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Leadership Through Influence - Arts Connect Leadership Programme

5000-word essay; work-based research project, integrating skills and knowledge from the leadership programme.

Essay question:

'How does good leadership encourage change? RAGM implementation of Volunteer Makers programme.'

Many organisations fail to move with the changing sectoral landscape and get left behind. Others find change too difficult, too uncomfortable and are fearful of the process and of something new. This essay aims to explore the influence a good and productive leader can have in motivating and enabling change to happen. I will explore a range of styles, models and frameworks. I will include real life role models and leaders in the current cultural sector who move organisations forward. I will also examine my own practice, demonstrating what I have learnt through my work based assignment and techniques, tools and methods which enable change to take place.

Through my role as Learning and Outreach Officer at Rugby Art Gallery & Museum (RAGM) the work based project I have chosen to study for this essay is a new system designed for working with volunteers. This is a partnership project with 'Volunteer Makers', an Arts Council funded initiative, which I have led RAGM through the 'buy-in', development, training and delivery. Through this process, I will examine where change has worked well and where it has failed in the past. What were the barriers to change? If change took place, why did it stick or not? What do successful leaders of change look like and how do they inspire an organisation wide buy in? This journey of research, analysis and using my skills and knowledge developed from the leadership programme will lead to answering how does good leadership encourage change and utilise these findings through my work based project.

Context: What is leadership?

First it is important to discuss what leadership is, in order to see how it can make successful change happen. There are many leadership theories to draw upon and it is clear leadership can vary from person to person. A closer look at some of these theories, makes it apparent that although 'management and leadership are different, both are important in making change happen. I have selected example definitions particularly focusing on leadership and change.

John Kotter in his book 'Leading Change' (1) defines management and leadership:

'Management is a set of processes that can keep a complicated system of people and technology running smoothly. The most important aspects of management include planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling, and problem solving. Leadership is a set of processes that creates organizations in the first place or adapts them to significantly changing circumstances. Leadership defines what the future should look like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles.'

This clearly sets out the key areas of change: management is explained as the practicalities and skill based systems which make a project and change successful. Leadership however, is identified as cultivating a confidence in the team to work towards a joint vision and goal. The suggestion is leadership is an overarching inspirational behaviour. This ability to inspire colleagues to deliver the vision irrespective of the leader's presence is exhibited here:

'Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making the impact last in your absence.' Sheryl Sanberg. (2)

It is clear that not only do leaders have those who follow, but more importantly, inspire other mini leaders to continue the work without them, hence reiterating a positive behaviour. Leadership is, therefore, not a dictatorship or hierarchical but inspiring others to over-achieve. But to what end? Bradberry, also brings together both the above ideas of empowerment and team effort, but with the clear distinction that the 'goal', is what drives people forward. Without the clear vision and target to aim for, success is less likely.

'Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal.' Bradberry (3)

His definition highlights the importance of increasing the efforts of others to achieve the goal. A leader can also be someone who seeks out and utilises opportunities in order to make change. It is important to 'adapt' and 'empower', particularly when the landscape is changing and to be flexible and quick thinking. There is value in empowering the team, giving them a sense of ownership and pride over the vision, this will help to move the task forward.

'It is associated with taking an organization into the future, finding opportunities that are coming at it faster and faster and successfully exploiting those opportunities. Leadership is about vision, about people buying in, about empowerment and, most of all, about producing useful change. Leadership is not about attributes, it's about behaviour.' Kotter (4)

I will be focusing on these definitions within this essay, as the factors of inspiration, getting buy in, seizing opportunities, having a goal and clear vision, having faith in leading the right team and cultivating positive behaviours are areas I identify as key competencies in leadership and making change happen. The essay will also focus on positive attributes such as self-awareness, empathy and trust building, and personal resilience, underpinning key behaviours which I feel good leaders demonstrate and utilise to encourage change.

Why is change important in the cultural sector?

Why do we change anything? The Oxford English dictionary describes change as to 'Make or become different' or 'Give up or get rid of (something) in exchange for something else'. But this generally happens for a reason. For organisations it may be due to a problem, an inefficiency, an inability to meet the core aims, vision or goal. Thus there is a need to improve.

Successful change leadership however, is about encouraging individuals and teams to do things differently, to change the way they currently behave and to implement the changes of these new systems. It is also to recognise that by changing the way we work, staff roles and responsibilities may be altered and this may cause resistance. A good leader will consider human responses to change when planning and delivering something new. A good leader can prepare and pre-empt these challenges by recognising that people have both a rational and emotional response to change. Both Kotter and Cohen refer to 'people - driven' approaches and suggest these are successful methods of achieving change. This approach enables people to see and feel the changes, helping staff to make a visual connection as well as a connection at a deeper emotional level. This in turn, evokes a personal connection and focuses people to overcome barriers and change behaviours to strive for success.

