**Frame Reference**

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EDLP 702.901: Understanding Self as Leader

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**Frame Reference**

In Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal’s book *Reframing Organizations* (2017), they explore the intricacies of leadership through a mental model lens, in a term coined by the pair, as “frames”. There are four frames: structural, human resource, political and symbolic. The structural frame focuses on organization, such as, policies and roles. The human resources lens is centered around understanding people. The political lens is a competitive view of organization. Lastly, the symbolic lens is focused on meaning and faith. Frames are much like maps, they are windows on a terrain and tools for navigating it contours (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Tools are designed for a particular job; therefore, the usage of tool becomes situational. The right tool makes a job easier, the wrong tool gets in the way (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Through this lens Bolman and Deal explore the idea that leaders can shift between each frame according to the organizational needs. The four-frame model allows for multiframe thinking that allows leaders to be drawn to some and put off others (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Each frame is powerful and collectively permits leaders to reframe and look at the same thing from a multitude of lenses. In using the Bolman and Deal’s leadership self-assessment we can see comfort level and leadership skill within each frame. Here I will explore each frame in relation to myself as a leader.

**Structural Frame**

At any given moment, organization’s structure represents its best effort to align internal activities with outside pressures and opportunities (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Education is an ever-evolving industry where success is measured on performance. High performance expectations require leaders to lead through a structural frame of teamwork and interdependence. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) highlights a characteristic of a high-performing team that shape purpose in response to a demand or an opportunity placed in their path, usually by higher management. As higher demands arise from state legislative and the Virginia Department of Education K-12 leaders have to mount their efforts together to create goals and plans of operation at the building level. High School is broken into departments such as math, science, social studies, health and physical education that have to work together towards a common goal of student success and matriculation. All-Channel Networking creates multiple connections so that information flows freely (Bolman & Deal, 2017). In order to create a cohesive working environment in a large building with many moving pieces leaders have to conquer structural tensions by differentiation and integration (Bolman & Deal, 2017). In order to so they employ both vertical and lateral coordination (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Leaders use vertical coordination of policies and procedures for discipline, that are put in place by leaders for equity, and to provide structure and expectation for student-behavior. They also employ lateral coordination of meetings for strategic decision-making with staff. There are leadership networks in place that allow leaders mentorship and professional development opportunities. Both vertical and lateral coordination are effective and efficient. Every organization must find a design that works for its circumstances, and inherent structural tradeoffs rarely yield easy answer or perfect solutions (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

**Human Resource Frame**

While general education has been defined by structure and substance (Zai, 2015) educational leaders work in the people serving business. Human resource frame leaders emphasize the importance of people and centers on the relationship between organization and people (Bolman & Deal, 2017). I ranked in the 69th percentile in human resources in the Bolman and Deal Leadership Orientations Self-Assessment (2020) primarily due to the innate desire to focus on the human and relational side of the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017). The need of individuals and organizations can be aligned, engaging people’s talent and energy while profiting the enterprise (Bolman & Deal, 2017). In the case of education, the profitable enterprise is essentially is the students, however, it begins with placement of competent educators who take pride in their job. Performance based assessments are put in place to measure success. It is in the intricate details of understanding the needs of people and motivating to one’s ultimate potential that can achieve that success. In Daniel Pink’s book Drive (2012) he creates the model motivation 3.0: autonomy, mastery, purpose. It feeds off the idea that we often neglect what is needed for a person to be genuinely motivated (Pink, 2012). Being in the people business enables educational leaders to understand it is better to invest in people.

