**Darla’s note: This paper exemplifies a creative approach to a well-known artifact (*The Office*) along with a strong analysis that effectively used scholarly sources to support that analysis.**

**This paper is shorter than your assignment because the assignment requirements were different at that time. The section headings are basic, which was a lost opportunity to advance the argument. The paper needed a stronger review of literature before the deep analysis.**

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Coms 321 Rhetoric Discourse

Date

The World’s Best Boss: Michael Scott

**Explanation**

In NBC’s television sitcom *The Office*, Michael Scott appears as a fictional character. His character is portrayed by Steve Carell, but based on David Brent. Michael was the main character in the program’s first seven seasons. He at first served as branch manager in two stints from the pilot episode to season five and the other being in the episode *Broke* in season six. Michael was born in 1962 and raised by his stepfather in Pennsylvania. As a child, he always thought and even talked about him being lonely. He also claimed to have English, Irish, German and Scottish ancestry in the episode *Diversity Day*. He further alluded to the fact that he had some aspect of being a Native American. It also is later revealed that he had a sister with an older brother that is only mentioned once in the episode Email Surveillance. Michael is the world’s best boss in spite of all his antics and the decisions he made that were highly criticized.

The Office has been ranked as one of the most successful comedies (Craft, Par 7). This success came mostly from the unique characters, one of which was Michael Scott. He was loved by both characters and viewers for his exceptional management skills. Many were lured into falling in love with the show by his heart and the management skills that he taught many and was later termed as the world’s best boss. Even though, as a manager, he made some bad decisions and sometimes did not do well in his employee management, he recorded the highest earning in his branch. This basically means that there must have been something he was doing so well that was not noticed by the employee. Michael valued relationship and good ones for that matter. He strived to make the workplace as fun and possible and have everyone interact freely with others.

It can also be noted that Michael was not afraid of embarrassment. The last thing he wanted to portray and cultivate as a culture was that he was strict and did not know how to let loose. He once started a dance in his which was necessitated by the success of his team. I believe that such actions helped propel his team to success. Michael’s life at the program was dedicated to fostering healthy and strong relationships with one another. He always valued communication as a tool for continuity of relationships. Most of his relationship were cultivated at the workplace. In one of his quotes, Michael says, ‘Would I rather be feared or loved? Easy. Both. I want people to be afraid of how much they love me’ I believe Michael is multi-faceted and develops over time into a man that forms close ties with his coworkers, many of who despised him at first.

Michael loved his job more than he loved money and other things outside the office. His passion manifested well when he managed people. The countless hours he spent, all the fun he had at the office are all clear indications of the passion he had in managing people. Such management is contagious, as many people would want to work harder knowing that their boss cares and thus they should not let him down. He also believes that having more money translates to more problems. Even as a manager, Michael was always ambitious and active in other passions. He at some point started writing the book *Somehow I manage* and also coined a play for his company. He was always motivated to go beyond and above with many of his non-work related passions, playing a big role in his life. He did not allow his work to take over and control his life, but let other things matter. This let him gain respect from viewers.

Meetings, for Michael, did not result in the productivity that they are supposed to. He, thus, resorted to adding some variety to keep the employees engaged. As a manager, he wanted the employees to love their work more than any other thing. The result was that all employees at Dunder Mifflin were all attentive and loved to engage each other while at meetings. This was further propelled by his love to complement and encourage the employees. When Pam’s art was in a show, she was upset by what Oscar’s friend said and no one could calm her down. Michael saved the day by not only helping her outside the job, but also making her know how highly he thought of her. He even later went on to purchase one of his paintings. As a result of this encouragement, she later went to art school and followed her dreams. Michael’s love for work relationships also saw him transfer Pam to the sales department where she would better showcase her skills.

Michael showed love and care to his employees as though they were his own family. This is in spite of the fact that he sometimes acted inappropriately. His intentions were always good which offered important lessons to the employees and viewers. This was probably the reason for the exemplary work by his team as they viewed him as family and that he valued them. He also cultivated a good working environment and working relations that and employees feel safe and that they can always rely on one another together with their boss. He was the best manager Dunder Mifflin could ever get. There was absolutely nothing that he thought his team could not accomplish. He believed in them and was not afraid to make them know. He also believed that he could do and accomplish anything in life. Al though he had some few moments of nervousness, he always remained confident and focused.

