ON BECOMING A LEADER ALIGNED TO LOWNEY’S ‘HEROIC LEADERSHIP’

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There are a lot of changes when it comes to business world and the demands for leadership styles become more complicated due to the uncontrollable environment brought by ‘D-VUCAD’ world. There are many published books and articles which tackle about modern leadership skills that leaders should possess to keep an industry running. However, the book “Heroic Leadership” written by Chris Lowney focuses instead on the ‘secrets of Jesuit leadership’ rather than on modern ways on how leaders can adapt to changes.

Lowney, ‘a one-time Jesuit seminarian who later served as a Managing Editor of JP Morgan & Co,’ presented a new vision of who leaders are and how they lead. He highlighted why have the Jesuits prospered and why do they continue to prosper. The author stated that the Jesuits trained every novice to be a leader and it always begins by learning how to manage yourself. Their principles do not only settle on being company managers but also in daily life.

Looking closer, Lowney formed the four pillars of heroic leadership which said to be the core principles that are driving their organization. The first principle is self-awareness wherein it is believed that leaders prosper by becoming aware of own strengths and weaknesses and having the habit of reflection. It was followed by the second pillar which is the ingenuity that opts leaders to explore more ideas, approaches and cultures rather than staying in their comfort zone. This pillar enables them to discover potentials and to be clever in solving future problems.

Love, as cliche as it may sound, is the third pillar of heroic leadership because the Jesuits believe that teams could thrive in environments with greater love than fear which is contrary to Machiavelli’s belief that it is better to be feared than to be loved. Love opens many opportunities for the greater good because charity, commitment and giving service for the sake of other people are valued. For without it, the driving force to serve will be lessenened.

The last one is heroism. Lowney believes that ‘heroes extract gold from the opportunities at hand rather than waiting for golden opportunities to be handed to them.’ Being self-motivated is the most powerful practical insight according to Lowney. Having heroic ambitious goals motivate the leaders to do some actions for these to be achieved through initiating steps.
They tend to be the ones to shape the future rather than passively watching others do it for them.

Relevantly, the DepEd’s tagline ‘We Mould Heroes’ can be anchored on Lowney’s four pillars of heroic leadership from which educational leaders must live these principles. They are heroes themselves and it will be much better to adapt the heroic leadership to totally embody their ideals and to effectively mould others to be heroes as well.

There could be a lot of books and articles that would advice and guide any leader on how to achieve a heroic leadership but Lowney’s ‘Heroic Leadership’ is quite different. It does not simply tackles about being a leader but rather how to become an effective one, and the principles that he highlighted cannot be seen by the naked eyes. Indeed, ‘what is essential is invisible to the eye,’ because becoming a heroic leader cannot be seen but rather can be felt.

References:
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