The article examines President Donald Trump's leadership through the lenses of Bernard M. Bass's model of transformational leadership. It starts with a description of what transformational leadership is and what it consists of. Second, the author takes a look at some of the features of transformational leadership, such as high ethical conduct, arousing team spirit, and inclusion of followers, and applies them to Trump. Finally, the author discusses the results of the analysis and explains why these findings are important and thought-provoking. The peculiar novelty of the study lies in the use of the theory and model of transformational leadership, developed by Bass and formulated on the basis of the science of management and organization. This is one of the innovative elements that distinguish the author's project from previous works on political leadership.

**Keywords:** Donald Trump; leadership; the United States of America; transformational leadership

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Artykuł analizuje przywództwo prezydenta Donalda Trumpa w oparciu o model przywództwa transformacyjnego Bernarda M. Bassa. Na wstępie autor definiuje przywództwo transformacyjne oraz omawia jego kluczowe komponenty. Następnie przygląda się niektórym cechom przywództwa transformacyjnego, takim jak: postępowanie etyczne, wzbudzanie ducha zespołowego czy włączanie zwolenników, i odnosi je do Trumpa. Na koniec autor omawia wyniki analizy i wyjaśnia, dlaczego są ważne i skłaniają do refleksji. Swoistą nowością opracowania jest wykorzystanie teorii i modelu przywództwa transformacyjnego opracowanego przez Bassa i sformułowanego na gruncie nauk o zarządzaniu i organizacji. Jest to jeden z nowatorskich elementów wyróżniających autorski projekt spośród dotychczasowych prac dotyczących przywództwa politycznego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Donald Trump; przywództwo; Stany Zjednoczone Ameryki; przywództwo transformacyjne

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INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the study are to analyze the leadership of President Donald Trump and to examine the impact of the president's leadership on the leadership of the advisers he worked with during his presidency between 2017–2021. Accordingly, two main research questions were asked: Q1: What are the leadership characteristics of Trump?; Q2: Did the president's leadership improve the leadership of his advisers?

It is significant to conduct the analysis because despite the existence of many studies about political leaders, the topic of leadership and its essence – the mutual relationship between a follower (an adviser) and a leader (the president) has not been fully explored in the field of political science particularly with regard to transformational leadership. In addition, the improper behavior of President Donald Trump, exemplified by Trump's mistreatment of his aides, could mean that the United States is facing a leadership crisis.

Bernard M. Bass's model of transformational leadership will be applied, and it includes four components: an idealized example, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual treatment (B.M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008, p. 620). The characteristics of idealized influence are high ethical conduct, a collective sense of mission, and a perception of confidence. The elements of inspirational motivation consist of a clearly communicated vision, arousing team spirit, and a commitment to goals. The components of intellectual stimulation are the inclusion of followers, the encouragement of creativity, and the absence of public criticism. Finally, the features of individual consideration include effecting listening, acting like a mentor, and nursing individual needs (B.M. Bass & Riggio, 2006, pp. 6–7).

According to James MacGregor Burns, who coined the term, transformational leadership is a process in which “leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation” (MacGregor Burns, 2012, p. 20). Bass and Burns underline the relationships between leaders and their subordinates. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct an analysis of the relationships between the examined subjects, i.e., Trump and his close advisers, in order to demonstrate if the subordinates excelled in any leadership features because of Trump’s leadership.

The author will rely on the examination of just the three characteristics of the components of transformational leadership: high ethical conduct, arousing team spirit, and inclusion of followers, and apply them to Trump. The reason why
three out of the twelve features of leadership have been chosen is that conducted studies indicate that these characteristics are very important leadership attributes (Giles, 2016; Bennis, 1999; Boyt, Lusch, & Mejza, 2005). According to Warren Bennis, “exemplary leadership and organizational change are impossible without the full inclusion, initiatives and cooperation of followers” (Bennis, 1999, p. 74). It is believed that team spirit in the organization is the key to achieve common goal of the team (Boyt et al., 2005). In addition, studies indicate that team spirit increases productivity and decreases employee turnover (Kandel & Lazear, 1992). Finally, leader's integrity is a fundamental component of the transformational leadership (MacGregor Burns, 2012, pp. 42–46). While there might be a dispute among scholars with practitioners about the order of importance, they all tend to agree that high ethical standards must be at the top of the scale of leadership competencies (Giles, 2016).

