

Cultivating growth culture for higher education leaders

Fathur Rokhman¹

¹Faculty of Language and Art, Universitas Negeri Semarang
fathurrokhman@mail.unnes.ac.id

Abstract. Leaders should grow in their capacities and characters. Growth is not an option. It is an inevitable endeavor in this ever-changing time period called disruption era. Leaders who fail to update themselves will be left behind and their organizations will suffer. I believe that leaders shall continuously upgrade themselves in order to make themselves and their organizations relevant to the disruptions. With that principle in mind, I design a leadership upgrading model for university leaders called "Kepemimpinan Bertumbuh" or Growth Leadership. This model has been trialed and administered in different occasions. Results, feedbacks and inputs have been acquired from various users and stakeholders. This paper reports the development of this model and discusses the potential future improvement of this model. Latest results show that higher education leaders need a structured model of leadership upgrading in addition to their informal leadership upgrade based on their experiences and past performances.

1. Introduction

The existence of a higher education institution shall create enlightenment for the community, nation, and country where the university is located. The form of enlightenment is directed at the role of universities in actively solving problems faced by society by producing knowledge that is ready to use and in the sense of problem finders. Thus, the knowledge obtained through research can be used to explain, predict events in the lives of people, businesses and the industrial world. Therefore, that universities must be able to produce graduates (output) who have strong personalities, capable of being tough, intelligent, and creative so they are able to compete with other nations in facing a disruptive global era [1].

As an organization, higher education institution is seen as an organization that has characteristics which are somewhat different from other organizations. Higher education governance shows that almost all decision-making powers are at the department level [2]. In addition, most of higher education organizations use unstructured management practices and flexible controls. The characteristics of the organization are said to be an organized anarchy. With that kind of characteristics in higher education institutions, leadership needed is certainly different from leadership in other organizations [3]. The inaccuracy in establishing leadership causes many people to suffer, experience burn-out, cannot enjoy life at work, and bigger costs are incurred to treat emotional pain at the workplace [4]. In other words, leadership has a big influence on the success of universities.

An organization will succeed or even fail largely determined by leadership factors [5]. In addition, that everything rises and falls depending on leadership [6]. These words have now become more convincing and applicable to many people. Leadership factors are the main cause of progress or destruction of a country, institution, or organization. For this reason, the model of developing capacity building for individuals and organizations is always upgraded in accordance with the corresponding era.

Now, the world has entered an era of disruption. In this era, changes in human civilization were no longer developed in thousands or hundreds of years. In a matter of decades or seconds, changes in human civilization can take place. The style of thinking and acting of leaders must be completely futuristic. What is done today must have been based on long-term thinking. For this reason, UNNES has to perform a leap of faith. Targeting on being a world class university is deemed necessary. Thus, developing growth culture in leadership to develop capacity building needs to be realized in the era of disruption.

2. Capacity Building

The term capacity is the ability of individuals, organizations or systems to carry out their functions effectively, efficiently and continuously [7]. On the basis of that illustration, capacity building means that processes of individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and communities to improve their ability to (1) produce performance in carrying out core functions, solving problems, formulating and achieving a set of goals, and (2) understanding and fulfilling the needs of development in a broader context in a sustainable manner. Meanwhile, despite many differences, some experts agreed that capacity building is capacity development or capacity strengthening which implies an initiative on the development of existing capacity. Others are referring capacity building to a creative process of constructing potential capacity [8].

Furthermore, in the *Capacity Building for Local Government Towards Good Governance*, the attention of capacity building to;

- (1) Development of human resources; training, recruitment and termination of professional, managerial and technical employees,
- (2) Organizing, namely the arrangement of structures, processes, resources and management styles,
- (3) Network, in the form of coordination, organizational activities, network functions, as well as formal and informal interactions,
- (4) Organizational environment, namely rules and laws that regulate public services, responsibilities and power between institutions, policies that become obstacles to development tasks, and financial and budgetary support.
- (5) Other broader activity environments, including political, economic factors and conditions that affect performance.

The UNDP focuses on three dimensions, namely;

- (1) Labor (human resources dimension), namely the quality of human resources and the way HR is utilized.
- (2) Capital (physical dimension), concerning material facilities, equipment, materials needed and space / building.
- (3) Technology, namely organization and management style, functions of planning, policy determination, control and evaluation, communication, and management information systems.

3. Leaders and Ideal Leadership

Leaders and leadership are two interrelated elements. That is, leadership style is a reflection of the characters and behaviors of the leaders. The combination or synthesis between leader's behavior and leadership style is the key to the success of the management of an organization or institution. Many management experts express their opinions on leadership. The leadership is a set of activities to influence people to work together to achieve organizational goals voluntarily [9]. Thus, in leadership there is a link between leaders and various activities produced by these leaders. A leader is someone who can unite people and can direct them in such a way as to achieve certain goals. To achieve the goals desired by a leader, he must have the ability to regulate his leadership environment.

In 2007, in their book entitled *The Leadership Challenge*, conducted a survey of the characteristics of admired leaders. The results of this survey in the span of 8 years showed almost the same situation in each and every year. In the two surveys conducted, honesty was chosen most often compared to other leadership characteristics. Based on Kouzes and Posner's research, somewhat different results: honesty took the second place. Overall, the results of the survey describing the sequence of ideal leadership characteristics are as follows: (1) having a future plan (ability), (2) being honest (character), (3) caring, respecting employees (character), (4) integrity (character), and (5) wise (combination of character and ability) [10]. Of the five characteristics which are the most frequently chosen, the four traits are character traits, and only one trait is related to skill or ability. These results confirm that the conscience that shapes a person's character has a contribution which is more dominant than the ability to exercise leadership. This can be the base of the concept that everyone is a leader [11]. Philosophically, the ability to become a leader is essentially a human nature that God gives to humans. The leaders are influencers [11]. The key to giving influence lies in exemplary actions.

