

**ÈTICA DEL LIDERATGE: L'EMERGÈNCIA D'UN NOU PARADIGMA
(ETHICAL LEADERSHIP: THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW
PARADIGM)**

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Francesc Torralba (Barcelona 1967) is a Catalan philosopher and theologian. He holds a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Barcelona and a PhD in Theology from the Faculty of Theology in Catalonia. He is a professor at the Ramon Llull University in Barcelona and gives classes and lectures in many other universities. He has written more than ninety books. He has been awarded several prizes for his arduous defense of moral values and human rights.

In *Ethical Leadership: The Emergence of a New Paradigm*, Torralba dexterously manages to depict the image of the leader as a person who embodies not only inherently diverse values and virtues but also an amalgam of different capabilities, strengths and human resources. He succeeds in transmitting to the reader the difficulty of encapsulating and categorizing the meaning and significance of being the leader of a community and deploys a semiotic structure of human behavior to shed light on the values that constitute the core elements and the quintessence of a good and just community leader.

Ethical Leadership succeeds in describing the best paths a leader has to follow in order to inspire the members of an organization to follow her. A just, effective and efficient leadership that looks towards the future and is strong thanks to the values and principles that fundament it. Torralba evokes the best qualities of a good leader, a person who is capable of assembling the best team in order to maximize the objectives of the group. The cohesiveness of the group as a team is enhanced by the right leader.

However, the author highlights the fact that excellence in the team can only be achieved through an ethical leadership. If the leadership is ethical, then its goals are blessed and its objectives are just. Greatness, virtue, worth, merit and distinction can only be accomplished and carried through by ethical leadership.

In this work, Torralba explores the way an ethical leadership is constructed and explains its vital and most important components and ingredients. In order to support his arguments, Torralba selects five leaders who have become beacons of morality and who exemplify the best

qualities embodied in a leader: Gandhi, Dag Hammarskjöld, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and Jorge Mario Bergoglio. These great men possessed qualities that earned them a place in the history of the most ethical leaders. Their lives bear witness to the value of ethical leadership and are a source of inspiration to many people around the world.

Ethical Leadership helps to define the concept of a just and effective leader in an ever changing and dynamic society and describes the pillars that support good leadership: social intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, emotional intelligence, emotional memory, and imagination.

In this great work, Torralba continues to expound on the everyday actions that contribute to an ethical leadership and parades before the reader an array of practices and virtues that can be very useful for leaders in many different spheres of society: enthusiasm, humility, resilience, empathy are just some examples of important traits inherent in an ethical leadership.

Ethical Leadership reminds us that the best leadership is the leadership that transcends the material dimension of life through its vision, values and sense of mission in the existence of the community. Through the liberation of the ego, the leader can go beyond the tangibility of the physical and soar above the mundane to shine like a lighthouse in the middle of a storm. Vision, mission, and values are all interlinked, a leader needs to have an important goal and purpose. However, these have to be accompanied by a strong conviction, a calling or a vocation. Only this way can the ethical leader infuse his/her followers with the passion necessary to move forward.

The book also emphasizes the necessity of being a compassionate leader. Compassion or the feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune must be accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering of those who are in distress. The ethical leader has the capacity to understand and empathize with 'the other' without marginalizing, categorizing, and classifying differences. With the blurring of the emotional borders, the ethical leader can transcend the barriers of embedded prejudices and become the leader for the whole community. Torralba gets across the idea that our organizations need leaders who have a vision of the future, leaders who are open-minded, tolerant, and flexible because in a global society diversity and pluralism can only be tackled if leaders have these qualities.

The author also highlights the fact that the old vertical idea of leadership can no longer be effective in our present day organizations; there is

a deep crisis of trust and credibility that makes now more than ever necessary to lead ethically.

Torralba goes on to explain that this new model of leadership requires the leader to set an example in his/her actions for the rest. Moreover, it is of vital importance to be a good listener with the capacity to deliberate and share opinions with the other members of the organization so that in the end the leader can make the right decision.

The leadership crisis in the social, political, and economic world has its roots in the lack of moral authority that prevails in our organizations. Often leaders do not use their power to lead in the right way because they do not have the trust of the other members of the organization. In *Ethical Leadership*, Torralba explains that it is very important for leaders to make sure that they recognize and use the talents of the members of the organization in such a way as to deploy them to maximize their utility. In order to be able to accomplish such a feat, Torralba reminds the reader that it is necessary to inspire the members of the organization to participate and share in the decision making. The leader has to earn the trust of his/her team by earning their respect and not by imposing his/her will.

The patriarchal model of leadership has failed and given birth to a new leader that is more tolerant, participatory, and not afraid of mixing with the 'other' to obtain the best results for the organization.

Torralba makes it very clear that the old paradigm of leadership and its verticality has no place in our global society and an ethical leader has to be able to inspire in others the values of the organization, values that the leader knows and reflects in the managing of the organization and the way he/she leads. Every decision taken by the leader should embody the values of the organization.

The ethical leader has to make sure that the values of the organization are supported and upheld by his/her team and in order to do so the leader him/herself has to fervently believe in these values. The leader must set an example of ethical behavior before her team. If he/she is not true to the values of the organization, he/she will not be able to transmit them to the rest of the team. Torralba emphasizes the need to be transparent and make the mission and values of the organization clear from the start. If the leader lies, his/her team will follow his/her example. The human being is a mimetic creature and as a result the members of the team will tend to develop the same faults or virtues as their leaders. That is why it is of paramount importance that the leader should take into account the ethical values of the organization.

Torralba also remarks that ethical leadership is not a remnant of the past, nothing could be farther from the truth; ethical leadership has come back and proven that it is the only way to make organizations successful. Ethical leadership is essential in order to gain credibility and create cohesion within the team.

The complexity of public organizations requires an ethical leadership that is able to transform old ingrained practices that have resulted in excessively bureaucratic administrations that are slow and inefficient when it comes to meeting the new challenges of our global society. *Ethical Leadership* makes it clear that we need moral leaders capable of showing the way to the members of the organization, leaders who believe in their values and who are ready to do their best to bring about growth and development not only in the material sense but also on a spiritual level.

Ethical Leadership is a master piece that gives us hope in the face of a world where organizations appear to have lost sight of the meaning of their existence, it shows us the way towards change and human growth and revitalizes us in the belief that a better future is possible, a future where ethics allows us to transcend our fears and our superficial materialism and unites us in our desire for a better and more humane society.

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