

Annals of Theoretical Psychology 15

Matthew G. Clark  
Craig W. Gruber *Editors*

# Leader Development Deconstructed

 Springer

# Annals of Theoretical Psychology

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# Preface

Warren Bennis stated, “*Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.*” For all leaders, regardless of where you have led, having clarity of vision and purpose is universal. Whether it’s Jim Collin’s BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) or Peter Drucker’s pointed and inspirational mission statement that fits on a t-shirt, the common expectation is that leaders must have a clear concept for what the future looks like when they are fulfilling their purpose. This vision for a future and a clarity of mission have been repeatedly reinforced in leadership studies as critical for leaders.

Likewise, who is going to invest in a company that doesn’t have a clear and compelling business plan? While the answer depends somewhat on the type of investor, broad investment will be limited if there is no clear plan for how the company leadership will convert investment into a return. This is the case because the perception is that a leader without a plan is destined to fail. Even if the plan isn’t followed exactly, the process has value as the activity of planning builds capacity.

The problem is that leader studies and business are effectively operating today with limited clarity of vision or understanding of mission and virtually no business plans. In the United States alone companies spend tens of billions of dollars investing in leader and leadership development. The military also spends an incredible amount of time and resources developing and mentoring leaders. And yet, the structures and plans for leader development are poor to nonexistent. If we will not accept leaders without a vision, clarity of mission and purpose, or at least a plan, then why do we accept that approach when it comes to leader and leadership development? Unless people serve in large hierarchical organizations, the concept of focused planning to grow and develop leaders is generally far from the minds of leaders and managers.

Fortunately, leadership theories provide leaders a simple vision for what leadership can or should look like. Effectively, in a scientific sense, these “grand theories” of leadership, like Transformational Leadership, Authentic Leadership, or Adaptive Leadership (to only name a few), present a concept that some leaders research and attempt to employ. Yet, when it comes to leader and leadership development, more focused theories are not being employed. There are only a handful of theories for leader or leadership development, most of which are also more like grand theories

that are difficult to implement. The problem this presents is that there are issues translating from concept to reality. In scientific terms, there is a lack of “middle range theories” for the areas of leader and leadership development. In more practical terms, leaders are not able to go from a vision to mission to a business plan that can lead to tangible results. This leaves organizational leaders and managers on their own for figuring out how to develop others.

This volume is not intended to solely highlight the faults with leader and leadership development or to be disparaging in form. Instead, the purpose of this volume is to start a conversation around the topics of leader and leadership development. Specifically, we feel that there is a compelling need for more focused attention to the vision, mission, and business plans that can produce exceptional leaders of character in a complex and dynamic world. Because this volume is only starting a conversation, it will not address every issue related to leader and leadership development. Instead, this volume provides examples of the challenges and opportunities surrounding leader development as well as possible solutions for creating innovative and meaningful development and building better leaders regardless of the starting material. An additional challenge is doing this while simultaneously recognizing possible ends, ways, and means for creating positive change in a volatile and uncertain environment involving multiple domains.

The editors and authors of this volume invite further dialogue, discussion, and constructive debate around these important topics. Only through your positive engagement in this process can we find meaningful ways to tackle what is broadly accepted as a “wicked problem.” Bringing your insight, ingenuity, and expertise from academia or business to a shared conversation can help us all build better middle range theories that can promote the vision, mission, and business plans of leaders in all types of industries. We look forward to your participation.

For their courage in participating in this conversation around leader development, we are deeply grateful to all of the contributors of this volume. They are passionate and committed individuals who wish to make a difference so that all can benefit from the fruits of that labor. We are also grateful to the families of these authors because, as we discuss at various points in the book, leader and leadership development can begin when people are very young. Therefore, leader development begins with families. We are grateful to the families involved. This same gratitude extends to our own families. Katie and Heather, first and foremost, for their incredible support, and secondarily to our children for the times we were away to explore these ideas and the people who create them. We look forward to using what we learned through this project with all those involved in developing quality leaders and followers. Lastly, we are incredibly grateful to you the reader for your interest in leader development and for joining us in making innovation in leader and leadership development a priority. Your engagement on this topic and participation in the dialogue is what is truly needed to move this topic forward in the complex world of today and tomorrow. Thank you.