DONALD TRUMP AND HIGH ETHICAL CONDUCT

The analysis of Trump’s high ethical conduct should demonstrate whether the examined president has been guided by high ethical standards and as a result of that was a good example to follow, or if he only publicly declared his principles. In order to accomplish that goal, at the beginning of the examination, it is important to establish how Trump himself defines the government's ethical conduct standards. Moreover, “[t]he ethics of presidents are best understood by looking at the standards they create for those who work for them […]” (Gilman, 1995, p. 58). Does the president think of ethics as a set of laws and regulations, or similar to Bush’s opinion, sees ethical government as “[…] a spirit, an imbued code of conduct, an ethos. It is a climate in which, from the highest to the lowest ranks of policy- and decision-making officials, some conduct is instinctively sensed as correct and other conduct as being beyond acceptance” (Jenks, 2020). It is significant to point out the fact that there are not many quotes about the significance of public officials’ ethical conduct of President Trump. What does this finding say about the analysed president? Does it indicate that for Trump ethical behaviour is not important? If so, what does it imply about Trump’s character? Answers to the raised questions can be found in President Trump’s actions as well as in the opinions of his advisers and scholars who analysed Trump’s leadership.

It is important to begin the examination of the president’s conduct with the study of Trump’s comments regarding various violations by his administration’s
officials of the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch because it shows what importance the president attached to these events. Studies of the president’s responses indicate that Trump’s comments were often “both brazen and bizarrely counterproductive” (Jenks, 2020). For example, when Trump’s Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, was accused of breaking federal ethics rules, because the aide asked the staff members to run errands for him, such as booking restaurant reservations, taking care of Pompeo’s dog and doing shopping, the examined president commented that the allegations are not important and stupid. “This country has a long way to go. The priorities are really screwed up when I read this” (Jenks, 2020). However, Pompeo’s case was not the only example of unethical behavior in Trump’s administration. Investigations reveal that many of Trump’s Cabinet members “has engaged in questionable or unethical conduct” (Scheck, 2018), ranging from the closest president’s advisers to the junior staffers. For example, the administration’s officials such as Dana White, Scott Pruitt, Wilbur Ross, Steven Mnuchin, and Betsy DeVos, to name a few, have all generated a vast amount of controversy over their various unethical actions (Bookbinder, Eisen, & Painter, 2018). Yet, as it has been underlined earlier, “it all starts from the top”, in this particular case, from the president. Having said that, the question remains: was President Trump a good example to follow? There are reasons to believe that President Trump’s behavior regarding a repertoire of various political as well as personal realities, ranging from the President’s relations with the advisers to political decision-making, lacked the ethical principle, as some of his close consultants clearly indicate.

For example, John Bolton, who from April 9, 2018, until September 10, 2019, was the National Security Adviser to President Trump, in his political memoir The Room Where It Happened focuses on Trump’s political judgments and declares that the president consistently made national and foreign policy decisions in order to profit himself personally and politically, as he indicates: “I am hard-pressed to identify any significant Trump decision during my White House tenure that wasn’t driven by re-election calculations” (Bolton, 2020, p. 485), and adds “many of Trump’s national security decisions hinged more on political than on philosophy, strategy, or foreign policy and defense rationales” (Bolton, 2020, p. 489). One of the examples of Trump’s unethical decision-making represents the Trump-Ukraine scandal which led to the president’s First Impeachment in which the House of Representatives charged Trump with two articles: abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. President Trump was accused of withholding military support for Ukraine in order to influence the country’s president
Volodymyr Zelensky – to announce an investigation into Trump’s political rival Joe Biden and to endorse a plot that Ukraine, not Russia, was behind interference in the 2016 presidential election. Trump was acquitted, and two days after the verdict the president dismissed two witnesses who had testified about Trump’s conduct: Ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland and Director for European Affairs for the United States National Security Council, Army Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Vindman. In addition, Trump fired Vindman’s twin brother, Army Lieutenant Colonel Yevgeny S. “Eugene” Vindman, who was appointed as an attorney on the National Security Council staff managing various ethics issues. One could argue that if Trump did not dismiss the administration officials who appeared during the trial, the president would have shown high ethical conduct. In the end, “when an authority shows that he or she is using fair procedures – by behaving ethically, treating people with dignity and respect and being even-handed – then they feel valued by the authority” (Goethals, 2018, p. 515). Even if some do not agree with the point of few, a very high turnover of personnel, specifically among White House staff, which was the case for the Trump administration, might be an indication that the president was not a good leader, who lacked ethics.

