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MyLeadership IV : code of responsible leadership and monitoring

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MyLeadership IV

Code of Responsible Leadership and Monitoring

There are many instruments to improve leadership decisions, behaviour and action such as trainings, coaching, sharing power, control mechanisms, incentives, audits, sanction mechanisms etc. One such instrument is a code of leadership.

Codes of conduct are voluntary agreements with the aim of committing a person or an organisation to respect certain values and rules. They can be developed and implemented by a person or an organisation or existing codes can be signed by people and organisations. Therefore, they have the advantage of being developed and implemented in a fast way. They have the disadvantage of not being as binding as laws with their sanction mechanisms. Therefore, the credibility of each code of conduct depends on serious monitoring by the signing parties. Without it, it remains a nice piece of paper, for superficial window dressing. In this case it does not increase credibility but rather suspicion against those who sign a code.

Best known are company codes of conduct for staff or the whole company. The company declares what is welcome and what is forbidden in specific situations. For some years, non-governmental organisations have started implementing codes of conduct too.²⁸

A code of leadership specifically targets leadership positions and individuals. Such codes are much less known and less developed than codes of ethics for organisations. They exist e.g. for public officials or members of parliaments especially declaring their assets before entering

²⁸ E.g. “Code against Corruption and for Transparency for NGOs and Church Projects in Cameroon”, in: Stückelberger, Christoph, *Corruption-free Churches are possible, Globethics.net, Geneva 2010 (also in French)* For an overview of NGO codes of conduct: www.gdrc.org/ngo/codes-conduct.html. A collection of over thousand professional codes of ethics is available from 2015 in the ethics library www.globethics.net under collections.

in the new function. An example: The Parliament of the Republic of Uganda decided and implemented in 2002 – on the basis of chapter 14 of the Constitution of the Country – the “Leadership Code Act 2002” proposed by the Inspectorate of Government. This code is in place “to provide for a minimum standard of behaviour and conduct for leaders; to require leaders to declare their incomes, assets and liabilities; to put in place an effective enforcement mechanism. The object of the Leadership Code is not to have leaders declare their ‘poverty’ as some would say, but rather to ensure that the Leaders of this country remain accountable to the people. By declaring their assets, incomes and liabilities leaders can explain to the people that any assets you have were legitimately acquired not corruptly acquired.”²⁹ The Leadership Code lists as leaders 42 categories of functions from the president of state to “anybody in which a public body has an interest.”³⁰ This Code concentrates on the declaration of income, assets and liabilities in order to fight corruption. The 40 pages code is very detailed, including clear monitoring and sanction mechanisms.

Such codes of leadership serve as an instrument of control and transparency. But a code is first of all an instrument for the leader to improve her/his leadership in the sense of “Invest in yourself”.³¹

The following code of responsible leadership aims at improving responsible leadership within organisations on the international, national and regional level. It then serves as an additional label and support for people in leadership responsibility showing the standards that they want and have to follow in the leadership position.

²⁹ Inspectorate of Government of the Republic of Uganda, *About the Leadership Code Act 2002*, 2. See: www.igg.go.ug.

³⁰ Ibid, 11.

³¹ This is rule five of the five rules of the famous book on business leadership: Ulrich, Dave, *et al.*, *The Leadership Code. Five Rules to Lead By*, Boston/Mass: Harvard Business Press, 2008.

My code of Responsible Leadership

I , [name]commit myself
in my leadership function as [function]
in the organisation [name]

Faith, Values and Virtues

to act as a good steward of God's gifts and as a servant to the organisation;
to implement and promote the vision, mission and values of the own organisation/company;
to act in integrity, modesty, transparency, empathy, forgiveness, faithfulness, carefulness and ethical courage;

Performance and Resources

to perform in the best possible way and seek support for improvement;
to develop, use, increase and maintain the manifold resources in an efficient, sustainable and transparent way
to give precedence to public interest over personal interest;
to manage time in order to honour the need for renewal of physical, mental and spiritual sources and resources;
to maintain and update inventories that list out the properties of the organisation and to ensure that properties are registered on behalf of the organisation;
to avoid leasing and selling properties (both movable and immovable) of the organisation on the plea that current liabilities have to be met (limited exceptions may be reasonable under condition that full transparency and proper decision making is guaranteed);
to strictly utilise the finance that is earmarked for specific programmes and purposes without mismanagement;
to respect the laws and regulations of the country and of the own organisation/company.

Reporting and Transparency

to meet the reporting, accounting, accountability and audit standards of the organisation
to refuse to accept or give money or other incentives which can be construed as bribes;

to encourage and support people who are working against corruption as well as to protect the whistleblowers who expose corrupt practices;
to resist to all kinds of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of power;
to declare the personal assets (movable or immovable), liabilities to the governing body while taking charge and relinquishing the office;
to abstain from activities with possible conflicts of interests and consider such situations with the superior;
to distinguish private, public and professional life, but to be credible in all three
to care for the reputation of the organisation and stop all actions which can damage it;

Staff and leadership development

to adhere to minimum labour standards with fair appointments and selection procedures, issuing of employment contract letters, medical and pension benefits to employees and their families;
to avoid involvement of family members in the decision making as well as administrative bodies of the organisation;
to share and decentralise powers and duties to allow proper control and management of responsibilities;
to empower staff, committees and boards by training and delegation of competence to improve their participation and responsibilities;
to look for friends and a coach who can critically support me in my leadership responsibilities;
to plan the own leadership succession early enough since success also depends on succession;
to support regular renewal of leadership positions and respect the agreed terms of service of this function.

Monitoring

This code of responsible leadership is a personal commitment. I sign it voluntarily / on decision of my organisation for all leadership positions [underline either or both]. My superior agrees to monitor the implementation of this code once a year, in consultation with me, and to report the result and conclusions to the superior body.

PlaceDate

Signature

Signature of superior