Effective Leadership in *Arrival*

If people could tell their future, would they still live their normal life, or would they change their way of living? This question is a common thought throughout the movie *Arrival*, because of the protagonist being able to see what her future holds. In the movie *Arrival*, produced by Denis Villeneuve, Louise, the main actor, experiences challenges that only makes her stronger. Louise uses her mental and physical strength to find out why these Heptapods have come to Earth. This movie shows that any gender can be an effective leader, but they must have knowledge, determination, and leadership skills that resembles the character of Louise.

Louise Banks has been gifted with knowledge that will get her far in life. During the first part of the movie, it shows her teaching a college class. Louise is a professor in linguistics, which is the study of language and its structure. With that being said, she is very talented in the field of language and communication. It’s not easy communicating with people who don’t speak the same language as everyone else. It’s hard to even imagine the language barrier between humans and Heptapods. Louise Banks says, “If you learn it, when you really learn it, you begin to perceive time the way that they do, so you can see what’s to come. But time, it isn’t the same form them. Its non-liner” (*Arrival* 2016). She was up for a challenge and she really wanted to dig in and communicate with the Heptapods. Louise may not have known exactly what she was doing, or even know her next step, but she used everything she learned to get the answer everyone needed. As stated in the article Lost in Translation by David Lane, “There are many
things in Denis Villeneuve’s *Arrival* to admire, the chief of which is seeing a film whose central character is female- and whose intelligence is both self-evident and acknowledged by all other characters” (Lane 111). It takes a special type of women to use her knowledge and as a leader on a task that has never been completed before.

Calvin Powell once said, “A dream doesn’t become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.” Louise was determined to find out the answer to the question, “why are they here?” These Heptapods have randomly come to Earth and the military men only know a few people that could be able to communicate with these creatures. Louise is determined to get an answer out of the Heptapods and she doesn’t give up. Even when she felt like it was impossible to speak their language, she tried many techniques that she learned previously to get a single movement out of them. During the first scene of the movie, Louise is shown losing the most precious gift she has been given, her daughter. Later on, the viewers find out this was a flash forward, meaning Louise was able to see into the future. Even though she knew she was going to conceive a child who would later die, she was determined not to change her life to avoid obstacles. When Louise’s world seems like it’s spinning she says, “Despite knowing the journey and where it leads, I embrace it, and I welcome every moment of it” (*Arrival* 2016). Although it’s hard to not know what is going to happen in life, enjoy every moment like Louise did. She was up for a challenge and knew she had to be determined to get the job done, for not only herself, but the rest of the world.

Not only does Louise have knowledge and determination, but she has also been gifted with outstanding leadership skills. It takes someone special to be a leader like Louise Banks. In the movie *Arrival*, she shows the viewers that a both men and women can be leaders. In the article written by Anthony Lane he says, “The test, of course, is what happens when you enter
Once Louise enters the craft, her leadership skills are put to a test. Any person can be a leader, but it’s very important to be a positive leader. Louise has to come up with her own type of communication that will be easiest to translate to the Heptapods. She fights until the very end of the movie, using everything she’s learned and put together over the years to finally get an answer. Throughout the movie people would discourage her and tell her they were going to shoot up the pods since they can’t tell her why they are here. Louise quickly uses her skills to call other countries and gets them to stop the attack they are plotting. She quickly enters the Heptapod knowing her time is limited and calls General Shang. Louise begins to speak in Mandarin to communicate with him and tells him what information she has gathered. Eventually, Louise gets an answer and the whole movie starts to make sense. She states, “It’s not a weapon it’s a gift” (Arrival 2016). She realizes these circles that the Heptapods have been drawing for her doesn’t mean any harm, it’s a gift to humans. Louise was a leader who fought for the answer, because this was her job and she wanted to finish it.

In an interview done by Sam Lansky, Louise Banks says, “The more you invest in somebody else’s experience, the more you might change your own” (Lansky). Even though Louise Banks had help from a physicist, Ian Donnelly, she still showed an amazing amount of leadership in the movie. Unfortunately, there’s a lot of pressure on Louise Banks, but she doesn’t let that stop her. This movie shows that any gender can be an effective leader, but they must have knowledge, determination, and leadership skills that resembles the character of Louise. Louise Banks, in the movie Arrival, shows a vivid example to never give up the fight until the goal is reached.
Works Cited


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