



## Sustaining Cultural Change

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**Abstract:** This discussion highlights various strategies for supporting and sustaining a cultural change within society to improve the health and well-being of the public. Strategies such as leadership professional development, collaborative leadership engagement, and providing additional resources can be part of a change agenda to strengthen right thinking, right actions, right behaviors, and right philosophy to develop greatness or magnanimity in individuals, the public, within society, and the nation. Topics examined include leveraging strengths and talents from others; strategies for supporting and sustaining change; how these strategies can support and sustain cultural change; and collaborative leadership or leading collaboratively. In addition, concepts such as position, power, authority, and privilege are investigated through hierarchy and sociological theories.

**Key words:** sociological theories, cultural change, society, well-being, leadership professional development, collaborative leadership, position, power, authority, privilege

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Once a cultural change has been achieved, leaders and educators should effectively support and sustain the change. As societies evolve from simplistic to more complex states, Weber observed legitimate authority characterizing various kinds of social orders (Anter, 2023; Hughes, 2023; Weber, 1978). The three forms of power are known as charismatic, rational-legal, and traditional (Weber, 1978). Finally, functionalism theory and symbolic interactionism theory are discussed.

### 2. LEVERAGING STRENGTHS AND TALENTS FROM OTHERS

Single leader leadership can lack the differing strengths others can bring to a change process and sustaining change (Adegbola et al., 2024; Rådberg & Löfsten, 2024). In addition, collaboration can have a more lasting and effective impact with leveraged strengths and talent from others (Calò et al., 2024). Collaborate leadership can embrace the energy and vitality of mutual partnerships with competencies in analytical skills, soft people skills, strategic thinking, empathy, communication, project management, etc. (Calò et al., 2024; Curseu & Schruijer, 2024). Developing agile, dynamic leadership teams can be a focus to energetically and productively move a societal change agenda forward as well as aiding in sustaining that change.

### 3. STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING AND SUSTAINING CHANGE

To encourage ideas from all areas, and to foster and support individuals and groups into new leadership roles, stepping aside to allow others to embrace a leadership role on certain problems or issues may be the most suitable option (Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024; Christensen, 2024). Ceding leadership to others may be needed to advance causes and fix problems when others have the skills to address the issues or when others are literally in the closest proximity to the problems requiring change (Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024; Christensen, 2024). It is always important to develop leadership competences in others throughout society to advance important causes and to solve problems (Adegbola et al., 2024; Christensen, 2024). Teaching others how to lead and how to teach is a mark of true leadership. When considering achieving a cultural change within communities, society, and the nation, strategies for supporting and sustaining a change agenda can include the following aspects:

- Do research,
- Seek and build like-minded coalitions and partnerships,

- Communicate a clear vision,
- Lead by example,
- Establish and foster trustworthiness,
- Set high standards and high expectations,
- Actively listen,
- Recognize differing motivations,
- Seek and build diverse skill-sets and talent,
- Foster inter-collaboration between partnerships and coalitions,
- Create and foster a collaborative environment,
- Promote delegation,
- Avoid micromanagement,
- Manage conflict,
- Share strategies,
- Empower and inspire others,
- Foster openness,
- Maintain focused energy and resiliency,
- Keep learning,
- Establish cross-functional projects,
- Utilize project management,
- Share information and resources,
- Host regular meetings, video calls, and touch-point contacts,
- Hold brainstorming sessions,
- Encourage risk-taking,
- Foster transparency,
- Make adjustments to new situations or setbacks,
- Celebrate victories,
- Continually train new leaders, educators, and partners,
- Have a growth mindset, and
- Focus on training youth for leadership positions at every level within society (Adegbola et al., 2024; Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024; Rådberg & Löfsten, 2024).

#### **4. HOW THESE STRATEGIES CAN SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN CULTURAL CHANGE**

A collaborative mindset and leadership model fostered and maintained amongst various individuals and partnerships can be an effective way to address complex issues requiring collaboration across sectors, disciplines, and spheres of influence within society (Adegbola et al., 2024; Rådberg & Löfsten, 2024). Maintaining a system of collaboration can involve many people and partnerships with like-minded intentions and similar concerns to make decisions, solve problems, and teach others (Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024; Christensen, 2024). Some specific traits of a collaborative leadership model can include the following themes:

- Process leadership rather than group leadership – the notion of process leadership involves uniting proper talent to collaborate in aiding effective work processes versus leading individuals toward an objective (Calò et al., 2024; Curseu & Schruijer, 2024). Work on making work flow processes streamlined, knowledge-sharing seamless, resource-sharing and allocation uncomplicated, and teaching strategies effective (Calò et al., 2024; Curseu & Schruijer, 2024).
- Have an open and understandable process – rather than steering a group or partnership, a collaborative leadership model is about conjoining like-minded individuals and groups to achieve goals and tasks with a collaborative decision-making process (Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024;

Christensen, 2024). End results are a collaborative effort with objectives and goals accomplished throughout various communities and sectors in each participant's sphere of influence (Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024; Christensen, 2024). This type of change agenda requires multiple *hands-on* approaches that necessitate a collaborative leadership model spanning multiple areas, communities, and systems (Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024; Christensen, 2024).

- Have a collaborative problem-solving and decision-making framework – in this type of leadership structure, it is not one single leader's role to make decisions on what to do and then tell collaborating groups how to do it (Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024; Rådberg & Löfsten, 2024). Instead, individuals, groups, and partnerships consider the problems, decide what to do, and count on the organizing leader to aid in focusing efforts (Carvajal & Sanchez, 2024; Rådberg & Löfsten, 2024).

