



# Transformational Leadership: Diversity

*In Collaboration with the BGSU Leadership Certificate*

## PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- Grew up in Philadelphia
- The youngest of 11 including 2 brothers with severe disabilities
- Attended BGSU from 1982 to 1985. Graduated with a BA
- Since then,
  - Lived in US, NL, FR
  - Conducted business in >10 countries incl China and Mexico
  - Lead orgs such as Sales, Marketing, Operations, Customer Service
  - Held exec positions in High Tech, Manufacturing, and Financial Services
  - Worked for companies such as GE, MCI, and Bank of America.

## DIVERSITY AND FLEXIBILITY: TRADEMARKS OF THE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER

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## Diversity Presentation Summary

While we often categorize based on what we see, value-based differences can make for tremendous conflict. This includes, for example, differences in

- Religion
- Political Philosophies
- Cultures
- Languages

The Transformational Leader seeks and appreciates diversity; understands that diversity may produce conflict and tension; helps themselves and others cross the barriers that may form; works to understand, accept, respect, and welcome others. In doing so the whole diverse team and the greater organization benefits from the process as well as the results.

## Skills and Attributes

Top skills and attributes needed by the 21st Century Leader to deal with issues of diversity:

1. **Learn new mental constructs.** Language skills (taught by native language speakers), as well as training in diverse Philosophies, and Religions enable a flexibility of thought, a greater capability to see multiple and diverse perspectives.
2. **Learn to resolve conflict.** Training, education, and practice in diplomacy and negotiation will help new leaders work more effectively through conflict and tensions. Both require a delicacy and new leaders stumble. These are the tools by which you actively bridge the gap between yesterday and tomorrow.
3. **Find your own ethical center.** You have to be completely grounded in your ethics and values. You cannot make your decisions based on pressure from others. The Transformational Leader has to consistently rely on his personal strength of character.

## Managing Diversity

The upside to a diverse team is creativity and ever improving results. Lack of diversity? Tension, oppression, suppression. The Transformational Leader strives to gain all the benefits and minimize the downside. It's not easy but the first step is simple, welcome someone...extend your hand or a seat at the table.