

## Chapter 31

# SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

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Ethical scandals, globalisation, technological advances and the environmental crisis are creating unprecedented challenges for 21st century organisations. The economic context is characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, forcing organisations to transform radically the way they do business and manage people if they want to become or remain globally competitive.

Despite global companies' legal and ethical obligation to follow good corporate practice, corruption remains a grave challenge.<sup>1</sup> According to the World Bank, the cost of corruption is estimated around \$1-trillion annually. Transparency International says bribes of up to \$40-billion are paid to corrupt officials in developing countries each year.<sup>2</sup> A Global Economic Crime Survey conducted by PWC in 2016 revealed that 69% of South African companies experienced some form of economic crime as opposed to the global average of 36%.<sup>3</sup> These alarming statistics, alongside a rising tide of Fortune 500 scandals, signify the extent to which our moral fibre has decayed, and also cast doubt on the efficacy of current leadership models to resolve ethical challenges.

Attempts to remain globally competitive have contributed to additional stressors that hamper organisational performance. Unacceptable levels of staff attrition, absenteeism, poor work morale and increasing incidents of stress-related diseases such as hypertension, depression, insomnia, obesity, diabetes, cardiac arrest, cancer and burnout<sup>4</sup> cost the South African economy billions of Rands. It is estimated that absenteeism alone costs R12- to R16-billion a year in South Africa.<sup>5</sup>

The degenerating health of individuals, and seemingly ubiquitous unethical behaviour, is not just knocking organisational performance. It is triggering a crisis of meaning. Employees, who generally spend more time in the workplace than at home, are questioning their purpose in life. They want to experience meaning in the workplace, where they can at least feel fulfilled and inspired by their work, and at best feel that they are making a difference in society.

Most contemporary leaders have failed to address organisational ailments and existential concerns because they are still operating in a mechanistic paradigm. A new type of leader is required, one who can traverse a more complex organisational terrain where the focus has shifted from only generating profit to being concerned about the triple bottom line: people, planet and profit. Employees are becoming increasingly discerning and want to work in organisations that promote employee wellness, encourage work-home balance, drive social responsibility initiatives, and actively contribute to genuinely caring for the environment.<sup>6</sup>

Because of this, spiritual leadership is proposed as the type of leadership required for 21st century organisations. This chapter discusses the relevance of spiritual leadership in the modern world of work; juxtaposes spiritual leadership with emerging leadership theories; and introduces an integrated spiritual leadership model from which critical leadership competences will be extrapolated, necessary to create a thriving organisational environment.

## Relevance of Spiritual Leadership

Before examining spiritual leadership in more depth, the distinction between spirituality and religion must be established. Some authors construe these notions synonymously, while others regard them as distinct but related notions.

### Spirituality and religion

Spirituality may be construed as a process where individuals search for a universal truth, find meaning in and purpose to life, experience a connectedness to a greater purpose related to a higher power, and strive to reach their highest potential.<sup>7</sup> Religion, on the other hand, concerns being a member of a specific religious community that follows rules, rituals, and belief systems.<sup>8</sup>

Even though there is a conceptual difference between religion and spirituality, they are interrelated. One does not have to be religious to be spiritual, as an individual could experience spirituality within or outside a religious context.<sup>9</sup> Fry<sup>10</sup> notes that “spirituality is necessary for religion but religion is not necessary for spirituality”. Altruistic love serves as a bridge between religion and spirituality. In this regard, religion may be perceived as comprising institutionalised faith, while spirituality is closely associated with the living-out of positive values.

### Need for spiritual leadership

Traditional leadership theories have generally failed to address 21st century challenges because they tend to focus on transformation from the outside in as opposed to changing from the inside out.<sup>11</sup> Transforming from the inside out turns conventional leadership theory upside down. It posits that in order to change someone else, one needs first to change oneself. Because the change of one system has a ripple effect on other interconnected systems, a leader changing from the inside out therefore has the power to transform others. This will most likely result in changes in the organisation and its performance and, ultimately, on society.