As Kotter explains in John Kotter's 'Making Change Real - The Heart of Change: Real-Life Stories of How People Change Their Organizations':

'Successful change leaders identify a problem..... then they show this to people in ways that are as concrete as possible. They show with a vehicle you can see, hear and touch.' (5)

From my professional experience, this has been true for me. An example is a course I took to become a Dementia friend for RAGM. There were stories and videos the trainer showed us of adults living with Dementia, and these explanations made such an emotional impact on me, I attained funding to run a sustainable heritage and

crafts programme, now in its second year. When I felt an emotional connection and passionate about something, I certainly strove harder to achieve the outcomes.

Kotter and Cohen describe this method of change as 'see, feel, change' dynamic. They explain this method contrasts with a less successful method where leaders rely on analysis and data to convince staff to change. This method hopes staff will change behaviours based on facts and theory, but is less successful as behaviour fails to change.

The 'people driven' approach, contrasts also with other leadership models such as the hierarchical model, focusing on top down leadership. Although this model can have its benefits in certain sectors, driving projects forward in a dictatorial manner, where following a process is key, I don't feel this model fits the cultural sector. Galleries thrive on ideas and creativity, therefore the more staff have an opportunity to work collaboratively, share and develop projects, the more innovative and adaptable the organisation can become. The 'people driven' approach and 'see, feel, change' dynamic supports this opportunity for development and growth and are methods I intend to explore.

The cultural sector is constantly changing as a result of funding cuts, priorities and agendas being redirected, such as the current focus on health and wellbeing, means a shift in funds and programmes. As such, it is particularly vulnerable to financial cuts and is constantly justifying its value and worth, particularly to political leaders. To regularly adapt, the cultural sector needs good leaders who can support and motivate change. Staff are passionate about their positions and the roles they do, therefore to implement change, a good leader needs to appeal to their emotions and passion to achieve 'buy-in'.

Good leadership can come in many forms and I explored other cultural organisations and researched various examples of what good leadership looks like within the sector. I noticed many peers often display key qualities listed earlier in the essay such as trust building, empathy and personal resilience.

Hannah Fox, the Director of The Silk Mill, as part of Derby Museums, is an example of a strong leader in the sector. Rob Hopkins interviewed Hannah to explore 'How a community's imagination reshaped a museum.' Hannah led her staff through a difficult period of change at the Silk Mill, which was near to closure. Rethinking the engagement model and volunteering, she has opened the doors to the public and asked 'what do you want to see here'. Not only has she developed a pioneering vision, but she now has dramatically increased the number of volunteers who are physically helping to build the new museum through a 'human-centred design' model, which focuses on a co-production approach with the public.

After attending a two-day course at Derby Museums and hearing Hannah speak about her passion and enthusiasm to take the project forward, it was clear to me and

my colleagues she was a good leader. Hannah demonstrated confidence, commitment and a creative approach to the organisations difficulties and inspired the staff, who were equally passionate and shared her clear vision of where they were heading. Hannah was compassionate and understanding on an emotional level and she talked about the team bringing ideas to the table and facing challenges together. Yet, she also had a thorough business plan and goals to aim for. The interview with Hannah with Rob Hopkins displays this:

'So your role is more of a facilitator and holding the space, rather than a conventional leadership role?

I think that's what leadership should be, personally. Absolutely, sometimes you have to be the pioneer, and you have to be the person that's got the vision, or is forming the vision....But then I'm always conscious that if that's the situation and something happens to me, then the risk of it all going back into the norms, or for it all to stop again are too big, so you have to spread the load of that vision. You have to give a broader ownership, for others to feel that they are doing it too.....but also I think the momentum of the volunteers and the expectations of the people that it's not just us doing it, but we are doing it together, for our collective good and for the good of our city, and our citizens, and each other, is true.' (6)

The success in her leadership is exhibited not only by her increase of support and volunteers but the shared ownership of the project within the team and community. She developed leaders at all levels in staff and volunteer, who helped to drive the project forward in smaller areas of the project. She displays attributes discussed earlier such as inspiring and empowering others to move forward, together towards the new aims and vision. Hannah's method of leadership could be likened to Heifetz's ideas of 'adaptive leadership', which presents leaders as enablers. The leader delegates and giving work back to staff at various levels in order for the team to own the project but coaches, facilitates and supports the process.

Current organisational thinking/policies around volunteering.

