LEADING TRANSFORMATION #59:

5 PHASES OF CHANGE

There are 5 PHASES that institutions go through during change.

ROMANTIC PHASE

First, there is the ROMANTIC PHASE during which people hold on to the ideals and promises of the new era. Change leaders at this stage may enjoy a lot of support. This may be due more to being given the benefit of the doubt rather than merit or achievement.

REALITY PHASE

After some time, reality begins to set in. This is the REALITY PHASE. People begin to measure more realistically the benefits and negatives of the change. At this stage people stop pretending and begin to reveal their real perspectives and positions on issues. The honeymoon is over! Depending on the circumstances, feedback may be constructive or destructive. Experienced and wise leaders will be proactive in creating a positive and safe environment for feedback such that it is constructive.

REORGANIZATION PHASE

The best response to the Reality Phase is to use the information positively for reorganization. This is the REORGANIZATION PHASE. By yielding to the temptation of defending their position and not giving due consideration to feedback the result can be that followers take their destinies into their own hands. This may then result in nonconstructive conflicts that can lead to DISORGANIZATION. Timely organization on the other hand will be good responsive leadership.

RENEWAL PHASE

Reorganization addresses outward issues of structure and power relationships. This should be followed by focusing on the inner renewal of the leaders, staff and the institution as a whole. This is the RENEWAL PHASE. The emphasis during this phase is to recover the heart and spirit of the organization through storytelling, and the revisiting of the vision, mission and values. Leaders, staff and key stake holders need affirmation as vital members of the institution. The Change Leaders need to excite the broader constituency with hope that is inspiring, energizing, magnetic and engaging. Change Messages must inspire and encourage hearts; envision and blow minds; and move feet and hands into action.

REFORMATION

Inner Renewal needs to be followed by the development of new direction, priorities, strategies, structures, leaders, resources, norms and policies; and new placement of qualified leaders as well as reallocating of resources based on new priorities. This is the REFORMATION PHASE.

If reformation is going on well, we can expect TRANSFORMATION.

RENEWAL + REFORMATION = TRANSFORMATION

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do the 5 Phases of Change help you understand where you are in a selected Change process?

2. What do you need to do to ensure that effective transformation takes place?