Spiritual leadership is therefore relevant because these leaders can transform others, organisations, and society by transforming themselves first. Strong *and* spiritual leadership, directed by a clear purpose and positive values, is therefore required to uproot corrupt practices and promote good corporate governance. Ethical, socially responsible leaders who lead by example are required. Organisations such as Google, 3M, Starbucks and Procter and Gamble have developed business models that promote “ethical leadership, employee wellbeing, sustainability and social responsibility”.<sup>12</sup> They believe that the triple bottom line can be achieved while still yielding high profit, performance and quality.

Spiritual leadership encourages the experience of meaning and purpose at a personal and professional level. Feeling fulfilled in the workplace is, for some employees, even more important than earning a higher salary. When employees feel fulfilled in the workplace by being part of a values-based organisational context and practice, their performance tends to improve, which in turn improves financial performance and profit. Studies conducted in more than a hundred organisations show that spiritual leadership increased organisational commitment and productivity in these organisations.<sup>13</sup> Spiritual leaders tend to establish value-based organisations that are highly successful, profitable and productive because the high level of engagement fosters greater commitment among employees.<sup>14</sup>

Spiritual leaders operate within an entirely new organisational paradigm that replaces mechanistic organisational practices with dynamic spiritual practices. Organisations tend to achieve long-term sustainable success when they are socially responsible and guided by spiritual

principles.<sup>15</sup> A study conducted by Collins and Porras revealed that organisations such as 3M, Hewlett-Packard, Disney and Marriot experienced sustainable growth and outperformed the stock market over a 64-year period because they were guided by a core purpose and values.<sup>16</sup>

## **Comparison between Spiritual Leadership and Emerging Leadership Theories**

An alternative to a leader who operates within a mechanistic paradigm is a leader who operates within a spiritual paradigm. There are several emerging leadership theories that can be classified within a spiritual paradigm, including servant leadership, transformational leadership, authentic leadership, ethical leadership and spiritual leadership.

A *servant leader* is a leader who is dedicated to meeting the needs of others by serving others first, instead of either being driven by power or ego or wanting to lead first.<sup>17</sup> However, the problem with this leadership construct is that it values the needs of the followers above the needs of the organisation.<sup>18</sup> While this is noble, it may prove detrimental to an organisation, especially if the needs of either the followers or the employees are based on self-centred values.

According to Burns, *transformational leaders* strive to raise the level of morality and motivation of leaders and followers<sup>19</sup> by empowering them instead of keeping them weak and dependent.<sup>20</sup> However, transformational leadership theory is criticised for not determining the leader's motives, which may be based on selfish values.<sup>21</sup>

*Authentic leaders* are leaders "who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others' values/moral perspective, knowledge and strength; aware of the context in which they operate and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient and high on moral character".<sup>22</sup> Authentic leadership is premised on the congruence between a leader's behaviour and internal values. The conceptual flaw is that a person's internal values may not be virtuous by nature. So dictators and rogues can be classified as authentic leaders as long as there is alignment between their behaviour and value systems.

*Ethical leadership* refers to leaders who seek to benefit followers, organisations and society by living in accordance with a system of normative beliefs and judgments as opposed to self-interest.<sup>23</sup> However, despite the fact that ethical leadership promotes trust and integrity in organisations,<sup>24</sup> its conceptual focus is so confined to ethical issues that it fails to cater for organisational performance issues that are unrelated to ethics.