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# Chapter 1

## Deconstructing Leader Development: An Introduction

Matthew G. Clark

In the mid-21<sup>st</sup> century, people will look back on our present [leadership development] practices as primitive (p.xix).

Gardner (1990)

Referencing the quote above, leader and leadership developers David Day, John Fleenor, Leanne Atwater, Rachel Sturm, and Rob McKee concluded a recent review in *Leadership Quarterly* (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014) covering the preceding 25 years by saying that the field of leader and leadership development is “still immature” (p. 80). They further concluded that “the field is replete with opportunities for researchers and theorists ... to progress [leader and leadership development] to a less primitive state.” These thoughts pointedly express the main purpose of *Leader Development Deconstructed*. The purpose of this book is to highlight the increasing need for theory and research in areas linked to leader and leadership development for use by scholars *and* practitioners. This book cannot address all aspects of both of these topics fully, but it can start the conversation with a greater focus on leader development. Even on this topic, we can only focus the conversation on elements that are either absent or underrepresented in the literature and practice. If effective in achieving this goal, there will be more interest in theory and the collection of evidence that can be put to use more quickly to effect change at the points of greatest need. From a business perspective, this challenge and goal are akin to getting the members of your team to understand the importance of vision, clarity of intent, and strategic thinking and how it impacts operations.

We intend to expand the discussion of leader development by encouraging engagement in this broad topic by individuals from across the behavioral sciences, education, and business of leader and leadership development. We begin our exploration by defining terms and deconstructing (i.e., focusing attention in detail) on what is truly meant by leader development and where we can begin as a community of scholars, researchers, educators, and practitioners. This topic requires more

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attention due to the increasing complexity of leading in the modern world with a further need to explore how to do leader development in a multitude of contexts and levels (Day & Harrison, 2007; White, 2011; O'Connell, 2014).

As recognized by Day, Harrison, and Halpin (2009), where it occurs, leader and leadership development most often is realized through training, education, and doctrine. A small group of executives may also benefit from executive coaching, but leader development is largely unmoored from relevant theories that can guide development of leaders over time and at every stage. While it is believed that any leader and leadership development helps the organizations which invest in it, the challenge is that without clear theory, research, or evidence-based concepts, the investment may be a wasted or at least an extremely inefficient exercise. Yet, according to estimates from 2013 (Elmholdt, Elmholdt, Tanggaard, & Holmgaard Mersh, 2016; O'Leonard & Krider, 2014), corporations in the United States alone invested over \$15 billion annually on leader and leadership development—therefore, the outlay suggests an obvious need. Adding to this observation, the amount expended was a substantial increase from the previous year suggesting a growing demand.

This seemingly incongruent situation reveals that there is a strong practical need beyond academic curiosity for both research and theory related to leader development. The lack of a theoretical footing with meaningful and focused theories, constructs, and frameworks for the business of leader development leads to an inability to clearly articulate the strategy of leader development in all types of organizations. In a free-market sense, this should promote the development of useful content that is both academic and practical. And still our understanding of the behavioral science of leader and leadership development is seen as “primitive.” This problem was also noted by Patricia O'Connell who wrote, “Leader development, even more than leadership, lacks definition, theory, agreed upon constructs, and effective processes” (O'Connell, 2014, p. 184). However, a strong practical need does not necessarily lead to a clear academic push. In this area, there is more of a practical pull for the content that defines the areas of leader and leadership development, and only on an as-needed basis or just-in-time manner. In short, it is not surprising that a survey of 1000 senior executives revealed that 44% responded that development in their organizations was poor and 54% indicated that it was ineffective (Borderless Research, 2016). The lack of focused and practical leader development theories could be a significant driver of this problem.

Exacerbating the challenge of leader and leadership development, a business-oriented approach and scholarly methodology are not always consistent. Business generally focuses on rapid return on investment. Unfortunately, this investment can be more about dollars and cents than about what really works and why. Scholarly scientific pursuits are generally focused on truth and describing and elucidating the unknown with only limited pressure for an answer in the near term, at least as long as it leads to publications and positive attention for the academic institution sponsoring the research. Excepting a few strategic thinkers and actors, business expects results quickly and academics are deliberate and patient. Despite their different cultures both the academic and business worlds have the potential to gain from a detailed and focused examination of relevant theories, constructs, or frameworks

that support and guide leader and leadership development. This publication serves to facilitate that conversation between such disparate groups and cultures to advance this topic.

