

Transforming the Quality of Leadership in the Jamaican Public Service

Can we Cross it?

Ministry Paper Number 56, “Government at your Service” states that, “ A strong and professionally functioning public sector holds a country together. It is the bridge between political representation of national aspirations and individual needs on the one hand, and the life experiences of all citizens on the other. It translates vision and needs into policy, policy into programmes and objectives into goals, goals into action, and action into results that should matter to people and meet the needs of the country.”

In order words there is a great need for a viable world class public sector that is flexible and responsive to the needs of the Jamaican people.

LEADERSHIP

The public sector comprises of sixteen (16) ministries, approximately two hundred and thirty (230) entities, including Statutory Bodies, Executive Agencies that are departments of Government. The Government is the largest employer contracting just over 10% of the Jamaican labour force. The Government is geared towards transforming the public sector. Hence, the relevance of the theme: Transforming the Quality of Leadership in The Jamaican Public Service- Can we Cross it?

Leadership does not reside in a vacuum; it must be anchored within a contextual framework. A review of the current situation in which we operate, will provide a better understanding of an appreciation for the need to transform the quality of leadership in the public sector, which needs more bold and decisive leadership.

One of the seven guiding principles articulated in putting Jamaica at the center of development is *Transformational Leadership*. As we are already aware there are different types of leadership styles, in short, leadership, highlights the range of traits and skills, inherent in a successful leader.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Jamaica needs transformational leaders, working in the trenches to achieve the collective objective of transforming the public sector and Jamaica, in realizing the national 2030 vision. Transformational leaders according to Burns (1978), causes and creates transformation which includes values, liberty, justice and equality. Such leaders elevates there followers to a higher level of morality and spirituality. Transformational leaders create something new for something old, by changing the basic political and cultural system, this is accomplished by challenging and transforming individuals' emotion, values, ethics, standards, and long term goals through the process of charismatic and visionary leadership.

Transformation of the public sector is a game changer. Our Leaders will have to be bold, courageous and principled with unassailable integrity. It is however clear that, this quality of leadership can be achieved through strengthened training and exposure or change, to ensure that there is the right leadership to advance the goals and objectives of a transformed public sector.

FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

In practical terms, we need to objectively assess our leader's worth and work, as expressed in clearly delineated targets and indicators. A robust monitoring and evaluation framework must be instituted at all levels, to ensure that public officers including our leaders constantly review the efficacy of the management of the management of their operations.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Government is aiming to have a public sector that is competent in financial management; knowing the true cost of operation, executing the business of Government and spend only what we can afford.

The Public Sector Transformation Unit in collaboration with MIND is engaged in delivering a course on Leadership and Change Management in the Public Sector in order to achieve this country's mandate.

Lecture delivered by CEO, Public Sector Transformation Unit – Mrs. Patricia Sinclair-McCalla