One opportunity for change is exploring how volunteering currently is viewed and delivered in the industry. Volunteering is integral to the resilience of the cultural sector. People of various ages and backgrounds give their time to support creative activities, projects and venues to help provide resilience for their programmes. In England 15.9 million people regularly volunteer, but this figure is falling and the Office for National Statistics states this has decreased by 7% in the last 3 years. Claire Sully, Director of Volunteer Makers explains during her introductory workshop:

'The challenges are set by changing economics, changing volunteer profiles and digital engagement'.

Claire, is another sector role model, showcasing passion and vigour to achieve the Volunteer Makers vision of revolutionising what volunteering looks like, by using digital technologies and new ideas of micro-volunteering (small pockets of time). She clearly identified above why we need to change our method of working with volunteers and what the reasons are for this. She recognises volunteer's reasons for donating their time is beginning to change, with young people desiring to gain purposeful experience via digital interactions and online opportunities, such as research. She also recognises the importance and value of maintaining current volunteers and working together to develop the platform to meet the needs of the organisation. Claire is inspiring and very self-aware and encouraged all members of her team and ours to be part of Volunteers Makers. During her initial workshop she demonstrated good leadership characteristics such as empathy, commitment, confidence, inspiration and provided information for different 'types' of people and their various learning styles. In her presentation she used a variety of statistics and visual and emotive stories, clearly demonstrating reasons why volunteering is altering (reasons for change) and provided a stepped approach to transformation. This was very similar to Kotter's 8 step framework which I will explore later in the essay.

Traditionally, managing and leading volunteers has been seen to be difficult, requiring a project manager and being time intensive for the volunteer. It can be the same format of helping, without much input and having little structure and the diversity and demographic of volunteers can be limited. The impact of these problems can therefore result in volunteers failing to stay with an organisation. This can be due to boredom and lack of enthusiasm or feeling undervalued as a result of poor management or lack of staff capacity to oversee volunteers. Lack of diversity can hinder the engagement with the broader community and ideas may be limited when a small range of age groups and cultures are represented.

RAGM was also facing many of these issues, particularly as the volunteer programme was relatively new. Until 2015, RAGM did not have a volunteer strategy, clear method of recruitment or sustainability. The average number of volunteers was around 3 people.

In 2015, Rugby was allocated the title of the 'Home of the Game' as part of the 2015 Rugby World Cup. As a result, Rugby Borough Council and RAGM developed a vast temporary venue and a very large programme for the public and schools to participate in for the eight-week period of the tournament. It was identified that volunteers were crucial to the delivery of the programme, to meet and greet visitors, check tickets and support crowd control. As part of this process, a strategy was

created, and 65 volunteers were recruited and trained. A volunteer manager was also appointed to co-ordinate the rotas.

The programme was a success, however, the volunteer manager post finished at the end of the project. In 2016/17, RAGM managed to maintain a small group of these volunteers, particularly focusing on education and another group who could support events for specific occasions. We recognised it was important to utilise this bank of skilled and trained volunteers who had expressed their desire to continue with us. The organisational thinking reflected the importance of volunteers and their value, but the aims still lay with the World Cup setup, an intensive eight-week programme.

The shift from The World Cup volunteering to RAGM was significant, moving from a short term intensive system managed by a part time volunteer manager in a temporary building, to a long-term system, with no specific manager, in a permanent building, less frequent shifts, but more specialist opportunities, such as supporting school groups and working with adults living with Dementia.

RAGM required different skills and levels of commitment, its needs were different to the World Cup agenda. As a result, there needed to be a change in the way volunteers were managed to ensure they did not leave and systems needed updating to coordinate current volunteers, introduce training and look at recruitment to better reflect the local community.

As the Cultural Hub of the town, with a combined Art Gallery, Museum and Visitor Centre, it was integral that volunteers needed to be involved in all parts of the service in the future. RAGM delivers special projects linked to the exhibitions and is particularly focusing on outreach work in the local hospital and Rugby's Age UK centre with adults living with dementia. We saw over 79,524 visitors in 2016.

The service offers a huge cultural, heritage and education programme, with very little budget and a very small team of staff of which 90% are part time. Volunteers are crucial in developing and maintaining the service. In order to build resilience, volunteers need to be a significant part of moving forward, supporting the organisation and feeding the cultural ecosystem, as suggested by John Holden. By supporting volunteering and introducing more micro-volunteering opportunities, we can engage more artists and members of the community to contribute to the healthy growth of culture in Rugby.

What does leadership look like for RAGM?