## 1.1 Leader Versus Leadership

Likely, part of the reason that leader development has garnered only limited attention as a topic is that the terms may have been too broad to pin down for scholarly examination. Lack of clarity about “operational definitions” for these terms means that they likely have little functional utility for businesses and the individuals involved. The sheer number of definitions for the terms *leadership* and *leader* alone is evidence of the problem this presents (Northouse, 2016). And still, some have argued that the definition of leadership is in the midst of a paradigm shift (Day & Harrison, 2007; White, 2011; O’Connell, 2014). An assessment of leadership and what it means to be a leader are used interchangeably and freely, only creating confusion, which is then exacerbated by a persistent desire to create the need for changing paradigms.

Concepts of effective leader behavior and leadership are regularly confused and applied to a host of situations, organizations, and competencies. Illustrating this, domain- or job-specific competence is regularly conflated to be clear evidence of leadership potential in a developing leader when it may have a limited role in *leader competence*. Unfortunately, this confusion about job-specific knowledge and competence and leader competence, and the confusion between developing “leaders” versus “leadership,” only adds complexity to an already complicated topic. For that reason, we are starting primarily by focusing attention in this volume on leader development, which obviously involves two aspects, the *leader* and *development*. This point may not be so obvious when it comes to implementation. Perhaps more succinctly, Day and Sin (2011) captured the challenge when they wrote, “Part of the difficulty is that it requires melding one fuzzy construct (leadership) with something that is equally complex and nebulous (development)” (p. 546). Essentially the term leader is more specific than leadership. This volume is not primarily focused on leadership broadly, nor is it focused on job-specific competence that generally develops through training, education, and on-the-job experience. Instead, the volume is focused more on leader competencies, which is a separate and distinct type of competence within individuals. Consideration of the differences between leader and leadership starts to reveal the complexity in the topics.

There are many definitions of what it means to be a “leader.” Before addressing the more focused topic of leading, we must address the broader umbrella of “leadership.” For the purpose of this volume, we have adapted the four elements highlighted by the often referenced Northouse (2016) who writes that *leadership* includes the following components:

- (a) *Leadership* is a process [between leaders and followers]
- (b) *Leadership* involves influence



- (c) *Leadership* occurs in groups
- (d) *Leadership* involves common goals (p. 6)

Therefore, for this text we have chosen the following definition:

*A leader is a person who identifies needs, focuses thinking, and influences others to create change through coordinated action toward a common purpose or shared set of goals in a complex environment.*

Thus, rather than emphasizing the processes of leadership, the focus of this volume is on *the leader as an individual and how leader capacity develops in complex social constructs*. Also, as highlighted by Northouse (2016), the leader negotiates the process with followers. Followers and their development must also be included in the context of leader development because we take the perspective for this volume that we all begin the process of leader development as followers. Adding to Northouse's components, we have chosen to focus on aspects related to the perspective of the leader or follower as individuals rather than the broad social, group, and organizational aspects of leadership. Thus, where appropriate, we have invited authors to consider the leader, the follower, their behaviors, the context, and other aspects of the environment that clearly have an impact on the development of the individuals who become leaders.

For the purpose of this volume and to be able to effectively use the concepts herein for development of individuals, *leader development* must be differentiated from *leadership development*. According to Day (2000), leader development is focused on "human capital" and is about developing the person while leadership development is about developing the system and processes related to leading and following. Per that definition and updated review (Day et al., 2014), human capital is focused on the individual, their personal power, trustworthiness, intrapersonal competence, self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation. This is an important distinction and should help frame that the concepts in this publication are primarily focused on how they affect *individuals* rather than teams, groups, or organizations.

While this text is primarily focused on concepts related to the individual as a leader, the construct of "leadership," or the environment and related "social capital" (Day, 2000), cannot be completely avoided. Where necessary, contributors will address touch points where the systems and capacity for leadership development connect to development in individuals. This point becomes particularly relevant when we start to consider relational aspects of individual leader behavior and especially the environment or context in which leader development occurs. Both of these elements are likely to interact and separating them completely is difficult, but the contributors to this volume have all tried to keep their theories and proposals focused on the impacts on growing individuals, even when there is a broader impact on relevant systems, processes, and related social capital. Contributors also not only explore the scholarly view of leader development, but they also examine the practical influences and processes involved in developing the individuals who become leaders over time. This is where development of leaders is intended to engage practitioners in education and business.