Reports indicate that only during the first year of his presidency, over thirty percent of Trump’s original personnel had resigned, been dismissed, or been relocated. “Nine of these positions had turned over at least once during the Trump administration, compared with three at the same point of the Clinton administration, two under President Barack Obama and one under President George W. Bush” (Lu & Yourish, 2020). Moreover, halfway through the term, over 60 percent of President Trump’s senior advisers had left. Among others, the names include the National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, Press Secretary Sean Spicer, the FBI Director James Comey, the White House Chief of Staff John F. Kelly, as well as many close personal Trump consultants such as Keith Schiller, Steve Bannon, Hope Hicks, and John McEntee. Overall, the total turnover of personnel in the Cabinet was an astonishing 92 percent (Tenpas, 2021). In contrast, the number for President Bill Clinton was 70 percent, for President Barack Obama – 71 percent, and for President George W Bush, an impressive 61 percent (Tenpas, 2021). Trump’s advisers, once realized how unfair and unprofessionally the president handles his staffer’s members, did not want to serve him.

In order to illustrate the point, let’s delve into how Trump fired the people who aided him. In most cases, President Trump used Twitter to inform the person as well as the public that he had fired a staffer. For example, John Bolton
was dismissed via Twitter. Trump wrote that John Bolton’s “services are no longer needed at the White House… I disagreed strongly with many of his suggestions, as did others in the Administration” (Groll, Gramer, & Seligman, 2019). Christopher Krebs, the Director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, was an example of another aide who found out on social media that he was fired from his job. Trump tweeted “Krebs has been terminated” (Sanger & Perlroth, 2020).

President Trump tweeted a lot, however, on many occasions his Tweets were insults that included graphic, violent language which is not befitting an incumbent US president. There is an opinion that “Trump’s simple, impulsive, and uncivil Tweets do more than merely reflect sexism, racism, homophobia, and xenophobia; they spread those ideologies like social cancer. […] His Tweets teach us to see others as less-than-human and they inspire hatred and violence” (Ott, 2017). Studies indicate that as president, Trump used Twitter for three purposes: to dissemble and manipulate the American public; to distract public attention; and to discredit others’ credibility (Ott, 2017). For example, using Twitter Trump called “Hillary Clinton ‘crooked’, Ruth Bader Ginsburg ‘dumb’, Elizabeth Warren ‘goofy’, Bernie Sanders ‘crazy’, Ted Cruz a liar and ‘not very presidential’, Megyn Kelly ‘overrated & crazy’, Marco Rubio as ‘little’ and ‘lightweight’, Rand Paul as ‘weird’, and Frank Luntz as a ‘clown’” (Ott, 2017). Trump publicly attacked James Comey as he tweeted: “James Comey can’t define what a leak is. He illegally leaked CLASSIFIED INFORMATION but doesn’t understand what he did or how serious it is. He lied all over the place to cover it up. He’s either very sick or very dumb. Remember sailor!” (Lacy, 2018). Comey in his memoir A Higher Loyalty confirms that he has learned about his firing from the news, as he writes: “All I knew was what was being reported in the media” (Comey, 2018, p. 264). He was totally surprised: “I was fired, effective immediately, by the president who had repeatedly praised me and asked me to stay” (Comey, 2018, p. 264). Following the decision, Comey received calls from Trump’s advisers who in protest and support of him wanted to resign. In A Higher Loyalty, Comey writes: “I took an emotional call from General John Kelly […]. He said he was sick about my firing and he intended to quit in protest. He said he didn’t want to work for dishonorable people who would treat someone in such a manner” (Comey, 2018, p. 264).