To investigate what the leadership culture looked like at RAGM, I asked the office staff, who are the core team, to complete a leadership survey which explored whether they thought they were leaders, to test their awareness of leadership styles and to reflect on the organisation's culture. (Appendix 1). The leadership styles I gave as examples included autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, paternalistic, and

transformational leadership. I choose these styles as they are the most common used within current business practice and they represent a varied range of differing styles. I gave staff descriptions of each, so they could identify themselves to their particular type. The findings showed certain staff identified themselves as extrovert leaders within the team, with confidence and self-awareness and others favoured introverted leadership styles such as laissez-faire, happy to take a step back, follow others and be directed. Most staff including myself, felt they were transformational leaders, who strive to inspire others and to direct their thinking to achieve a certain goal, showing good communication skills and charisma. No staff saw themselves as autocratic, confirming my earlier theory, that the cultural sector is more open to collaboration and transformative visions at all levels. There was a general overview that the organisational culture was respectful, supportive and democratic.

Like many cultural venues, RAGM had been through many changes over the years and was vulnerable. In 2015 it successfully received an Arts Council grant to focus on the resilience of the organisation. As a result of a training and development programme, staff undertook MBTI personality profile and as a result the team was increasing aware of preferences, learning styles and behaviours. This awareness of each other's strengths and weaknesses helped us to work better together as a team, focusing on our specialisms and area of skills. On reflection, this training better equipped myself and the team in advance of changes ahead.

For me, as the leader of the education programme at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, taking the MBTI again as part of the leadership programme, reaffirmed my preferences, supporting my personal awareness even further. The Myers - Briggs self-report based on Jung's theory of psychological types was very useful and valuable to help lead the education team forward. By being aware of my preferences, I used these to thrive by motivating, inspiring the team and using my preferences for risk taking, but delegating intricate and detailed work to staff with these preferences.

As part of the leadership programme, I was identified as 'Extraverted Feeling with Introverted Intuition.' Myers Briggs describes this in 'Introduction to type' as:

'ENFJs base decisions on personal values. They use their feeling primarily externally, radiating warmth and energy. They look for and find the best in others and prize harmony and cooperation.' (7)

This description accurately reflects who I am and how I work, as a positive and supportive team player, who believes strongly in values and fairness. I was able to use these preferences to help motivate and coach the staff with a new vision which they helped to sculpt. In past projects, when I was less self-aware, I would become frustrated when other team members or volunteers were slow to take part or were not team players. For example, when introducing a new education workshop with little lead in time or running a consultation session without providing information in advance, or if staff didn't vocalise concerns. I am now aware of introverted and

thinker 'types' who may require different opportunities to voice their opinions and may need to process information in advance. What I now understand is the benefit of trying to sympathise with a variety of people and adapting to support staff who are different to my type. Already, I think this has benefited my leadership style and enabled me to better prepare for the Volunteer Makers project. When training older volunteer members I was able to sympathise with any concerns and approach the changes to the volunteers systems with a language they understood and felt safe with. For example, when introducing the new online system which included accepting and completing challenges (volunteer opportunities), I explained the process being similar to the traditional clocking on and off system, recording the time worked. This was accepted quickly and I was relieved that potential resistance was met with enthusiasm.

Being more self-aware encouraged me to be increasingly mindful of our difference within the team, but also within the Council. It was clear, in order for other council departments to understand and appreciate the value of the service and influence decisions, myself and the team needed to speak the language of the different officers. This may be providing graphs, financial information and facts, rather than my extrovert preferences of enthusiastic encounters and images showcasing successful projects. By using Kotter's and Cohen's 'people driven' approaches I have begun to see a smoother transition of change.

Work based research project: Testing the Leadership Learning: Volunteer Makers

Leading the education team, I also began overseeing education volunteers as part of the shift from the World Cup. I worked hard to include volunteers in consultation, training and socials. Using my ENFJ preferences to motivate, praise, credit and be empathetic to social and emotional changes. Working together with other staff, also supported the volunteers with their training needs and the administration of booking shifts.

This was a large shift for the organisation. We began to make volunteers integral to all of our school and holiday sessions and events, booking volunteers to support our staff. We also went a step further, by working with a smaller group of volunteers to train them in specific areas, such as working with adults living with Dementia. This specialist group are highly valuable. I sourced funding to purchase volunteer t-shirts which increased morale and made the volunteers feel part of a team.