## 1.2 The Challenge of “Development”

Differentiating leader and leadership is only half of the focus of this volume. The other half is development. In brief, development might be captured simply as “change” or “the way that people grow.” However, this oversimplification neglects the various challenges of development, particularly when change is considered across a life span and various environments. We note that leader development does not have to be directly tied to the age of the developing individual. While leader development could be considered to track with human development, it does not have to. It is clear that all life experience will likely influence the developmental time course of leader development in an individual, which adds to the complexity of change.

Consequently, it turns out that development is the most challenging aspect of the topic. For the purpose of this volume, the definition for the overarching approach to development is simply captured as “positive change over time.” This change over time will need to consider the context and starting point of each individual and his or her environment. Yet, at least change over time provides the opening for considering the complexity involved in identifying where a person is developmentally at any given moment as a leader, and the interaction he or she has with other individuals, networks, organizations, and the environment, which could also be changing. Therefore, because the final objective is quality leading and leadership, this change must be towards positive growth with socially accepted and connected leaders in a complex and ever-changing environment.

With a myriad of potential variables, to keep the level of complexity manageable, we have chosen the focal points of the person, behavior, and environment as the frames of reference for examining leader development. Like Bandura’s concept of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1978), an argument can be made that a change in any one area creates a change in the other areas over a given period of time. While simplifying to a point, using only three frames that are fully reciprocal, the opportunities are still virtually endless, but at least the domain for the presented concepts can be cast into areas for potential use by practitioners. In the end, not only is the environment complex and volatile, but the individual is also complex and ever-changing. The frames at least provide an initial construct and focus for organizing conversation around leader development.

Therefore, taken together, *leader development* is effectively about learning to manage change in one’s self and environment while also learning to consider and involve others. This includes developing a personal capacity to orient and align people within an ever-changing environment towards shared goals. Due to the complexity, each of the elements needs to be deconstructed into components so that they can eventually be reconstructed as a cohesive whole again in some useful manner for academics and practitioners alike. Reconstruction is beyond the scope of this volume, but starting with the end objective in mind will help with reconstruction at some future point as we learn more about the topic.

The process of deconstructing leader development is not trivial. To manage the complexity, we have chosen to engage those who have studied relevant topics in depth and developed appropriate theoretical constructs, usually within the space of some aspect of psychology or other behavioral science. That is, the majority of the contributors to this volume did not obtain their credentials through leadership studies. Instead, they have brought their focused expertise from their discipline and experience-in-detail to the topic of leader development. The intent was to take a creative and original approach that might challenge the current positions held within leadership studies. The authors and chapters included herein were selected to address topics raised by Day (2000) and Dalakoura (2010) related specifically to human capital. By bringing their respective expertise in focused areas that are not specifically constrained by leadership studies, the volume is intended to set out a process that others can follow for bringing their extensive behavioral science acumen to the topics of leader development and leadership studies. This bottom-up approach provides a method for more clearly articulating the relevant important elements. More pointedly, the intent is that the practitioner can use the existing data-driven theories herein to build programs and interrogate their existing leader development programs. The academic can benefit as well, because the process demonstrated herein can provide an approach for further researching and expanding our limited knowledge about leader and leadership development.

Consequently, when considered together, this volume is focused on the underlying elements that lead to the creation of quality leaders over time, which could be considered to begin when life begins (Day et al., 2009; Day, 2011; Murphy & Johnson, 2011). This underlying premise means that by definition this volume assumes that leaders can be “made” or “created,” but we also endeavor to consider areas that are generally seen as immutable, like our biology, personality, general mental ability, courage, and character.

We assume that leadership is necessarily a social construct involving at least two people, which is a generally accepted starting point. For example, Bass (1954) demonstrated that spontaneous leader-follower structures emerge in social environments even when participants specifically set out to be “leaderless.” The emergence of leaders regardless of the environment has led to the conclusion that leadership is a “universal” human social phenomenon (Bass, 1990; Brown, 1991; Hollander, 1985). However, the development of *quality leaders* clearly is not universal or pre-ordained.