4. Growth Leadership

Covey makes leadership like a tiered staircase that is carried out inside out. The four levels include personal leadership: our relationship with ourselves, (2) interpersonal leadership: our relationship and interaction with others, (3) managerial leadership: the responsibility to complete work with others, and (4) organizational leadership: our own need to organize people; recruit them, train them, hire them, form groups, solve problems and create harmonious structures, strategies and systems.

Inspired by Stephen Covey, the concept of leadership with a resemblance with the concept of a tree instead of a staircase. Because a healthy tree is a growing tree, this leadership concept is called growth leadership. There are five main concepts in growth philosophy: (1) recognizing the potential seeds in growth leadership, (2) making strong leadership trees, (3) developing leadership tree networks, (4) managing stormy days in leadership, and (5) grow the new seeds of leadership [12], [13].

5. Application of Growth Leadership

The five main concepts of growth leadership are divided into five main modules. Each capacity building activity can cover all concepts or selected concepts that are in accordance with the needs of the audience. Growth leadership training is arranged in a combination of techniques as follows: (1) seminars, (2) workshops and (3) coaching.

Some basic principles must always be emphasized at every growing leadership session:

- (1) Leaders must grow. Leaders cannot stop learning. Leaders shall not be satisfied quickly. Leaders must always be open with useful new information.
- (2) Leaders may fail but leaders must not give up.
- (3) Leaders must benefit others.
- (4) The leader must be a mentor to other leaders.
- (5) Leaders must always look for opportunities to create new leaders.

- (6) Leaders should not be afraid of being rivaled by new leaders who are more competent. To get rid of this fear, senior leaders must always learn to learn new skills.
- (7) The leader must not be shaken when the storm hits. The leader is a place to hold on to when the crisis hits.
- (8) Leaders must collaborate and build network. The ability of individual leaders is very important but collaboration is the soul of leadership.
- (9) The leaders must master leadership strategies.
- (10) Leaders must see leadership as a spiritual way.

6. Conclusion

There are conclusions resulting from this study. The prototype format of growth leadership training is a combination of seminars, workshops and coaching. The main material of the growth leadership prototype is the five major chapters in growth leadership, namely: Growing the Seed of Leadership, Strengthening the Leadership Tree, Developing a Leadership Network, Art Facing Difficult Situations and Developing New Leaders. The next conclusion is after being tested on audiences, it turns out that growth leadership concepts can be accepted in various circles. According to the pretests and posttest, there was a significant increase in knowledge of the participants after attending the training.

7. References

- [1] Yuliawati, Sri. 2012. "Kajian Implementasi Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi sebagai Fenomena Pendidikan Tinggi di Indonesia". *Majalah Widya*, Tahun 29 Nomor 318 Maret 2012, hal. 28 – 33.
- [2] Baldrige, J.V. (1983) 'Organisational characteristics of colleges and universities' in J.V. Baldrige and T. Deal (eds) *The dynamics of organisational change in education*. Berkeley: McCutcheon Publishing Corporation.
- [3] Handoyo, Seger. 2010. "Pengukuran Servant Leadership sebagai Alternatif Kepemimpinan Di Institusi Pendidikan Tinggi Pada Masa Perubahan Organisasi". *Makara, Sosial Humaniora*, Vol. 14, No. 2, Desember 2010, hal. 130–140.
- [4] Frost, P.J. 2003. *Toxic Emotion at Work: How Compassionate Managers Handle Pain and Conflict*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- [5] Sardjono, T.S. dan Syafarudin A. 2004. "Pengaruh Gaya Kepemimpinan dan Motivasi terhadap Perubahan: Studi Kasus pada Dinas Kesehatan Kota Yogyakarta Setelah Diberlakukannya Otonomi Daerah". *Sinergi*, Vol. 7/1, Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Islam Indonesia.
- [6] Maxwell, J.C. 2011. *The 360 Degree Leader Developing your Influence from Anywhere in the Organization*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.
- [7] Milen, Anni. 2004. *Pegangan Dasar Pengembangan Kapasitas*. Yogyakarta: Pondok Pustaka Yogyakarta.
- [8] Soeprapto, Riyadi. 2010. *The Capacity Building For Local Government Toward Good Governance*. World Bank.
- [9] Terry, George R. 2006. *Asas-Asas Menejemen*. Terjemahan Winardi. Bandung: Alumni.
- [10] Trimahanani, Emmy, Philip S dan Ria F. 2011. "Ciri Khas Kepemimpinan yang Dikagumi". Dalam *Vibizmanagement Research*, Vibizmanagement.com.
- [11] Agustian, Ary Ginanjar. 2005. *ESQ (Emotional Spritual Quotient)*. Jakarta: PT Arga Tilanta.
- [12] Rokhman, Fathur. 2016. *Kepemimpinan Betumbuh: 50 Kiat Memimpin Era Perubahan*. Semarang: Prima Cipta Nusantara.
- [13] Rokhman, Fathur. 2018. *Kepemimpinan Bertumbuh: Prinsip Kepemimpinan di Era Perubahan*. Edisi Revisi. Semarang: UNNES Press.