We had begun to overcome problems identified earlier making the shift from The World Cup to a more realistic long term volunteer programme. What was now in place was a vast improvement from our 3 volunteers before 2015. However, I realised, through the 'system thinking' model, adopted by Rugby Borough Council,

that we still needed to 'Think, develop, do'. We needed to step back and assess how we could improve the programme further. We still had challenges which we faced such as lack of diversity and few young people, no clear programme of training or recruitment. This was prevalent as some of the original volunteers had moved on, yet our need for volunteers was growing in line with our flourishing programme of activities. These challenges highlighted we needed to change how we were working and address issues such as encouraging the whole RAGM team to take on the ownership of volunteers and work more strategically to attract and maintain volunteers.

I used my growing confidence, in 2016 at the Museum Association conference and seized the opportunity to work with Volunteer-Makers as part of their pioneer programme. I acted autonomously and completed the application on the spot to enable RAGM to be in with a good chance of being selected. Volunteer Makers appeared to present many solutions to many of RAGM volunteer problems.

'Volunteer Makers is a new model to help organisations manage, grow and engage a community of volunteers while widening public participation and diversity.'

Volunteer Makers addresses fundamental shifts in demographics, funding models and digital platforms to meet the challenges and opportunities of this new era of volunteering.' (8) Volunteer Makers

Funded by Arts Council England, Volunteer Makers uses an online platform to showcase museums and galleries volunteering opportunities. It calculates the hours volunteers give and transforms this into monetary value. It also uses social media platforms to encourage younger volunteers to engage with taking part and offering micro volunteering (small pockets of time which can be on or off site) was an exciting way forward. (See appendix 2)

My leadership role on the project included partaking in the national pioneers programme during its trial phase. I worked with the team to develop the interactive digital platform for RAGM and its engaging content, re-designing what volunteering looks like. I used my confidence developed on the leadership course to lead the team in creating a new volunteering vision, aims and plan. By working in partnership with the internal team, council departments, leaders and local agencies we began to achieve 'buy-in', which then helped to deliver the project. It was clear, as a leader of this programme, I needed to use an organisational wide method to ensure the staff

and current volunteer team supported the change and encourage legacy. Similar to Hannah, as mentioned earlier, for the vision and plans to continue, even if I was no longer there, the team needed to believe in the vision and feel a sense of ownership to continue the project.

Roy Clare CBE Chief Executive Officer, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council explains the importance of cooperative working:

An organisation is on the pathway to success when outcomes belong to everyone and when each and every person is involved in making a difference, thinking creatively, setting the pace and encouraging people to do more than they think they can. (9)

I set out to use my skills and knowledge developed through the leadership through influence programme to make a more meaningful impact on the change of volunteering at RAGM.

Leadership Models used to structure my plan and project planning

Using three models and frameworks from the leadership programme and my personal research, I explored RAGM's needs and requirements and structured my plan of implementing Volunteers Makers. The following frameworks chosen are:

OPM (Office for Public Management) 4 box change model shows what prerequisites are needed for successful change and the effect when any one element is missing. The model is based on extensive experience of leading change in organisations across various public services.

The first requirement is the pressure for change, a need to move forward and make systems and staff work differently. Pressure could be a result of pressing outcomes which need to be achieved, government requirements and lack of resources. It is implied if there is no pressure the project goes to the bottom of the in tray. The second prerequisite is capacity for change. It is key to ensure there is adequate resources, staffing facilities, skills and experience to carry out the change process. If this is lacking it leads to anxiety and frustration and inevitably slows or halts progress. The third prerequisite is a clear shared vision, a strong idea where the project is heading and why. Without this enthusiasm starts to fizzle out and there may be confusion linked to the direction of the project. The final prerequisite is actionable first step, a clear plan and outline of how you are going to achieve these

goals and get change started. Without a clear plan, it can lead to haphazard efforts and false starts.

The OPM model suggested RAGM was in the fit position for change demonstrating all four areas to make change happen. It was clear I could use this tool to move the Volunteer Makers programme forward and potentially showcasing good leadership skills in doing so.

I also, looked at the 'Strategic Influence 4 box model' (see appendix 3), which appeared to compliment the OPM model. After witnessing enthusiastic leadership failing to gain 'buy-in' despite having an inspiring vision, this model explains why. Many leaders may speak corporate languages about change and what the vision will look like but staff feel talked at and unsafe to question the vision. I too, have been in this situation on the receiving end and also probably delivered similar speeches myself in the past, therefore on reflection I can see why projects may have failed to get 'buy-in'.

The strategic influence 4 box model (10) helps to tackle this. To begin, the question of why the change is required, what is the reason for change? This is crucial for people to understand the logic and by using facts and uncomplicated language staff are more accepting. Secondly, to discuss the benefit of change, what positives will this new system bring and how will it affect us? Thirdly, address any issues and accept there will be barriers, but we can work through these because it is worth it. Finally, talk about what will stay the same, this may include the values of the organisation or some systems and this will encourage staff to feel safe.

