



Independent Order of Odd Fellows
Dedicated Members for Change

June 19, 2014

Dear Dedicated Members for Change,

Louie Sarmiento has penned a very interesting article on "management" styles. He contrasts what he calls the "old management paradigm" (which was prevalent in the last Century) versus the "new management paradigm" (which is emerging in the current Century). Louie's theory is that most of the leaders of this Order at all levels practice the old management style, although some of the more progressive leaders practice the new management style. It goes without saying that the management style of Lodge leadership can have a direct effect and major impact on retention of Lodge members and recruitment of new members.

Which management style do you see in your Lodge?

F - L - T

Dave Rosenberg
Deputy Grand Master

UPDATING THE I.O.O.F MANAGEMENT PARADIGM
By Louie Blake S. Sarmiento, MA I/O Psychology

What is a paradigm? A paradigm is a framework or model containing the basic assumptions, ways of thinking, and methodology that are commonly accepted by members of an organization or scientific community. The new management paradigm is considerably different today than in the past.

According to various researchers, the old management paradigm focused on ensuring "order", "control", "authority" and "seniority" in an organization or company. This is the paradigm that most of our Lodges, Grand Lodges and Sovereign Grand Lodge still follow. Thus, a number of those in office (but not all) in the Independent Order of Odd Fellows may be focused on codes, laws and titles to ensure "order" and "control". We nominate and elect members in officer positions mostly based on "seniority". There are even cases when the SGL or GL code is used by some of our officers as a source of "ego", "power" or "authority" over the members. For people who have knowledge on organizational psychology, this behavior is understandable because



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many of these senior officers grew up at a time when this old management paradigm was common and acceptable. This old management paradigm, however, is already obsolete in this era.

Today, some members - particularly new ones - can easily be turned-off if they encounter officers following this old management paradigm. This results to lower organizational commitment by members of an organization. Hence, it also results to low organizational effectiveness and leads to the organization not reaching its highest potential. In the case of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, this results to younger or newer members no longer attending Lodge meetings or quitting our Order (membership decline, low membership retention, etc).

Nowadays, the new management paradigm is focused on creating change, initiating strategies, empowering people, and launching processes. According to management and leadership experts, the task of leaders today is to influence and encourage, not force, others to attain organizational goals. In other words, the new management places a premium on leadership - people admire and follow leaders who deviate from traditional bureaucracy - those leaders who give more importance to people over procedures, codes, protocols and titles. Those leaders who do not think that they are the boss but rather act as servants of the people. People today want people who do not use their title or position as a source of power or authority over others.

Take for example the new Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic Church. Last November 26, 2013, the Pope called for big changes in the Roman Catholic Church - including at the very top - saying the church needs to rethink rules and customs that are no longer widely understood or effective for evangelizing. During the Pope's address he said:

"I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security; I do not want a Church concerned with being at the center and then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures".



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How does this relate to the Independent Order of Odd Fellows? As officers of our Lodges, Grand Lodges and the Sovereign Grand Lodge: let us also check and update our old management paradigm because how we manage and lead our members years ago may not be as effective as how we can manage and lead our members today. A key element in the emerging paradigm is the radical change in the relationship between the officers and members. Some have called this paradigm open-book management.

Open-book management eliminates the "us-versus-them" relationship between officers and members by turning members into participants in the management of the organization.

Another element is empowerment. In many cases, empowerment means "power-sharing" but can also refer to management or leadership efforts to help members develop a sense of power. Some of our leaders fear empowerment because they think it is synonymous with loss of authority. This is false. Effective empowerment is synonymous with the concept of "managed participation", which calls for our senior officers to teach, coach, and counsel employees to take active roles in decision-making and in the Lodge projects. Empowerment means delegating authority to members. It allows the membership to feel that they are important in the organization because you allow them to take active part and you allow them to feel that their ideas and efforts are being heard and recognized.

The next element is communication. No matter what company or organization you belong, what your title is or what work you do, if you work with people, effective communication is an important part in attaining success. Officers of a Lodge, a Grand Lodge or the Sovereign Grand Lodge who can't communicate effectively can't really lead. Communication may be practiced by the Lodge, Grand Lodge or Sovereign Grand Lodge by having regular open forums, suggestion boxes or comment cards during sessions, a focus group discussion or retreats about the issues or conducting member-needs surveys to know what needs to be improved in our Order.

Another element is goal-setting. A good leader sets goals and inspires members to attain them. Goals help a Lodge, Grand Lodge or the Sovereign Grand Lodge stay focused and keeps the organization on track. Officers should have a clear idea at all times of what they are trying to accomplish. Those officers who do so are more likely to accomplish their objectives than those who do not. Effective goals should be clear and specific, be measurable, be verifiable, and have



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time limits, be challenging, be relevant, be cost-effective, balance needs and can be measured over time.

One additional element that applies in our Order is conflict management. Conflict in Lodges or Grand Lodges can occur between members and officers and among members. Conflicts are not always negative. According to management experts, conflicts can also enhance creativity and innovation if properly managed. It may increase the likelihood that Lodge or Grand Lodge resources will be used most efficiently. It can also ultimately encourage parties with divergent options to work together more closely. But this is all dependent on how an officer of a Lodge or Grand Lodge manages conflicts.

In a number of cases, Grand Lodge officers resort to closing Lodges or revoking charters when a particular problem or conflict occurs. That is unfortunate. Worst cases of conflict in our Order involves members shouting at each other, back-stabbing at each other or even resorting to law suit. Think again if this is an effective management and leadership solution. Let us ask if it is doing our Order any good?

In Friendship, Love and Truth!