This also suggests that in order to proceed, the tent of leader development alone has the potential to be quite large. And consequently one might expect that the theoretical structures that exist for such a large topic area would be equally expansive. However, this is not the case, and in truth the breadth of focused theory regarding leader development is quite limited at present. Therefore, before we dive into the potential areas that could be deconstructed for the purpose of leader development in future chapters, it would be useful to provide a brief overview of prominent theories that address leader development directly.

### 1.3 Current Theories of Leader Development

It has been noted in the last few decades that there is a need to create integrated and unifying theoretical frameworks that explain leadership (e.g., Avolio, 2007; Chemers, 2000; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Hollander, 1985; Van Vugt, 2006; Yukl, 1989), and to a small degree even leader development (Day et al., 2009; O’Connell, 2014). Theories like charismatic leadership (House, 1977; Conger & Kanungo, 1987), transformational leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985) as eventually included in the full-range leadership theory (Bass & Avolio, 1994), leader-member exchange theory (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), and adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994), to name a few prominent theories, have come to exist addressing this overarching need (see also Table 10.1 for more details about these theories of leadership). In a sociological construct, these leadership theories provide a sort of grand theory related to broad overarching objectives for leadership.

Alternatively, with few exceptions, the theoretical options for a grand theory of leader development are still quite limited. Day, Harrison, and Halpin (2009; Day & Sin, 2011) created the most complete integrated theory of leader development. The CCL or Center for Creative Leadership (Van Velsor, McCauley, & Ruderman, 2010) published a useful construct that guides the creation of developmental leader experiences. O’Connell (2014) has prepared a “simplified framework” for integrated leader development, and the creators of leader-member exchange theory developed an approach for “leadership making” (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991). Besides these few theories or frameworks, there is a greater need for attention to the detailed theories, constructs, and frameworks related to leader development; thus, relevant theories are briefly presented.

Day et al. (2009) provided an initial response to the need for a more integrated leader development theory (also see Day & Sin, 2011). Their theory highlights key topics including accelerating leader growth through application of Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development, examination of developmental readiness, moral development, epistemic cognition (i.e., understanding how knowledge is formed), problem solving, and development of leader competence and expertise. Their overarching theory also examines adult development, and identity processes, cognitive frames, and goal orientation. While their theoretical approach attempts to increase attention in key areas for leader development and trajectories of development with a holistic and integrated presentation, it is complex and difficult to clearly articulate briefly for use in most leader development programs. Consequently, the approach does not lend itself for ready use by practitioners of leader and leadership development in undergraduate academia or business. The complexity of their theory renders the application useful primarily to students and faculty in a graduate program dedicated to leadership studies, social and organizational psychology, organizational behavior, or one of only a few other types of programs in academia.

Despite the complexity, at its core Day, Harrison, and Halpin's theory focuses primarily on competence, identity development, self-regulation, and adult learning, all of which are not entirely conscious processes. Even though they attempted to use a behavioral approach, it is still difficult to implement by practitioners. It is also clear that while they provided a detailed presentation of key elements of leader development, there is still potential for it to go beyond the main elements in which they focus, especially when considered against the totality of topics and research in the entirety of behavioral sciences. An evaluation of their theory suggests that pursuing a grand theory of leader development necessarily results in the need for more focused efforts, also called middle-range theories that have more utility in practice.

At the other end of the spectrum from the grand integrated theory, the Center for Creative Leadership developed a general framework for leader development that is a useful and simple construct for guiding and evaluating activities in a leader development program. *The Handbook of Leadership Development* by Van Velsor, McCauley, and Ruderman (2010) presents a two-part model for leader development. In the first part of their model, developmental experiences are most effective if they include elements of assessment, challenge, and support (p. 2–20). This simplified framework of learning by doing creates the opportunity for growth. Assessment involves the process of providing individuals with data and information so they can increase their self-awareness about where they are and compare that with where they want to be as leaders. Their approach promotes a behaviorally oriented means-end analysis directed at personal development and leader effectiveness, particularly if the growing leader is engaged in the process. Assessment then is about knowledge and understanding through data that guides growth.