Spiritual leadership has emerged from, and to a large extent embodies, many of the principles of the leadership theories operating within a spiritual paradigm. However, it has also overcome their conceptual shortfalls. Spiritual leaders operate from a positive value system, and their motivation for developing others is based on both a higher purpose and on values that are founded on a set of universal values.<sup>25</sup> In addition, spiritual leaders achieve congruence between the values, thoughts and behaviours of the leaders and employees in organisations.<sup>26</sup> Spiritual leaders are committed to improving themselves and learning from their mistakes by changing from the inside out and by emphasising self-transcendence. Although, essentially, spiritual leaders are driven by spiritual intelligence, they also acknowledge the value of emotional, physical and mental intelligence. Spiritual intelligence enables spiritual leaders to address 21st century concerns where individuals have lost their sense of purpose and meaning because of greed, power struggles, corruption, loss of trust, stress, and demotivation in their workplaces.<sup>27</sup>

Spiritual leaders promote and harness workplace spirituality which, in turn, is characterised by a strong sense of purpose. This sense of purpose inspires and provides meaning for others; promotes virtuous values such as trust, honesty, ethics and respect; applies humanistic work practices; and is tolerant of employees expressing their emotions without fear of reprisal.<sup>28</sup>

## An Integrated Spiritual Leadership Model

The proposed Integrated Spiritual Leadership (ISL) model aims to provide a framework to help leaders address organisational problems and improve productivity through spiritual leadership. It is significant because it reflects the expected inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes of spiritual leadership, and can be used as a foundation for developing a spiritual leadership training or mentoring programme.

### Purpose

The ISL model is driven by two core purposes. *Firstly*, the *key purpose* of the model is to promote the internal transformation of a leader. This is achieved by establishing the higher purpose and core positive value system that guides leaders' behaviour and enables them to make decisions. *Secondly*, the application of the four personal intelligences – rational intelligence (IQ), physical intelligence (PQ), emotional intelligence (EQ), and spiritual intelligence (SQ) – ensures that the leader will approach self-transcendence in a holistic and integrated manner.

### Development

The ISL model has adapted and incorporated the common attributes and unique features that emerged from evaluation of a number of spiritual leadership models listed in Table 31.1.

Table 31.1: Evaluation of spiritual leadership models

Spiritual leadership model	Description
Zohar and Marshall's <sup>29</sup> 12 Transformative Principles Model	Developing spiritual intelligence by following 12 transformative principles
Kevin Cashman's <sup>30</sup> Seven Pathways Leadership Model	Developing leadership from the inside out
Stephen Covey's <sup>31</sup> Whole Person Leadership Model	Holistic leadership development by harnessing the four personal intelligences
Gilbert Fairholm's <sup>32</sup> spiritual leadership model	Conceptualisation of moral and selfless leaders who are committed to stewardship and service
The not-for-profit health group Memorial Hermann's <sup>33</sup> spiritual leadership model	Focusing on values; allowing employees to explore and express their spirituality; planning for and encouraging community involvement
Ferguson and Milliman's <sup>34</sup> spiritual leadership approach	Framework for effective organisational values, which emphasises authenticity, service to others and an alignment between personal and organisational values
Louis Fry's <sup>35</sup> spiritual leadership causal model	A model of the causal relationship between hope, faith, vision and altruistic love, which may instil a sense of calling and membership in others. In turn, this may improve organisational performance

Spiritual leadership model	Description
Margaret Benefiel's <sup>36</sup> organisational transformation model	Spiritual transformation
Sangeeta Parameshwar's <sup>37</sup> spiritual leaders with ego-transcendence	How spiritual principles contribute to the process of ego-transcendence
Cindy Wigglesworth's <sup>38</sup> 21 skills of spiritual intelligence	How to guide a leader's journey towards higher spiritual intelligence

## Explanation

The ISL model comprises three core levels: spiritual leadership, the team, and the organisation, with the intention of improving performance at all three levels. The components of the ISL model and their interrelationships are set out in Figure 31.1.