In some view, when Trump “labels someone, there is a good chance he is projecting his own thoughts and behaviors” (Elovitz, 2020, p. 46). Trump, who never served in the US Army, nor had the experience to fight in combat, made disparaging
comments about a well-known authority and American hero – Senator John McCain, who fought in the Vietnam War and was taken prisoner of war on October 26, 1967, when his plane was shot down by a missile. McCain spent over five years in prison where he was extremely tortured. Trump said that McCain “was ‘not a war hero’, but ‘a loser’ because he was captured in Vietnam” (Elovitz, 2020, p. 46). One can make a justifiable argument that Trump’s statements about McCain made the examined president unfit to be commander-in-chief. Moreover, Trump’s awful comments demonstrate disrespect and the president was called to apologize to all American veterans, which he never did.

There is also an opinion about Trump that he often made racist comments. For example, Trump’s trusted close personal counsel – Michael Cohen – who worked for the examined president as an attorney from 2006 to 2018 and also served as a vice-president of the Trump Organization, in his memoir Disloyal, writes: “I knew Trump better than anyone else did. In some ways, I knew him better than even his family did, because I bore witness to the real man, in strip clubs, shady business meetings, and in the unguarded moments when he revealed who he really was: a cheat, a liar, a fraud, a bully, a racist, a predator, a con man” (Cohen, 2020, p. 51). In another fragment of Disloyal, Cohen gives an example of Trump’s racist language, as the former aide explains: “there were many times that he made racist comments. What he said in private was far worse than what he uttered in public. […] ‘There was no way I was going to let this black fag win’, he said to me” (Cohen, 2020, p. 51).

Trump used violent language to insult his political opponents. He fired the Cabinet members and the administration’s officials through social media such as Twitter in a disreputable way, instead of through a personal conversation with them. Trump did not keep certain ethical standards in the White House. Moreover, President Trump acted unethically, unlike any other American president in history. Trump’s violent language culminated on January 6, 2021, when the president influenced the crowd of his supporters gathered on the Ellipse just south of the White House to attack the Capital, as he shouted: “We will never give up… We will never concede. It will never happen. You don’t concede when there’s theft involved. Our country has had enough. We will not take it anymore” (Barry & Frenkel, 2021). Prior to the riots, on December 19, 2020, Trump tweeted: “Big protest in D.C. on January 6th… Be there, will be wild!” (Barry & Frenkel, 2021). The lives of five people ended as a mob incited by President Trump stormed the Capitol. As a result, the actions led to Trump’s Second Impeachment. The president was charged with attempting to overturn
the 2020 presidential election results and inciting the attack on the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Consequently, the question arises: can President Trump, whose leadership seems to be unethical, transactional, and ego-driven, arouse team spirit?

DONALD TRUMP AND AROUSING TEAM SPIRIT

As indicated, there are three features that enable a leader to arouse team spirit: a high level of confidence, an active management style, and a magnetic personality. Assuming, without completing a thought investigation which is based on personal interviews with Trump’s advisers on the president’s ethics, that he did not possess high ethical conduct, a question that should be asked is: did President Trump has confidence, energy, and a charismatic personality? Finding answers to the inquiries will help to determine if the examined president was able to arouse team spirit.

Accepting that leader’s body language provides valuable information about a person’s leadership, Trump’s gestures express an enormous amount of nonverbal self-confidence (Beinart, 2019). To illustrate the point, there are many photos of Trump showing the “steeple”, a gesture where the fingers of one hand touch the fingers of the other in a triangle-like pose. In the opinion of body language experts, Barbara and Allan Pease, this move is proof of President Trump’s extreme confidence (2006, p. VIII). “We found that the Steeple was frequently used in superior-subordinate interaction and that it indicates a confident or self-assured attitude. […] People who are confident, superior types often use this gesture and, by doing so, signal their confident attitude” (B. Pease & A. Pease, 2006, p. VIII). In addition to Trump’s body language, the study of the president’s speeches discovers simple, straightforward messages, as well as heavy use of pronouns such as “I” showing that he is not afraid, but confident in his often highly controversial actions. For instance, during one of the president’s announcements, Trump said: “To stop Iran’s path to nuclear weapons and missiles, I withdrew the United States from the terrible nuclear deal, which has very little time remaining, did not allow inspection of important sites, and did not cover ballistic missile” (YouTube, 2018). Yet, a leader who demonstrates confidence at the same time must be humble and admire truth, because without those characteristics he/she will not be able to arouse team spirit. After all, people are not attracted to leaders whose self-confidence is devoid of morals. James Comey knew that and the former FBI
director highlighted it in his memoir: “I see no evidence that a lie ever caused Trump pain, or that he ever recoiled from causing another person pain, which is sad and frightening. Without all those things – without kindnesses to leaven toughness, without a balance of confidence and humility, without empathy, and without respect for truth – there is little chance President Trump can attract people and keep the kind of people around him that every president needs to make wise decisions” (Comey, 2018, p. 268).