The kind of confidence Michael had led him in creating his own supply firm that brought him huge profits when it was bought by Dunder Mifflin. The confidence also helped him deliver at the workplace as his team borrowed from the same. Michael also mastered the art of faking and acting as though he knew things even when he did not have an idea about something ([Heitzman](https://www.inc.com/author/adam-heitzman), para 12). At some point, every worker will have issues with their colleagues and not know how to navigate it. His confidence made people believe he knew everything and that his decisions were well informed and thus the best. In real sense, Michael was just confident and believed in himself. He also taught his employees not to always expect accolades whenever they did anything good. During his reign Michael did not receive the well-deserved appreciation especially from his employees. This did not, however, dampen his zeal and mood while at Dunder Mifflin. He continued working and fostering good relationship even when he should have been mad at everyone.

**Deep analysis**

*The Office* is a comedy show set up in America and follows office lives of employees at Dunder Mifflin, which is a small paper firm located in Scranton. The office is portrayed as dysfunctional with Michael heading it. The viewers are treated to a range of comedy with Michael acting inappropriately and making decisions seen by many to be dry and unintelligent. Many people thus downplay him as being a poor leader and having a role of a lovable fool. Closer examination of the show will, however, reveal otherwise. The manager has several leadership skills that are hard to recognize at first and requires one to closely monitor his life both in and outside the workplace. First, Michael values relationship. As earlier deduced, he greatly inspires his employees to value the input of each, respecting and helping one another. This is perhaps the reason he runs one of the most successful branches in the firm. He also has a very close relationship with the team. According to Hao and Yazdanifard (p. 3), good leadership has the leader having the ability to relate well with other people while influencing them for change of value, beliefs and behavior.

Secondly, Michael mastered the art of creating good roles and having a strategy for his team ([Norris](https://medium.com/@claynorris), para 3). He acted as being the person most responsible for creating roles and strategy for his teammates as a branch manager. He also created a culture in the firm that realizes everyone has some vital information and thus there is a need to listen actively to everyone. As a manager, Michael also tasked himself with listening to everyone’s issues, even if they are not related to work. He made sure that every employee was respected and given the same treatment. Peoples’ inputs were highly encouraged with opinions being given the deserved attention. Such kind of acts is what creates a successful team. Michael always sort people’s opinions and acted in making decisions based on the views gotten from his employees. This, Michael learns over a period of time as he started off as a not so lovable manager.

Michael is a perfect example of a manager who led through his own actions. He always told his employees of his experience as a salesman for the company. His experiences encouraged the employees to achieve more and never lose hope. The better part of the show only has four employees in the sales department. Phyllis and Stanley had been in the company for a long period of time while Dwight and Jim were younger and liked to always compete with one another. As a model, Michael uses his expertise and experience to guide Jim and Dwight. Dwight even sees him as the ultimate goal. He perceives him to be a womanizer owning the manager role and tittle that he strives mots to have. Jim, on the other hand, sees Michael for who he truly is (Kyle para 2-3). He thinks Michael is flawed and thus tries to learn from his mistakes while following his own success path.

Meetings, in Michael’s reign, were highly valued and utilized throughout the episodes. He used them to prove to the other employees that he valued their opinions and always wants to hear their input on the company. The frequent meetings in the conference rooms created a balanced participation platform while having employees discuss the team’s strategy and surface ushered information. On many occasions, the meetings awkward whenever too much information was relayed. This did not, however, overshadow Michael’s true and pure intentions for his coworkers. As a manager, he highly valued transparency and always wanted to hear what the other employees had to say (Jaremko-Greenwold, para 4). Such traits together with his consistency are what made him a good manager while allowing his team to excel. It also led to a change of perception among both the employees he worked with and other company staff who had viewed him as a mediocre who would not succeed in leading the team.