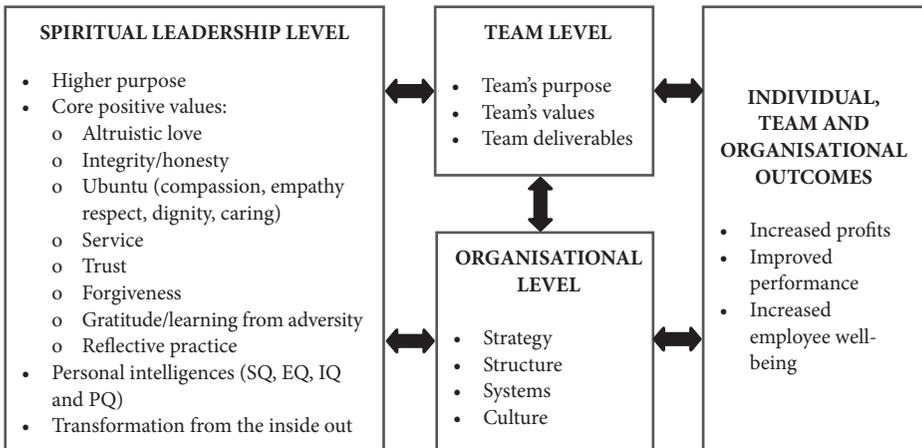


Figure 31.1: Integrated Spiritual Leadership Model

## Spiritual Leadership Level

The spiritual leadership level comprises four key attributes, which form a collective whole and are necessary conditions for the successful functioning of a spiritual leader. The four key attributes of spiritual leadership are discussed in relation to the way in which they can be acquired and applied.

### Higher purpose

Higher purpose refers to the way in which one expresses oneself and adds value in relation to following one's calling in life.<sup>39</sup> Purpose creates value as it inspires individuals to make a positive difference in the lives of others and the world. Purpose fosters authenticity by encouraging congruence between a person's purpose and actions. Purpose serves as a compass, keeping you on track with your life's course by directing one towards one's true north. Unlike a goal that is achievable, a purpose involves a life-long journey of self-discovery. Purpose should not be confused with a profession. Although it is preferable that there should be alignment between the two, a purpose extends beyond a profession in that it serves to direct all aspects of your life.

Having meaning and purpose is instrumental in transcending adversity.<sup>40</sup> People who have a clear purpose and meaning are able to transcend problems and are regarded by Frankl<sup>41</sup> as the primary motivation in life.

Asking the following questions can help one determine one's higher purpose:

- If money were of no concern in your life, how would you spend your time?
- What is your *raison d'être*, your reason for existing?
- What are your key strengths and talents, identified by you and others?
- What deeply motivates and inspires you?

### Core positive values

Values refer to a set of core beliefs that define the way in which one ought to behave in a variety of situations.<sup>42</sup> Values are important in the context of spiritual leadership because they help spiritual leaders and their followers to live their higher purpose and find meaning at work, while offering moral guidance on their behaviour.<sup>43</sup> A core positive value system refers to values that are virtuous, ethically based and spiritual in nature. Positive values help the spiritual leader to transcend the ego and serve others.<sup>44</sup> Operating from explicit core positive values separates spiritual leadership from other leadership theories, in that the motives of a spiritual leader are founded and remain based on genuine and pure intentions.<sup>45</sup>

The core positive values set out in Figure 31.1 were selected on the basis that they have all been validated empirically. Many are exhibited by both spiritual and traditional leaders. However, values that are generally associated with spiritual leadership such as altruistic love, gratitude/positive use of adversity, forgiveness/acceptance and reflective practice were included to distinguish this model from other leadership models governed by values.

The eight core values for a spiritual leader as expanded are given in Table 31.2.

Table 31.2: Eight core values for a spiritual leader

Core values for a spiritual leader	Description
<b>Altruistic love</b>	Being selfless and giving unconditional love that is based on genuine care and wanting happiness for others <sup>46</sup>
<b>Integrity/honesty</b>	Being truthful and demonstrating complete congruence between one's values and behaviour <sup>47</sup>
<b>Ubuntu</b>	Embracing core spiritual leadership values such as compassion, respect, dignity, empathy and humility, with the intention of strengthening a community <sup>48</sup>
<b>Service</b>	Placing the interests of others before one's own interests, and giving generously of one's time, care and compassion <sup>49</sup>
<b>Trust</b>	Establishing a reciprocal relationship based on one person's confidence in another's integrity and reliability <sup>50</sup>
<b>Forgiveness/acceptance</b>	Showing acceptance and gratitude rather than being weighed down by negative thoughts and experiences such as jealousy, gossip, failed expectations, hatred and revenge <sup>51</sup>