Investing in people can present challenges and requires time and persistence (Bolman & Deal, 2017). External pressures from legislation, new initiatives, graduation rates and many more can often over shadow the human resource frame. There are practices that are put in place in place in order to improve and expound upon the ongoing effort of marrying people and the organization together. In educational leadership we enter our human resource frame in our hiring and retaining process of our staff. We provide professional development for teachers and staff to continually learn and grown. Teachers are given autonomy in the classroom and empowered to be authentic and creative in their profession. While no single method is effective by itself, these approaches strengthen the bond between individual and organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

**Political Frame**

Organization are inevitably political (Bolman & Deal, 2017). You almost never want to hear politics and educational leadership in conjunction with each other. All too often educational leadership does require us to operate in the political frame. Political leaders emphasize the importance of building a power base (Bolman & Deal, 2017). They are advocates who understand politics and are comfortable with conflict (Bolman & Deal, 2020). Educational leaders are dependent on resources provided for the schools. When money and students are plentiful administrators can focus on initiating innovative programs (Bolman & Deal, 2017). While educational leaders deal with continual conflict they employ political skills, such as, agenda setting, bargaining and negotiating (Bolman & Deal, 2017) to navigate through them. In particular, I employ networking and building coalitions for excising my political influence (Bolman & Deal, 2017). By identifying those relevant relationship, it allows me to acquire more resources for the school building.

In educational leadership we have to manage and allocate scarce resources throughout the building while remaining equitable. Difficult decisions are made around budget items and making choices on areas to cut. Scarce resources and enduring differences put conflict at the center of day-to-day dynamics and make power the most important asset to a political leader (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Often times, on a smaller scale, a leader will have to choose between buying more Spanish to English dictionaries for their English language learners or providing the science department funds to purchase labs to provide students with hand-on experiences. On a larger scale in general education, historically there are decisions made to incentivize through faculty award structures: tenure, promotion, compensation, support, prestige, and funding (Zai, 2015). Bolman and Deal (2017) note that most important decisions involve allocating scarce resource and determining who gets what.

**Symbolic Frame**

“A symbol is something that stands for or suggests something else; it conveys socially constructed meanings beyond its intrinsic or obvious functional use” (Zott and Huy, 2007, p.72). Symbols take different forms, such as, myths, visions, and values within organizations (Bolman & Deal 2017). In leadership it is important to create vision so that there is an interconnectedness within the organization. Addressing culture and vision is key if organizations are to create a climate for innovation (Wong-Kam, 2012). We encourage staff involvement with shaping the vision and mission to create a shared culture. We help celebrate wins with staff in monthly meetings, recognize students for their achievements, and celebrate our diversity each year with a flag ceremony to cultivate a shared culture. In schools, we also operate through strategic planning, these act as symbols to our dedication to evaluation and improvement. Plans are symbols that maintain legitimacy and create a roadmap for where an organization is going (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

Symbols also offer solace in time of tribulation (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Due to the recent events of the COVID-19 pandemic, educational leaders across the nation have had to come up with innovative ways to connect with their community, students, and staff. COVID-19 has forced us to rethink and refine our vision, address our loss, deal with the painful present and transition into the new future (Bolman & Deal, 2017). It is in these moments, when the unknown is ahead and change is certain, leaders are having to tap into their symbolic frame of leadership the most.

**Conclusion**

Schools, as educational organizations dealing with demands for improvements in student outcomes, teacher quality, pedagogy, and curricular programs, can use multiframe thinking to find innovative solutions (Wong-Kam, 2012). Bolman and Deal (2017) emphasize that each frame highlights significant possibilities for leadership but each by themselves are incomplete. By applying learning of the four perspectives to various situations, leaders are better able to understand what they are up against and move forward (Wong-Kam, 2012). The terrain in which educational leaders navigate is treacherous at times. There are many comprehensive situations that are too complex and need to be addressed in delicate manner. Operating in a multiframe approach as a leader can help me traverse the constant change. My strengths from the Bolman and Deal Assessment (2020) indicate that I mostly operate in the human resource and symbolic frame. The assessment also indicated that it is vital for me to identify situations in which a multiframe approach is necessary and tap more into my political and structural frame. By integrating each frame into my leadership, I can offer an orchestrated design for responding to need for learning, realignment, negotiation, and grieving (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

**References**

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2017). *Reframing organizations, artistry, choice, and leadership*. Jossey-Bass.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2020). *Leadership Orientations Self-Assessment.* Jossey-Bass.  Retrieved from <https://fs25.formsite.com/josseybass/form29/index.html>

Katzenbach, J.R., & Smith, D.K. (1991). *The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High-Performance Organization.* Harvard Business School Press.

