

Charles T. Townley

College of Education, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, USA

The Innovation Challenge: Transformational Leadership in Technological University Libraries

ctownley@nmsu.edu

Traditionally, libraries have relied on structural forms of leadership. Librarians use management methods like hierarchy, job descriptions, and command and control systems to lead their organizations. In a 1999 IATUL paper (Townley, 1999), I presented a case study of how my university library was carrying out a strategic plan to implement user-focused services. The concepts in the plan were innovative. But in hindsight, the structural leadership methods that we used were inadequate to fully realize the innovations we envisioned. So it is with many libraries in this rapidly evolving, technologically driven environment.

Empirically supported, transformational leadership practices are a promising technique for creating and supporting innovative technological university library services (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). This paper will discuss what we know about the five practices of transformational leadership:

- Modeling the way
- Inspiring a shared vision
- Challenging the process
- Enabling others to act
- Encouraging the heart

The paper will focus on the process of leadership and how it impacts organizational effectiveness in rapidly evolving knowledge organizations, specifically technological university libraries. Examples in the paper will focus on how transformational leadership techniques can be used to increase performance, support, and organizational well being in these libraries.

Since moving to the NMSU Education Management and Development Department in 2001, I have been engaged in teaching leadership and conducting research on leadership in knowledge organizations (Townley, 2003; Geng, et.al., 2006). I am eager to apply what I have learned about transformational leadership to the field of technological university libraries. The paper will be based on qualitative research methods. Appropriate literature will be cited. Inferences will be drawn.

References:

Geng, Qian, Charles T. Townley, Huang Kun, and Jing Zhang. "Comparative Knowledge Management: A Pilot Study of Chinese and American Universities." *American Society for Information Science and Technology Journal* 56(June, 2005): 1031-1054.

Kouzes, James and Barry Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*. 4th ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007.

Townley, Charles T. "User-Focused Strategic Library Services," *International Association of Technological University Libraries IATUL Proceedings* (May, 1999): Track 42 (cd-rom).

Townley, Charles T. "Will the Academy Learn to Manage Knowledge?" *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* 26(2003): 8-11.

Charles T. Townley, Ph.D. is Professor in the Educational Management and Development Department at New Mexico State University. From 1990 through 1999, he served as Dean of the University Library at New Mexico State University. His doctorate is from The University of Michigan. He is conducting research in comparative knowledge management and higher education.