The next element is focused on challenging the individual. Challenges present the opportunity for self-recognition of limits and help the individual experience disequilibrium. By definition, individuals are challenged when they go beyond their comfort zone. Like Day et al. (2009) suggested for adult development, Van Velsor and colleagues suggest that the challenges people experience necessitate growth to make up for the shortcomings in capability. As examples, these challenges can threaten one's identity, values, self-efficacy, ways of making meaning of the world (i.e., epistemic cognition or cognitive frames), social conflict, or even his or her place in an organization or a society. By threatening any of these values, beliefs, or normal procedures, the individual is forced to let go of the previously held positions. Therefore, challenges motivate action and provide the opportunity to grow.

Through assessment and challenges, Van Velsor and colleagues (2010) suggest that support is best able to help developing leaders move towards positive growth. The support that is provided is similar to that described by Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" (1978), as well as by Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky's "holding environment" (2009). Per Vygotsky, this could be the hand up that helps an individual reach past the abilities they have on their own to further create the opportunity for growth. Alternatively, the holding environment promotes a social location where others continue to challenge individuals while facilitating support and development in one another. This support usually involves teaching, coaching,

or mentoring others and it is inherent in the social structures of the society, system, or culture surrounding developing leaders. Support is the main element that maintains motivation and persistence despite the presence of the adaptive challenges. Together, a challenge and support approach facilitate meaningful growth while keeping the learner engaged in the process of leadership. Yet, there is still room for a greater understanding of how leaders can use support to facilitate growth in others. Collectively, these three elements are also captured in the model by Day et al. (2009), albeit in a different manner.

The second part of the CCL model is that developing leaders need a variety of these developmental experiences where the leader has the opportunity to practice providing direction, alignment, and commitment to followers in various leadership contexts. Collectively, these guidelines set the conditions that produce leader development. While the framework serves as a useful heuristic for general consideration, it becomes less useful when applied in a focused manner to the many topics connected to leadership or when a specific context or culture may need to be considered. This is the case due to the complexities of social capital, processes, participants, categories of groups, and the total environment affecting leaders at any given moment. This is important because leader development presumably occurs when it is needed, often in a just-in-time fashion. Therefore, an understanding of the type of leader capacity and performance needed at any given time will be wholly dependent on the capacity of the leader, the followers to be led, group composition and size, culture, and the environment in which leaders and followers work. That is, the CCL framework is useful in creating opportunities for growth more as a mindset or guiding principle, but it does not allow for focused examination of important areas that might need development in specific contexts, individuals, or for areas of specific development in individuals.

More recently, a “simplified” framework of leader development was presented by O’Connell (2014). This framework focuses on five different “webs of belief” as a launching point for building behavioral and cognitive complexity that are required in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environments. O’Connell’s five webs included a focus on learning, reverence, purpose or service, authenticity, and *flaneur*. “Learning” is focused on developing the cognitive organizational skills or the “intellect” and openness to new experiences needed for managing complexity (c.f., McCrae & Costa, 1987; Digman, 1990). This suggests that the intellect web of belief clearly points to intelligence as a possible element of leader development; this is novel as there is very limited information about the role of intelligence (from a classical sense) in leadership and leader development. “Reverence” is focused on elements of agreeableness and extraversion in the five-factor model, but they are considered as elements of empathy, collectivism, and relatedness. The “purpose” or “service” web of belief is focused on intention, aspiration, agency, and self-regulation, which also involves a great degree of self-awareness relative to one’s mission and goals and the capacity to have vision. “Authenticity” as a web of belief serves to represent self-efficacy, greater self-awareness through personal reflection, and a value-based orientation for moral and ethical development. This is notable because as a web of belief it is one that is developmental in nature rather than

genetic or trait based. This is also notable and unusual when considered against the character aspects of this theory. This web of belief is heavily dependent on the developing leader's ability to communicate. Lastly, the "flaneur" web of belief represents a "philosophical and spirit-led approach to living and leading, using periods of reflection and rest to stay balanced in the face of the complex requirements and constant stimulation" (p. 197). O'Connell goes on to write that leading with flaneur promotes a "detached and objective" perspective. This perspective is essentially "practical wisdom." The approach for how to develop practical wisdom is one that is well received as an issue, but it is not readily addressed in the area of leader development. Therefore, it is open for further examination and how these webs of belief are developed is lacking in this expansive framework.