Core values for a spiritual leader	Description
Gratitude/positive use of adversity	Showing appreciation of a positive outcome, even if the positive outcome is perceived as either not earned or deserved, <sup>52</sup> and extracting positive lessons from a difficult experience
Reflective practice	Engaging in introspective practices such as journaling, meditation, prayer and being in nature to reframe your experience from a wider perspective <sup>53</sup>

Are your top five values as a reader consonant with these values? Reflecting without judgment on why there might be dissonance between the two sets of values should provide invaluable insight into the reasons for the manifestation of your current reality. Conscious and reflective application of the core positive values will alter your thoughts, behaviour and decisions, which will in turn transform your reality.

### Personal intelligences

Despite the fact that spiritual intelligence may be regarded as the core intelligence, its harmonious functioning with the emotional, mental and physical dimensions of intelligence is crucial. An imbalance in one can adversely affect the effective functioning of the other dimensions.<sup>54</sup> The driver of the four dimensions is the spiritual dimension which serves as a compass and helps to direct attitudes and behaviours.<sup>55</sup>

However, each of the personal intelligences performs a critical, albeit different, role in ensuring that the spiritual leader changes from the inside out in a way that inspires others and makes a positive impact on organisations. Fostering the four intelligences contributes to the development of balanced leaders who possess the spiritual fortitude, emotional awareness, analytical abilities and physical agility required to overcome organisational problems.

A leader who applies the personal intelligences will demonstrate the following behaviours:

- Being driven by meaning, vision and values;<sup>56</sup> using intuition;<sup>57</sup> using higher purpose to overcome adversity;<sup>58</sup> and recognising their interconnectedness with everything in the universe;<sup>59</sup>
- Being aware of and able to regulate his/her own and other people's emotions;<sup>60</sup> and establish authentic relationships;<sup>61</sup>
- Applying rational, logical, analytical, metacognitive and problem-solving abilities;<sup>62</sup> and
- Healthy eating, exercise, and understanding the metaphysical reasons for illnesses in order to achieve balance in life.<sup>63</sup>

Wigglesworth<sup>64</sup> asserts that the four personal intelligences interrelate on several levels. The intelligences develop separately: a person who is highly developed in terms of mental intelligence may have poorly developed emotional and spiritual intelligence, and *vice versa*. However, the development of these intelligences is interdependent and interconnected. The development of one intelligence may "create a 'necessary but not sufficient condition' for growth" of another intelligence.<sup>66</sup> For example, some degree of cognitive development is required to attain advanced stages of spiritual development: a person with a high SQ is able to perceive issues from a multiplicity of perspectives. On the other hand, EQ development is necessary for SQ development because it is incumbent on a person with a high SQ to manage her or his own emotions effectively, as well as those of others, and to show empathy. In addition, the development of PQ is necessary

for SQ development because the body serves as a barometer for spiritual, mental and emotional misalignments.

### Transforming from the inside out

Transforming from the inside out refers to changing oneself first in order to effect change in others. Traditional leaders focus on changing the behaviours, attitudes and skills of others, with little or no emphasis on changing themselves. In contrast, spiritual leaders believe that in order to change others, one needs to change oneself first. An inside out approach is driven by spiritual leaders who live out their spirituality as opposed to talking or thinking about it. This in turn results in ethical wellbeing.<sup>66</sup>

Operating in accordance with an inside out approach implies that individuals take responsibility for their thoughts, actions and responses.<sup>67</sup> ‘Victim’ thinking is replaced by taking responsibility for one’s own actions instead of blaming others, and being proactive in finding solutions.<sup>68</sup> In addition, according to Cooper,<sup>69</sup> the “inner attracts the outer” in the sense that one’s internal and underlying values and thoughts attract lessons within the external context. If a situation in the external world is not desirable, one should first examine oneself, and then shift one’s values, beliefs and feelings in order to alter one’s reality.<sup>70</sup>