Michael strived hard to encourage and have his team look awkward. Michael took a different managerial approach. According to Avolio et al. (pp 421-449), many managers and other upper level staff would always want to think about the future of the company together with their projected revenues, earnings and overall growth. This was not Michael. This does not, however, mean that he did not think forward about Dunder Mifflin. It is just that his priorities and focus were on the growth of the employees and not just the company. He believed the firm would grow if employees were contented with where they were. In fact, the majority of the show is about office relationships. Jim and Pam become the center of attraction as the show progresses as they portray an obvious chemistry between them. The first seasons have Pam being engaged to some other person who was evidently not meant for her. Jim, however, has some glimmer of hope because Pam’s fiancée did not want to commit to a wedding date at first.

The episode *Booze Cruise* sees Pam’s boyfriend propose and finally set a wedding date. All this is done in the office and with the employees witnessing. Jim later leaves the party and runs into Michael confessing to him about his love for Pam. Jim does this expecting that Michael will console him or even give him one of his many meaningless quotes. Michael does not take that path. He instead encourages him to never give up on anything that means enough to him. Jim lightens up and is left encouraged to still pursue the love he has for Pam. Later on the show, Jim manages to win her over and they get married. This might not have happened if Michael was not outward looking in this episode. Michael had realized that words can do a lot in a person’s life. There is a need for leaders to carefully choose their words as they can make or break someone (Yukl, pp. 708-722)

From the above discussions, we can clearly deduce that Michael had a well-developed skill of motivating people. Encouraging a group of employees in a small company located in Scranton, Pennsylvania was not a small task and thus has a lot of challenges. Sometimes motivations turn out to be a discouragement depending on the choice of words and the approach employed. The constant comments from the other employees in the firm reminded viewers that there was nothing in Scranton that is worth worrying about and that nobody dreams of a career at a company that deal with paper. Michael is tasked at the start of every season to explain his job. He struggled for some time, but finally admits that he is boring himself with trying to explain his job as a salesman. This is one of the challenges Michael faces as he starts on a low motivational environment and is required to encourage and turn the table around within the other episodes as the season progresses.

The transformational leadership has it that for one to inspire others, they have to rely on shared team values and identify, have a common purpose for the team, and cultivate a strong team cohesion and camaraderie (Madanchian et al. pp. 1043-1048). Michael cultivates these in his team throughout the seasons. Even though the team exhibits countless differences in personality and in the office, they have a shared identity as one family. The same sense of community is shared in all relationships formed throughout the show. Michael further makes it clear on his emphasis of a strong office community over a fragmented and competitive traditional office. The firm also has a clear goal that makes them strive to remain competitive in the industry while continuing to improve its bottom line. Furthermore, compelling work has to be clear, challenging and consequential as at Michael’s company. The roles of the employees are clear in that they are expected to sell paper while ensuring the clients receive them in time.

**Conclusion**

*The Office* is a satirical television show that was largely created by writers hired by the company. It was a massive hit and was viewed by many people. Michael Scott was the main character that brought life and comedy into the show. A successful leader does not therefore need to be an iconic person that does not engage in any wrong (Lyne de Ver, and Kennedy, pp 20-40). Even as a leader, Michael was always on the wrong. He, however, used his skills to propel his team into success. In this paper, much focus has been put on his motivational aspect, creation of ideas and team composition. I also recognize that there are more traits that Michael possesses, which are beneficial and could be employed by any given person in a managerial position or one aspiring to be a manager. Michael also worked hard to create strong relationships exhibiting laughter and fostering a positive work environment. At the end of the show, we see the team coming together for one last time as employees.

Michael had a mixture of technical and social skills. He weighed competency against likability in a bid to be a well-rounded team manager. He did this strategically even in his hiring of salesmen and accountants. A perfect example is in his main salesmen, Dwight and Jim, who had very strong communication skills and always got their points out with ease characteristic of good salespeople. Numbers and details drove Michael’s accountants. On tax-day, they stayed overnight to make sure that the office and its books were well set. And as a good leader, Michael stayed with them until the job was done. Such actions are what led to unity between the members and their manager and spilled over to the daily running of the company. Michael also tried very hard to have his team be diversified in background and life stories. For instance, Bernard is a graduate while Darrel did not even attend college. This is in spite of the fact that they hold the same positions and work together.

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