactional leadership will always have a place in policing due to the nature of the work we undertake, it is therefore important that I work with those staff that are joining the organisation to ensure that they are able to build personal resilience into their repertoire to enable their longevity in the workplace. The social learning theory can be used to assist staff in continuously develop throughout their career (Bandurra as cited by Chuang 2021) and help encourage younger staff to better self-regulate and model increased resilience from existing older staff.

✓

Secondly, I have observed a style of project management that, whilst I would not wish to repeat, have learned much from by way of observation. The importance of being an honest leader and accepting critical feedback without being defensive of the project, I would certainly build the timeline to ensure that consultation and feedback were prioritised from all levels of the organisation. ✓

The rank structure within policing may present the right to lead due to seniority however this does not automatically infer the ability to be a good leader. These experiences have helped me understand the importance of listening when someone is willing to challenge but also of creating that environment where they know they are psychologically safe to make the challenge in the first instance, without fear of punitive measures. ✓

Finally, I would take forward a requirement for all senior officers to better understand the concept of servant leadership, which has been researched and documented since the 1950's. Servant leaders are responsive to the needs of their staff, the consumer and the organisation – not the other way around, i.e. all energy and focus channelled upwards towards what the senior leaders want, away from the end users. Blanchard and Broadwell (2018) listed 10 characteristics of servant leaders including empathy, awareness, stewardship and listening – all traits that I felt were missing from this change programme and would have resulted in a better outcome much earlier in the process. Servant leadership covers many of the positive qualities of the leadership, motivation and learning behaviours that I have reflected on within this report and would make an ideal leadership starting point for all staff within the organisation. ✓

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