The lack of humility has affected the president’s confidence, turning it into overconfidence, which as a result generated real risks for the public. As expected, Trump’s bullishness has negatively impacted the president’s political-decision making. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, President Trump has not listened to health experts and failed to respond adequately by taking aggressive measures to slow the spread of the virus. His lack of actions resulted in many deaths which could have been prevented if Trump highlighted the dangers that the virus presented and advised Americans to take precautions. Instead of taking the threat seriously and acting accordingly, “[w]ith great pride, arrogance, and lack of humility, Trump has attempted to bludgeon the virus out of existence” (Villanueva & Sapienza, 2021, p. 262). Trump’s dealings with COVID-19 displayed the president’s overconfidence’s cousin – narcissism – the real face of his “charismatic” personality.

It is significant to emphasize that narcissism can have both normal and pathological expressions that show adaptive and maladaptive personalities. Scholars indicate that adaptive narcissism “refers to thinking positively about oneself and qualities and is associated with assertiveness, self-confidence, need for achievement, and independence. Maladaptive narcissism refers to the need to be viewed as superior by others and is associated with lower self-esteem and aggressive behavior” (Williams et al., 2020, p. 662). Trump’s actions during the pandemic indicate two important points. First, Trump possesses maladaptive narcissism, and second, more significantly, that “a quiet leader with some solid ideas could be overlooked in favor of a more flamboyant leader with some untested but bold ideas to change the status quo” (Williams et al., 2020, p. 677). Specifically, this can be applied to Dr. Anthony Fauci who served under President Trump as one of the lead members of the White House Coronavirus Task Force. The doctor’s advice was often contradicted by Trump, who mocked Dr. Fauci and used his “narcissistic charisma” to manipulate the American public. During the first eight months of the pandemic, Trump lied about the dangers posed by the coronavirus; intentionally misrepresented facts early on;
disparaged wearing masks; and urged Americans to rally against lockdown rules (Villanueva & Sapienza, 2021, p. 261).

An argument can be made that leader’s charisma must be allied with moral values in order to be used for arousing team spirit and motivating. Trump’s example demonstrates that without the moral dimension, charisma becomes a dangerous “tool” in a leader’s arsenal. Who is to say that Donald Trump’s narcissistic style of leadership will not influence other political leaders who were impressed by what Trump was able to accomplish? After all, it was mostly because of Trump’s charisma that the examined president won the presidential race with a much better qualified and experienced Democratic presidential candidate – Hillary Clinton. However, history did not repeat itself. In 2020, Trump lost to Joe Biden who became the next President of the US. Having that in mind, it is important to examine whether President Trump was able to include his followers in his mission through, among others, giving junior staffers more responsibilities and asking for their opinion, and at the same time not relying only on the advice of his senior advisers. Yet, based on the evidence presented about Trump’s misuse of Twitter, which became the president’s tool to fire his personnel, as well as an instrument to communicate with the public, there are premises to suggest that Trump did not get along well with his personnel, which is crucial in terms of leader’s inclusion. Finally, the staffers must want to work for the president. On the other hand, some facts from the president’s life suggest that Trump used to hire people at Trump Organization as well as in the White House who did not always possess the necessary education nor experience required for the position, which might imply that Trump used to “give a chance”. In the end, when it comes to transformational leadership, one of the three features of intellectual stimulation of transformational leadership – inclusion of followers – is about whether a political leader (in this case, Donald Trump) sends a clear message to his follower and includes them in tasks. So, the questions are: Did the president show the staffers respect and empathy? Did the president make the advisers feel comfortable while being around him? Finally, did the president share power with them?
DONALD TRUMP AND THE INCLUSION OF FOLLOWERS