The final model analysed is **based on Kotter's 8 Steps process for change from his book 'Leading change'**.

This model set out a framework to guide an organisation through successful change using 8 steps and I also related to this process when reading 'Help! Our iceberg is melting' by John Kotter.

1. Establish a sense of urgency by creating the catalyst for change.
2. Form a powerful coalition by assembling a group with enough power to lead the change effort.
3. Create a Vision – to help direct the change effort.
4. Communicate the Vision – Using every channel and vehicle of communication possible to communicate the new vision and strategies.
5. Empower others to act on the vision – Removing obstacles to change. Changing systems or structures that seriously undermine the vision.

6. Plan for and create short term wins – Planning for visible performance improvement

7. Consolidate improvements and producing still more change

8. Institutionalise new approaches, creating the connections between new behaviours and corporate successes.

Using these frameworks, I was able to identify what needed to change and why, examine any potential resistance and barriers, work with the team to create a vision and aims and begin to put a plan together. Below you can see how I used the various elements of the three frameworks: 'OPM four box model', 'Strategic Influence four box model' and Kotter's 8 steps combined to analyse and reflect on the process.

'OMP Pressure for change'/ 'Kotter's sense of urgency' - Why was it important and was it important now?

I carefully analysed our current offer, identifying the reasons why we needed to change.

- We needed to be able to record volunteer hours, which we had not been doing in the past and use this as evidence to give to the political leaders and funders.
- A limited democratic makeup of volunteers - mostly white retired people. Few regular younger people. We wanted to diversify and represent a broader range of our community.
- There was no strategic plan, a new relevant policy was needed.
- The team was struggling to working jointly, it was mostly the 'education' and 'collections' staff working with volunteers. We needed all team members to support and be involved with volunteers.
- Opportunities were generally regular volunteering opportunities onsite and were vague in description. A broader range of opportunities were needed, ranging from small pockets of time, to longer commitments.
- There was no way of recruiting future volunteers and numbers were dwindling. We needed a new method of recruiting.
- There were no clear aims or outcomes for volunteers. Volunteers needed a purpose to feel valued.

To do this we needed a new way of working and we needed it as soon as possible. There was a pressure to change due to the issues identified above, combined with a deadline for working in partnership with Volunteer Makers.

'Strategic influence 4 box model' highlights the importance of explaining the reason for making the change to staff and volunteers.

I used the above reasons as part of presentations, emails and introduction workshops to current volunteers, to influence resistant staff and other leading council departments to 'buy-in' to Volunteer Makers. By explaining the logic behind the change, others were prepared to listen and be part of the journey of improvement. The role-play exercises as part of the leadership through influence course also had given me confidence in dealing with difficult conversations and potential resistance I met.

'OPM' Clear Shared vision /Kotter's 'Establish and communicate the vision'.

Volunteer Makers presentation really sold itself to the RAGM and wider council team, as it clearly showed why we needed to change and how we could do this. Claire Sully, Director of Volunteers Makers, was an inspiring role model, encouraging, engaging whilst setting out how using this online platform could increase volunteer numbers, but ensured we understood our purpose for doing this. Our vision at RAGM was to '*Engage the community through volunteering, becoming participants, learners, contributors and ambassadors.*' (11)

The team and myself could see the opportunities during the introduction workshop, Claire helped us to think about our aims for volunteers and where we wanted to be in the future. It helped us to have a shared vision. It was my role as the project leader to embed this shared vision. This took place quickly arranging a second meeting with a core team of people, as in Kotter's 8 steps, I identified the right people, and we were able to support the project progression and we defined the vision even further. On reflection, I recognised the team were enthusiastic about Volunteer Makers, I was very aware of everyone being busy, and I worked hard to maintain momentum (see appendix 4). Communicating the vision further I developed a marketing campaign with the team, which included bookmarks, posters and online promotion. We also devised a targeted marketing plan to roll out in 2018.

'Strategic influence 4 box model's' second point: 'Sharing the benefit of change', was significant here. I led with Claire on explaining how Volunteer Makers could work for us and what the benefits would be. These included, volunteering opportunities all in one place, on a website, describing volunteer opportunities as 'challenges'. These could be minutes, hours, days or regular volunteering opportunities. These challenges would appeal to a wider variety of people who could also complete some of the tasks such as research from home and could potentially attract a younger audience of volunteers. Another key benefit was that the system calculates the number of volunteer hours and can provide statistical data which can be demographically broken down. By emphasising the benefits the system could bring, the team were able to have confidence in the change being worth initial efforts.

