



The Dark Side of Transformational Leadership: A Critical Perspective

Dennis Tourish

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Most research into leadership has presented leaders as heroic, charismatic and transformational ‘visionaries’. The leader, whether in business, politics or any other field, is the most important factor in determining whether organizations succeed or fail. Indeed, despite the fundamental mistakes which have, arguably, directly led to global economic recession, it is often still taken for granted that transformational leadership is a good thing, and that leaders should have much more power than followers to decide what needs to be done.

The Dark Side of Transformational Leadership confronts this orthodoxy by illustrating how such approaches can encourage narcissism, megalomania and poor decision-making on the part of leaders, at great expense to those organizations they are there to serve. Written in a lively and engaging style, the book uses a number of case studies to illustrate the perils of transformational leadership, from the Jonestown tragedy in 1978 when over 900 people were either murdered or committed suicide at the urging of their leader, to an analysis of how banking executives tried to explain away their role in the 2008 financial crisis

This provocative and hugely important book offers a rare critical perspective in the field of leadership studies. Concluding with a new approach that offers an alternative to the dominant transformational model, *The Dark Side of Transformational Leadership* will be an invaluable text for academics interested in leadership, students on leadership courses requiring a more critical perspective, and anyone concerned with how people lead people, and the lessons we can learn.

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