Donald Trump’s vulgar comments via Twitter as well as the ones made in person directed towards the advisers might indicate that the examined president “at the very least, experience some difficulty in regulating his own emotions. He also appears to have difficulty in focusing constructively on others: his focus seems always to be on himself” (Long, 2020, p. 121). If that is true then Trump might be unable to handle interpersonal relationships with empathy and care, which is crucial for intellectual stimulation. In addition, Trump’s possession of overconfidence and the need to control others makes it very hard to want those around him to work for him, not to mention, to be a part of his vision. Studies emphasize that “[w]hen people have the self-confidence to work with others rather than seeking to control others, this is always apparent. Such people find common ground and create a desire to achieve a shared vision. They are also the people whose opinions seem to carry the most weight in group discussions and problem-solving and they are the people with whom others want to work” (Long, 2020, p. 121). Douglas Long underlines: “No matter whether they have formal leadership roles, they are perceived as leaders by those around them and are respected as such. Others generally consider them as having empathy because they are responsive to the legitimate needs and concerns of those with whom they interact. Because they can understand others’ perspectives, they are able to explain themselves in meaningful ways and this, of course, is an essential skill in getting the best out of those with whom one works. These people think about others’ feelings and respond to them in a manner that demonstrates unconditional respect” (2020, p. 121).

Trump’s close senior advisers experienced the examined president’s lack of empathy on their own skin. For example, Reince Priebus, who served as White House Chief of Staff for President Donald Trump from January 20, 2017, until July 31, 2017, submitted to Trump his resignation and was told by the president that they will both inform the public about Priebus’s departure. However, that did not happen. The president, just minutes after the resignation, tweeted: “I am pleased to inform you that I have just named General/Secretary John F Kelly as White House Chief of Staff. He is a Great American…” (Snyder, 2017). The example demonstrated Trump’s lack of empathy, which resulted in his absence of inclusion of followers, especially in situations that mattered to them, like how the adviser’s departure is carried out. It is believed that “Priebus was concerned about the optics of his departure” (Woodward, 2018, p. 234). The adviser acknowledged
his disappointment when he said: “The president has zero psychological ability to recognize empathy or pity in any way” (Woodward, 2018, p. 235).

At the same time, General Kelly, who replaced Priebus in the position and became the new White House chief of staff, was caught by surprise, as he explains and at the same time apologizes to Priebus: “Reince… I’ve never done this to you. I’d never been offered this job until the tweet came out. I would have told you” (Woodward, 2018, p. 235). One might ask: what kind of inclusion did Trump’s decision represent and what did it signal to the rest of the advisors? First, the examined president did not keep his promise to Priebus, who asked him to wait and inform the public about the resignation together with Trump. And second, the president did not consult with General Kelly about his appointment but hired him. “The president’s tweet was the first he knew of it” (Wolf, 2018, p. 218). How is it possible that Trump filled such an important position as the White House chief of staff without even talking to the candidate? What does it show about the president? First of all, it proves that the examined president “has adopted a decision-making style less reliant on information and more dependent on instinct” (Barber, 2019, p. VIII). And second, more importantly, it shows that Trump did not care about other people’s feelings, but was mainly concerned about his needs. It is believed that Trump “is motivated primarily by the power to the extent that relationships are welcomed only if they recognize and heed his power and authority” (Long, 2020, p. 91). If that is true about Trump, then the question is whether he is capable of possessing the feature of inclusion of followers.