Pink, D. H. (2012). *Drive: the surprising truth about what motivates us*. Riverhead Books.

Wong-Kam, J. (2012). *Creating a climate for innovation in education: Reframing structure, culture, and leadership practices*(Order No. 3514349). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global: Social Sciences. (1027591110). Retrieved from <http://proxy.library.vcu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.library.vcu.edu/docview/1027591110?accountid=14780>

Zai, R., I.I.I. (2015). Reframing general education.*Journal of General Education, 64*(3), 196-217. doi:10.5325/jgeneeduc.64.3.0196 Retrieved from <http://proxy.library.vcu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.library.vcu.edu/docview/1773229001?accountid=14780>

Zott, C., & Huy. Q. H. (2007). *How Entrepreneurs Use Symbolic Management to Acquire Resources.* Administrative Science Quarterly, 52:72

**Marti Tomlin’s Peer Review for Kiesha White**

 Kiesha, I provided my feedback based on the sections of your paper, if you’d prefer I scan and send you the paper with my mark-ups I can do that!  You did a great job, I loved learning about your through reading your paper and I’m excited to work with you over the next (3) years.  FYI-when I say “line X” it is based on the line in each frame.

**Title Page:**

* Consider making the font in the running head the same font as the paper
* In the title are you referencing the title of the book?  If so, you will want to add an S to the end of Organization
* The assignment is titled Frame Reference paper, that may also be an acceptable title of the paper.
* As opposed to June 25 as the date you may want to update that to be the due date of the project.

**Introduction:**

* Add ‘s to the end of Deal on line one.
* Comma after model lens, comma after pair
* Should the various frames be capitalized through the document?  I wasn’t sure?
* Add word The before Human Resources on line 4.
* Remove word (a) before multiframe thinking on line 11
* On line 14 remove the comma after using
* On line 15 instead of saying “here we” say “I” and remove the word more

**Structural Frame:**

* I don’t think you need to include the page number in the reference on line 2.
* The sentence beginning with “As higher demand mount” may need to be 2 sentences.
* Remove the word down on line 9
* On line 10 consider words “towards a” as opposed to “in”
* I think there is an extra “with” before the word building on line 13
* Consider making the sentence that starts with “In order to create” two sentences.
* Comma after equity on line 16
* I’d like to get a little more description around the lateral coordination of meetings…

**Human Resources Frame:**

* On line 9 add a comma after but
* On line 10 remove word such and change the ; to a , after success
* On line 12 I’m thinking the citation should be after the book, not the author.
* On line 12/13 you repeat the phrase create the model
* On line 16 remove word its
* On line 19 remove words “every going”

**Political Frame:**

* On line 5 change is to are
* On line 9 remove and between setting and bargaining
* On line to change for to to.  Also, is that your quote or B&D?  It’s not quite clear.
* On line 13 add word educational in front of leadership and change scares to scarce
* Line 14 I think surround should be around?
* Line 17 the sentence may need to be edited to read “Often times a small-scale leader will…”

**Symbolic Frame:**

* I’m not sure you need the page number on line 2 in the citation
* On line 7 remove word and after ceremony
* On line 8 instead of says “It” maybe say “These acts”
* On line 9 you say “plans” but there isn’t follow up with an example of a plan, maybe provide that?
* The Won-Kam quote on lines 10-11 doesn’t flow with the rest of the paragraph to me.

**Conclusion:**

* Line 3 I think you need to add (2017) after Bolman & Deal
* Line 7 remove word through
* Line 8 consider reformatting sentence to read: situations that are complex and need to be addressed
* Lines 10 & 11 may be better as one sentence instead of 2.

**References:**

* You have the year as 2008 in the first reference but in the paper you have the year as 2017.
* Need to add ( ) around the year in the Katzenbac reference
* I believe the Wong-Kam reference may need to be updated, check out page 334 of the APA manual for citing dissertations.
* The Zai article has a DOI so I believe it should read like:
  + Zai, R. (2015). Reframing General Education. *The Journal of General Education,* *64*(3), 196-217. doi:10.5325/jgeneeduc.64.3.0196
* In the Zott reference:
  + you are missing a period at the end
  + I also don’t believe you should use “ “
  + You may also need a comma after the word Quarterly

**Frame Reference Paper and Peer Edit, 25 points**

**DUE: July 12**

**(A) Paper**

Bolman and Deal believe that while most leaders operate within the comfort level of their own preferred frames, excellent leaders are more responsive and able to switch frames based on what the circumstances require. This ability to reframe is central to a leader’s success.