### 5. COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP OR LEADING COLLABORATIVELY

The notion of *collaborative leadership* involves taking a leadership role in an agenda, initiative, enterprise, organization, or coalition whereby others involved are on equivalent levels working in unison to operate an organization, run an initiative, create something new, or solve problems (Adegbola et al., 2024; Christensen, 2024). One singular leader does not have authority over a group, but rather is responsible for coordinating and guiding processes whereby a group makes decisions and facilitates actions to achieve objectives (Adegbola et al., 2024; Christensen, 2024). The notion of *leading collaboratively* is about stewardship within a collaborative effort. With this type of model, commonly effective in organizations rather than a community setting or coalition, leadership can switch via group decision, from one individual to another as various abilities, competencies, or talents are needed (Adegbola et al., 2024; Christensen, 2024).

In a *leading collaboratively* framework, leadership is permanently and communally shared by all participants or several participants within a group (Adegbola et al., 2024; Christensen, 2024). In this model, there is no one singular leader and the partnership truly operates as a collaborative effort guiding itself (Adegbola et al., 2024; Christensen, 2024). What is a rationale for practicing collaborative leadership? Collaborative leadership is significantly beneficial in circumstances whereby one singular individual is not in charge, and when the complexity and size of issues or problems prevent one organization or individual to effect change alone (Calò et al., 2024; Curseu & Schrujjer, 2024).

### 6. POSITION, POWER, AUTHORITY, PRIVILEGE

#### 6.1. Charismatic Power and Rational-legal Power

Despite the resistance of others, the notion of power is defined as having the ability to carry out one's will and others obey (Anter, 2023; Hughes, 2023; Weber, 1978). Three forms of legitimate authority are charismatic, rational-legal, and traditional (Weber, 1978). Not always a stable source of power, charismatic authority is used by charismatic leaders with skills in personality, voice, tone, inflection, or other attributes (Márquez, 2024; Weber, 1978). This type of power is not easily transferred to others after a leader is gone if those types of skills are not present. Rational-legal power originates via law and is established upon faith in the legitimacy of a community's rules and laws (Anter, 2023; Hughes, 2023; Weber, 1978). In addition, rational-legal authority is based upon the right of people in leadership to operate through established rules to make decisions and set policy for others (Anter, 2023; Hughes, 2023; Weber, 1978).

#### 6.2. Legitimate Authority

Legitimate authority is a term that is often times just called authority. According to Weber (1978), when a society values the exercise of power in a specific manner or form, that power is viewed as legitimate authority. Traditional is power based upon enduring traditional practices and beliefs held by people within a society. This type of power exists and is granted to specific types of people within society based upon established traditions and customs. People may be granted authority for certain reasons, for example, inheritance or meeting religious criterion. Mainly, the power of traditional authority is granted because of tradition and customs.

#### 6.3. Functionalism Theory

The sociological theory known as functionalism is about the influence over social institutions and how the organization of society can direct the way society operates and the behaviors of people (Lin-Januszewski, 2024; Munawar & Raza, 2023). The theory explores how the social institutions within a

society, for example, the media, religion, family, education, and the economy each serve a specific role, in addition to, influencing people within a society (Lin-Januszewski, 2024; Munawar & Raza, 2023). In this perspective, society is viewed as complex yet a stable and orderly system interconnecting social patterns and structures operating in a manner meeting the needs of people (Lin-Januszewski, 2024; Munawar & Raza, 2023). The family structure would be an example of functionalism whereby this type of social system, when properly ordered, can provide for protection, child-rearing, and reproduction of children. Furthermore, the family structure is the pillar of properly ordered government within a society.

### 6.4. Symbolic Interactionism Theory

Symbolic interactionism posits that society is a result of shared symbols, for example, language, math, etc. (Miyamoto, 2023; Saliya, 2023). Thus, people construct meanings attached to social interactions and events to create a social worldview or paradigm (Miyamoto, 2023; Saliya, 2023). Shared symbols are transmitted throughout generations via language (Miyamoto, 2023; Saliya, 2023). The theory examines how individuals respond to aspects within the environment according to subjective meanings attached to those aspects, for example, meanings modified and created via social interactions that involve communicating with other individuals (Miyamoto, 2023; Saliya, 2023). Therefore, as a sociological theoretical framework, symbolic interactionism is useful in describing how to create and maintain societies via the repetitive actions of people (Miyamoto, 2023; Saliya, 2023). This is important to note, as leaders and educators can use repetition when teaching and modeling right actions and right philosophy.

Shared symbols and language can be useful in spreading the value of ethics, morality, principles, character-building, right actions, and right philosophy to create a culture of excellence in any institution or society. Leaders and educators can use various established forms of power such as rational-legal power, legitimate authority, functionalism theory, and symbolic interactionism theory to build curriculum models in any institution or workplace to help people understand how to strive to achieve greatness in self, community, society, and nation. Organizations use power in different ways to achieve goals and to lead people toward a common objective (Anter, 2023; Hughes, 2023; Weber, 1978).

## 7. CONCLUSION

The discussion highlighted various strategies for supporting and sustaining a cultural change within society to improve the health and well-being of the public. Strategies such as leadership professional development, collaborative leadership engagement, and providing additional resources can be part of a change agenda to strengthen *right thinking, right actions, right behaviors, and right philosophy* to develop greatness or magnanimity in individuals, the public, within society, and the nation. Topics examined included leveraging strengths and talents from others; strategies for supporting and sustaining change; how these strategies can support and sustain cultural change; and collaborative leadership or leading collaboratively. In addition, the discussion investigated position, power, authority, and privilege through hierarchy and sociological theories. The three forms of power known as charismatic, rational-legal, and traditional were explored (Weber, 1978). Finally, functionalism theory and symbolic interactionism theory were discussed as well.

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