One of Trump’s former close aides, who worked for him at the Trump Organization, said that: “He says he’s going to get the best people around. But he doesn’t do that – he never has. […] Because he doesn’t listen to them, and then they leave. And if anybody is ever credited with doing anything good, he gets rid of them because he hates when anybody else gets the credit” (Laughland, 2016). A leader’s inclusion requires listening to his/her followers because only then a leader knows a person’s strengths and weaknesses and based on provided information he/she can find the best way for an individual to contribute to the organization that the leader commands. Without attentive listening to a follower, a leader cannot satisfy one of the most important follower’s needs – inclusion. In order to do that, a leader must treat followers with dignity, and be able to notice follower’s individuality as well as the values he/she can contribute to the group. Moreover, as highlighted before, followers must trust a leader.

The results so far indicate Trump’s lack of empathy, and his disposition to lie to and manipulate others to achieve self-oriented goals. There is also evidence that
at least some of Trump’s senior advisers did not trust the examined president. For example, James Comey admitted that after every personal meeting with Trump, he wrote a memo, something he has never done before in his conversations with other presidents. The reason for Comey’s action is that he did not trust Trump, as he wrote in *A Higher Loyalty*: “I was discussing those things with a person whose integrity I had come to seriously doubt after watching him campaign for president and since. I needed to protect the FBI and myself because I couldn’t trust this person to tell the truth about our conversations. As was my practice, I printed two copies of the memo” (Comey, 2018, p. 244). Based on the FBI director’s remarks, it is hard to imagine that an aide like Comey who had serious concerns about Trump’s integrity would want to be given more power and responsibilities by the president. Comey was not comfortable around Trump, and he did not feel “included”. After a few meetings with him, Comey did not even want to spend time with the president, as he emphasized in the memoir: “another visit with the president was not high on my priority list. So I said no – thanks” (Comey, 2018, p. 246). The FBI director compared meetings with Trump to the ones he had with the examined Bush and Obama, as he explained: “I cannot recall ever seeing them stationed at their desk. They instead sat in an armchair by the fireplace and held meetings in a more open, casual arrangement. […] There the president can try to be one of a group and draw the others out to tell him the truth” (Comey, 2018, p. 247). Trump was not trying to be one of the group and by doing so, was not trying to make others feel included. The examined president was distant and very formal, as Comey indicated: “But when the president sits on a throne, protected by a large wooden obstacle, as Trump routinely did in my interactions with him, the formality of the Oval Office is magnified and the chances of getting the full truth plummet” (Comey, 2018, p. 247). In contrast to Trump, Bush and Obama acted professionally, but at the same time, when the situation allowed, were “informal” with the adviser.

**CONCLUSION**

To recapitulate, the examination of the leadership characteristics of President Donald Trump described him as a leader who did not improve the leadership of his advisers. Trump was not always guided by high ethical conduct and, in addition, did not possess the other two features of transformational leadership, namely, the inclusion of followers and arousing team spirit. The examination of
Donald Trump’s high ethical conduct showed that, while serving as the President of the United States, on many occasions he did not follow the standards of ethical leadership. In contrast to President Clinton, one could argue that President Trump has committed more major moral failures, and as a consequence was impeached twice, not once. As for the inclusion of followers and arousing team spirit, Trump was seen by some of his subordinates as an arrogant, narcissistic leader, who often acted unpredictably and immorally. As a result, Trump was unable to regularly motivate the staffers to work as a team, as well as the president’s advisers did not feel included in his goals.

The author’s analysis of Trump’s leadership has examined only three of the twelve features of the four components of transformational leadership, namely, high ethical conduct, the inclusion of followers, and arousing team spirit. In order to have a complete picture of Trump’s leadership, there is a need to analyze the remaining nine features of Bernard M. Bass’s model of transformational leadership. In addition, the author’s preliminary analysis of Trump’s leadership characteristics was based on research materials that mostly come from two main types of sources, which are as follows: scientific studies on the leadership of the examined president, written by presidential scholars; and memoirs, statements, opinions and press interviews of his advisers, as well as close associates. In order to fully analyze the characteristics of President Trump’s leadership, it is recommended to arrange interviews and speak with former senior and junior presidential advisers such as Mike Esper, Mike Pompeo, John F. Kelly, and Nikki Haley. After conducting those interviews, there may be further support for the obtained information. Talking to the closest associates of the mentioned advisers will help in understanding whether or not the consultants improved any characteristics of leadership thanks to President Trump’s leadership.

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