Using [Bolman and Deal’s Leadership Orientations Self-Assessment,](http://fs25.formsite.com/josseybass/form29/index.html) analyze your leadership skill/comfort level with each frame. Brief, specific examples of your own leadership actions/behaviors will illuminate the discussion, and the inclusion of 2-3 scholarly references (in addition to B&D) will support your assertions.

Your paper should be organized by the following: a brief introduction, one section for each frame discussion, and a conclusion that summarizes the impact of this knowledge on your leadership practice. Papers should be 5-6 pages (minus title and reference page).  Rubric is below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rubric:                                                                 Frame Preference Rubric** | | | |
| **25 points** | **Target** | **Acquiring** | **Developing** |
| **Organization**  **3** | Crystal clear focus that does not stray; all paragraphs fully developed; strong intro and satisfying conclusion; reader is skillfully guided through  (3 points) | Clear focus with minor digression(s); most paragraphs well-developed; logical intro and conclusion; reader can see where writer is headed  (2 points) | Focus digresses; paragraph development weak; intro and conclusion missing and/or weak; reader experiences gaps/confusion.  (0-1 point) |
| **Structural**  **Frame**  **4** | Thorough and insightful analysis; examples enhance; sources support ideas  (4 points) | Thoughtful analysis with minor gaps; examples correct but lack depth; sources mostly support correctly  (3 points) | Analysis weak and/or incorrect; examples off-target or otherwise questionable; sources missing or incorrect  (0-2 points) |
| **Human Resources**  **Frame**  **4** | Thorough and insightful analysis; examples enhance; sources support ideas  (4 points) | Thoughtful analysis with minor gaps; examples correct but lack depth; sources mostly support correctly  (3 points) | Analysis weak and/or incorrect; examples off-target or otherwise questionable; sources missing or incorrect  (0-2 points) |
| **Political**  **Frame**  **4** | Thorough and insightful analysis; examples enhance; sources support ideas  (4 points) | Thoughtful analysis with minor gaps; examples correct but lack depth; sources mostly support correctly  (3 points) | Analysis weak and/or incorrect; examples off-target or otherwise questionable; sources missing or incorrect  (0-2 points) |
| **Symbolic**  **Frame**  **4** | Thorough and insightful analysis; examples enhance; sources support ideas  (4 points) | Thoughtful analysis with minor gaps; examples correct but lack depth; sources mostly support correctly  (3 points) | Analysis weak and/or incorrect; examples off-target or otherwise questionable; sources missing or incorrect  (0-2 points) |
| **Grammar\*, Punctuation,**  **and Spelling**  **3** | No major or minor errors  (3  points) | No major errors; one or two minor errors that do not distract  (2 points) | Repeated one major or several minor errors that distract  (0-1 point) |
| **APA: Use of**  **Sources and Paper Format**  **3** | Sources attributed and formatted perfectly in text and reference page  Impeccable use of APA conventions such as title page, running head, page numbers, font, spacing, margins, section headings, etc.  (3 points) | Some minor errors in use of APA conventions  Some minor errors in use of APA conventions; e.g. minor punctuation, spacing, or indentation  (2 points) | \*\* Major errors or inconsistencies; e.g. major error/omission of any source information   Major errors; e.g. missing reference or title page, incorrect/missing section headings, margins, font, page numbers, running head  (0 – 2 points) |
|  |
| **Plagiarism, intentional or not, will result in an automatic zero on the assignment.**  \*\*Examples:  No citation for any material that should be cited; paraphrasing that contains copied keywords, phrases, or structure from the original source which should be quoted; or any other type of intellectual dishonesty that uses others’ words or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment. | | | |