'OPM Model Capacity for change'/ Kotter's 'empowering others to act on the vision'

Time and staff, are for many organisations, the biggest barriers to change and moving a project forward. Establishing enough resources and capacity to lead and deliver is crucial. My manager could see the potential in Volunteer Makers and we agreed I would dedicate time to lead this project. After the initial workshop, the whole team believed in what we were trying to achieve, enough to put time aside and move forward by committing to the vision. By training the team to use the online system and valuing their input in the development of content and procedures, I supported the staff to feel empowered and they began to set their own volunteer challenges for their areas. I was required to plan for and make complex and difficult decisions through the process, such as how we could resolve issues of volunteers not having computers when digital was key in the new system. I worked with the technical team to look at options of staff inputting hours on the behalf of these volunteers. I also worked with complex issues and decisions linked to the processes by problem solving and consulting with other team members. Part of the process has been to have confidence in Volunteer Makers and convincing the team we can work through any barriers identified. As part of the project planning I allocated a budget for marketing and I have recruited a volunteer to support and help us move the programme forward.

OPM model's 'Actionable first Step' / Kotter's Planning for short term wins

Claire helped us to set an action plan during the initial workshop with a vision and aims (appendix 5) setting out clear targets and direction. The plan laid out the practicalities of what we were going to do, by when and who was going to be involved. This so far has enabled the project to move forward. Regular group meetings looking at our process and working with the team and our current volunteers has enabled us to identify and overcome any difficulties and technical teething issues with the online platform. Our officers are setting challenges, front of house staff are promoting Volunteer Makers, volunteers are currently testing it and evaluating it. Everyone plays a part.

The act of reviewing is important, as stated in 'The innovation book' by Max McKeown:

'Reviewing looks at the impact of innovation efforts. There is a purpose behind the focus on new ideas - they are meant to solve problems, improve situations and shape better futures.' (12)

By constantly assessing the process we can continually move forward and can offer better opportunities and make use of digital technologies. This has already taken place, with the technical reviews we have conducted and now resolved.

Strategic influence model emphasises reassuring staff with 'What stays the same?' For this project, this included reassuring staff that the training and induction process would mainly stay the same, however we would look at improving it and rolling it out for everyone, so we could offer a consistent induction. The regular volunteering opportunities would also remain similar but the process of communication of which shifts were available would be transmitted via the online Volunteer Maker platform. The new system was the tool to communicate and market the volunteering opportunities.

By using these models I can see a difference in the success of the programme to date and I feel I can identify when things are starting to go wrong, why and what I need to implement to correct them. As a result of the research and success of the leadership through influence programme, the impact has been meaningful across the region. I was asked to sit on the advisory panel for Volunteer Makers, due to the Director, Claire Sully noticing we had achieved buy in quickly. Following this I was asked to speak about 'buy-in' and change management linked to this project at the 2017 Museum Association Conference in Manchester to other nationwide peers. This was an opportunity to share my experiences of Volunteer Makers and also my learning from the leadership programme. I was also asked to share further by being asked to write a blog reflecting my conference speech and experience (see appendix 6). The leadership through influence programme gave me the confidence and tools to enable me to speak in front of seventy gallery and museum peers.

Measuring success

As part of our initial plan we set our aims and goals alongside our vision. These included:

Within 6 months of launching we aim to:

- To update policies and procedures for volunteers and make these consistent across the team.
- Increase regular volunteers by 10%
- Introducing micro volunteering and increasing volunteers to 300 in this area.
- Attaining the technology to support the platform - a tablet for the gallery spaces.

The process has taken longer than expected, therefore we are a little behind schedule, but are keen to ensure what we are doing is completed to an excellent standard. We are working towards our vision and on our ways to achieving our targets. After launching in November 2017 we aim to achieve the above goals by April 2018. We have already seen an increase in regular volunteers and have updated policies.

As the project leader, my current aims are to keep the momentum going to maintain enthusiasm and to work with the team on any current technical issues. We are working towards an easy win target by Christmas of seeing all current volunteers

signed up. The next step of the plan is to have a focused marketing strategy for colleges and universities and set challenges linked to these.

Using my leadership skills I have identified certain areas of the project which have been difficult such as producing the digital platform. This has been time consuming, particularly leading up to Christmas, as everyone was busy. There have been some technical issues and this has begun to frustrate staff and volunteers. In response to this, I have moved deadlines and target dates and set up workshops to analyse our problems and work together to solve the problems. Using Kotter's 8 step model to reassess the issues and to work with the core team. As a transformational leader of the project I will continue to be proactive, and continually create an awareness of the need for change and improvement, whilst keeping communication open with system updates and training. Using Kotter's theory of constantly 'adapting' and 'empowering' I continue to seek opportunities to develop and improve the Volunteer Makers system.