The inside out approach is based on a quantum reality in terms of which everything in the universe is made up of energy and is intrinsically interconnected.<sup>71</sup> Scientific advances in the area of brain plasticity in the fields of neurobiology and quantum physics have demonstrated that human beings are able to change the hardwiring of their brains.<sup>72</sup> By changing our thoughts, reframing events and experiences, we are able to rewire our brains.<sup>73</sup> From a quantum perspective, beliefs are vibrating energy patterns within an energy field, where a change of belief causes the quantum energy field to change.<sup>74</sup> Accordingly, positive thoughts, actions and feelings will create a positive reality. Negative thoughts, actions and feelings will create a negative reality.<sup>75</sup> Spiritual leaders operating from an inside out approach do not only accept that they have created their own reality – be it positive or negative – but also feel empowered to transform their reality and the realities of others.

Transforming one’s beliefs involves two core processes: *firstly*, uncovering one’s conscious and shadow beliefs, and, *secondly*, developing helpful beliefs. Conscious beliefs are beliefs one is aware of. Shadow beliefs are subconscious or hidden beliefs that are suppressed because they are too painful to face. Jung, who coined the notion of shadow beliefs, contended that they fall into two categories: *firstly*, the light shadows – hidden positive potentials such as unknown talents and gifts – and *secondly*, the dark shadows, which are problematic, destructive, and stop us from moving forward in life.<sup>76</sup>

Shadow beliefs often operate insidiously and sabotage conscious beliefs, plans and goals. For example, if one finds oneself never having the job or relationship that one desires, it could be because the shadow belief of “I’m not good enough” is overriding one’s conscious belief. Jung argues that shedding light on shadow beliefs creates the opportunity to deal with the issue instead of permitting it to undermine your efforts continuously.

Uncovering shadow beliefs requires being conscious of how one’s feelings and thoughts are projected onto others. It is common to project one’s repressed thoughts onto others as a means of disassociating oneself from the negative thought. For example, if one believes that “my manager is controlling and mean”, it could be an indicator of an unresolved shadow. We judge and criticise others because it is too painful to resolve the issues that we are attempting to suppress. However, when others reflect these behaviours, it brings strong emotions to the surface, and we often respond disproportionately to the situation.

If one identifies a pattern of people – former bosses, romantic partners and friends – who display this behaviour, then it is a clear indication that one has identified a shadow. One’s animosity towards one’s manager for being controlling and mean could, for example, have roots in one’s own unresolved and subconscious beliefs about oneself as either being controlling and mean, or, on the contrary, being a pushover and unassertive, which might underpin a belief of being weak and worthless. The adage “if you spot it, you’ve got it” highlights that people we dislike are often our best teachers, because they provide us with invaluable opportunities to heal ourselves.<sup>77</sup> We inadvertently create experiences where we attract into our lives people who mirror our shadow beliefs as an attempt to heal subconscious thoughts and painful wounds.<sup>78</sup>

Changing beliefs is a relatively simple process but requires steadfast diligence and perseverance. Once the shadow belief has been exposed, it should be replaced by a helpful and supportive belief. The helpful belief must be developed based on the following principles:

- It should always be stated in the present tense so that you create the reality that you desire. Example, the belief “I **am** assertive” will be experienced in the current reality, as opposed to the belief “I **want to be** assertive” which would not be experienced in the present situation because it is phrased in the future state.
- It should be crafted as a positive statement. Phrasing the belief as “I am assertive” is preferable to “I am not weak”, because the brain tends to focus on key words such as “weak” and tend to overlook minor words such as “not”.
- It should be short and simple so that it can be repeated easily and effortlessly.

These helpful beliefs should be repeated extensively a minimum of 100 times a day. Even though there may be resistance to repeating these helpful beliefs initially, one should persevere. The subconscious mind does not know what is real and not real, even if the conscious mind can make this distinction. With constant repetition the subconscious mind establishes a vibrational pattern to create the desired thought so that the helpful belief is eventually accepted by the conscious mind as real.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, transforming from the inside out involves changing one’s beliefs in order to change one’s reality.

## Team level

The team level depicted in Figure 31.1 refers to an area in which spiritual leaders are able to influence employees in the workplace. This level comprises team members and employees whose performance is guided by the team’s purpose and values. The spiritual leadership level influences performance at a team level. In turn, the team level may influence both the behaviour of the spiritual leader and performance at an organisational level. Quantum physics has proven that everything is intrinsically interconnected.<sup>80</sup> This implies that the spiritual leader can affect the team, which in turn will affect the organisation.

The inspiration that flows from spiritual leadership should result in enhanced commitment and calling in the workplace. This in turn would lead to team members’ greater sense of belonging, bolstering their work ethic and improving performance.

## Organisational level

The organisational level represented in Figure 31.1 pertains to the leader’s influence in the organisation both as an individual and through a team. Organisational performance refers to an organisation meeting its strategic targets and delivering services through managing the organisation’s strategy, systems, structure and culture effectively. Organisational performance

may be observed by an organisation meeting its targets; adhering to good corporate governance principles; improving service delivery; using funds in an efficient and effective way (getting more done with less); being environmentally friendly; and improving the lives of its employees and communities.

The organisational level comprises the organisational elements of strategy, structure, systems and culture. These elements are based on McKinsey's 7-S framework, which depicts seven key interrelated organisational elements: strategy, structure, staff, systems, skills, style and shared values.<sup>81</sup> These elements are categorised as hard elements (strategy, structure and systems) and soft elements (shared values, style, staff and skills).<sup>82</sup> The collection of soft elements is referred to as organisational culture. Organisational strategy should determine the development and operation of the organisational structure, systems and culture, while the organisational elements are influenced by the actions of the spiritual leadership and the teams. Likewise, the organisational elements may influence the functioning of the spiritual leader and the teams.

The spiritual leadership, team and organisational levels are therefore interconnected in a dynamic and synergistic manner. While the spiritual leader should influence the direction of the teams and the organisation, the team and the organisational levels also influence each other as well as the spiritual leader. The role of the spiritual leader is to ensure that leadership, teams and organisation are aligned in terms of purpose and values, and to involve relevant stakeholders at multiple levels to promote buy-in to the ISL model.

## **Individual, team and organisational outcomes**

In Figure 31.1 the application of the four attributes of a spiritual leader – higher purpose, core positive values, transformation from the inside out, and personal intelligences – all promote individual, team and organisational outcomes. This extends beyond financial bottom-line indicators to fostering self-transcendence; increased employee satisfaction; and establishing ethical businesses that operate on environmentally sustainable principles. The spiritual leader's influence on the team contributes to increasing feelings of calling and membership as employees feel that they are making a difference to the workplace and to communities, which in turn has a positive impact on the organisation as a whole.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter presented the ISL model, which was developed by selecting the core aspects that emerged after a comparative analysis of ten spiritual leadership models. The model aims to promote the internal transformation of the spiritual leader and to inspire others to improve organisational performance. It comprises three core levels: the spiritual leadership, team, and organisational levels. These levels are interconnected and should be aligned if the organisation is to function optimally. The spiritual leadership level displays four key attributes: higher purpose and vision; core positive values; application of personal intelligences; and transformation from the inside out. The three core levels all influence individual, team and organisational outcomes by improving performance and employee wellbeing, leading to increased profit.

Unlike conventional leaders, it is argued that spiritual leaders are able to address 21st century organisational ailments related to ethical issues; concerns related to a loss of meaning and purpose; demotivation in the work place; and decreased productivity and profit due to a rise in stress-related diseases. Because spiritual leaders operate from a higher purpose and core positive values they are able to rise above adversity and resistance to change. A key benefit of the ISL model is that it can be used to transform individuals from inside out, and create a desired

reality by changing beliefs. Because everything is interconnected, the spiritual leader can have a positive impact on the team, which in turn can have a positive effect on the organisation.

## Endnotes

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