Summary

Leaders present themselves in many shapes and forms and the research from this essay has identified key areas in which a good leader can not only encourage change, but improve an organisation, its culture and impact on the community in doing so.

I have learnt not only is a leader's behaviour important, but self-awareness and being aware of others can inspire staff and volunteers and encourage a positive and proactive culture. As a 'transformational' leader, I aim to continue to create visions and inspire others to follow them.

Dr Peter Fuda explores the snowball effect in 'Leadership Transformed', stating:

'Leadership transformation accelerates as more leaders are swept up by the process.' (13)

I have identified myself as a transformational leader at the beginning of this research journey, giving others responsibilities and opportunities and encouraging staff to develop their own skills. On reflection I still feel this leading style best describes me. I naturally prefer coaching and inspiring staff to develop their own skills, take ownership and be swept up themselves.

By using the various frameworks and tools, good leaders support change by having a clear vision, ensuring the capacity for change is appropriate, follow a clear but adaptable plan and work towards shared goals. I have been able to take a step back during this research and examine my professional leadership style and discover how I can improve it. This includes reviewing other projects which at times failed, I recognised I lacked the knowledge of the above frameworks and I identified initiatives I have begun in the past which struggled to get off the ground due to the lack of capacity or 'buy in', or failing to continue the communication of the vision.

Self-reflection has been a key part of my journey in answering this essay. By questioning myself, methods of working, leadership styles and skills, I feel I have challenged my behaviours, adapted and improved to benefit the project or react better towards the team and our outcomes. I have learnt I often put pressure on myself to achieve a high standard, which at times can be time consuming. I have learnt to take a step back and ask, 'who I am doing it for and why?'. This method has helped me to focus on important areas of work and relieve stress. I have increased my confidence in leading the team, knowing I have increased knowledge and theoretical skills to back up my enthusiasm and *ENFJ* 'type' characteristics. These transferable skills could be used across the arts and culture sector and I will utilise them to develop and lead the education programme and the potential Heritage Lottery Fund redevelopment in the future.

Reviewing my leadership journey with my mentor, Nikki Grange, Arts, Heritage and Tourism manager, she recognised a change and progression throughout the leadership through influence course and my research as part of this essay.

'Your contribution to team meetings and forward planning meetings is always confident and strong, however your knowledge and understanding about sector issues has noticeably increased and our meetings benefit from your input and insight. You are very good at reminding us to think about where we are headed and focus on our aims and vision.'

'Volunteer Makers – you have taken responsibility for pushing this forward and ensured that RAGM have fully taken advantage of this opportunity. This will be really important for our future resilience and our HLF project, and its success is due to your collaborative approach, getting the right people across the council involved in the project from the start to ensure good support. It's also excellent that you have been invited to speak about your experience, this is great for your personal development as well as exposure for RAGM and our work.' Nikki Grange

Volunteer Makers is an exciting and innovative way of working with volunteers for the future. As Nikki stated, the impact on both the organisation and the community will be large and I have been proud to begin the change journey for RAGM. Therefore, I have been and continue to be inspired by the vision and the opportunity to lead this project, which has a national profile. We aim to expand the Volunteer Makers initiative across all Rugby Borough Council departments and across the Town Centre, using the RAGM model as a positive and successful example.

My leadership has also improved at a regional level giving me confidence to play an active role as Engage West Midlands representative (body representing gallery education). This involves organising regional meetings, with themes and speakers along with supporting and guiding peers in the sector. Since beginning this journey, I have also led the team to win various awards including the 'Family Friendly' category of the Warwickshire and Coventry Tourism and Culture Awards, recognising our hard work, professionalism and profiling our organisation.

To summarise, good leadership can not only encourage change, it can deliver it and encourage the organisation to flourish, grow and respond to the audiences and

customers' needs. A range of leadership skills, behaviours and frameworks support the process, but a good leader will be brave, take risks, constantly communicate the vision and be prepared to continue to adapt and change, both the project but also themselves.

Supported by these tools, good leaders believe, people, not just the process, are the most important strength. As Mark Anderson states in 'The Leadership book':

'Your team are your lifeblood. The right people in the right jobs.... can deliver superior performance.' (14)

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Leadership questionnaire

Appendix 2 Volunteer Maker home page platform screenshot

Appendix 3 OPM 4 box change model

Appendix 4 Strategic Influence 4 box model

Appendix 5 Aims and visions

Appendix 6 Action Plan

Appendix 7 MA Conference blog and online links