Like the approach of Day et al. (2009) and the CCL model (Van Velsor et al., 2010), O'Connell's (2014) proposed framework contains a great deal of relevant information, but they require further focused examination. Indeed many of the topics in her "simplified framework" are addressed in detail in various parts of this volume. However, like Day's integrated framework, the utility of O'Connell's approach will be restricted primarily to academics because of its uncommon language, expansive approach, and difficulty in explaining a "web of belief" in a manner that is readily employable in the field. The theories, constructs, and frameworks explored within this volume attempt to make components of leader development more accessible and usable for researchers and practitioners alike.

Lastly, regarding available and accepted theories of leader development, "leadership making" is a method highlighted by the creators of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991). LMX as a leadership theory focused on dyads and social interactions between leaders and followers. In "leadership making," Graen and Uhl-Bien's (1991) goal was to develop "superior manager professionals into self-managing and partially self-designing units" (p. 25). In the process of leadership making, developing leaders are encouraged to create high-quality exchanges with as many followers as possible. Effectively, the process of building relationships is the main focus for this model where two people progress through three phases from stranger to acquaintance and finally to partners. In their conception, leadership making promotes the conditions for expanding the "in-group," which then benefits more of the organization. This theory is one of the few that starts to explore practical details that can facilitate development and be readily used by researchers and practitioners alike. Even though the model is intended to focus on the "leadership relationships," referring to this model as "leadership making" may be an overstatement. It probably would be best referred to as "partnership making" because it is focused on the interactions between leader and follower, which is tangible and practical for implementation in the field.

Graen and Uhl-Bien (1991) suggest that leadership making is distinct from "role making" and "team making." Role making refers to the progression of individuals through formal roles with progress through tasks and relationships over time (Dansereau et al., 1975). Like leadership making, it is focused on the individual and relevant for a focus on leader development. Yet, leadership making and role making can be confused from how they were originally conceived and presented (c.f., Cropanzano, Dasborough,

& Weiss, 2017, and Martin, Guillaume, Thomas, Lee, & Epitropaki, 2016). Team making (Uhl-Bien & Graen, 1992) is directed more at the development of teams within different situations, and the related changes that occur over time and a leader's life cycle. More than leadership or role making, this element can be more focused on *leadership* rather than *leader* development, as there is a greater focus on the environment and other social aspects. Regardless, each of the three elements are linked and may develop along a different time course.

Interestingly, relative to the broader LMX theory, only leadership making seems to have gained the most acceptance over time. Nahrgang, Morgeson, and Ilies (2009) examined the development of exchanges between leaders and followers. They still indicated that the level of understanding about development of the exchange was poorly understood. This may have been in large part due to the tendency to employ cross-sectional rather than longitudinal research designs. To start to address this shortfall, they examined the early stages of relationship development between leaders and followers. In that analysis they revealed that the personality traits of agreeableness and extraversion played a differential role and that leader-follower relationships develop quickly. Leaders were influenced by extraversion, while followers were influenced by agreeableness (including trust and cooperation) in early interactions. Interestingly, the inverse was not observed. Ultimately, for the initial development of exchanges over time, behavioral performance emerged as the key predictor of relationship (i.e., partnership) quality. These results further suggest that due to the speed that leader-follower relationships develop, more research is needed on personality and trust and their role in leader development, some of which is addressed in this volume.

A clear limitation of the LMX approach and leadership making is that the leader can only reach so many individuals. When considering executive leaders other theorists have addressed this point by suggesting that reputation management is central to the role of the highest level leaders (Tsui, 1990). Thus, further development beyond this level must involve something more than just strong dyads and high-quality leader-member exchanges. This further suggests that grand theories of leader and leadership development may play a role, but there is still a need for more focused theoretical examination of the components related to positive change over time. Even within a more focused area like leadership making, there are gaps evident that may be addressed more effectively by engaging behavioral scientists who have examined related topics through research, and then bring that understanding to the realm of leader and leadership development.

Psychologists have published an expansive literature base on topics related to leadership (see Day et al., 2014 and Dinh et al., 2014 for review). Yet, the focus of *leader development* programs and the theoretical constructs supporting leader-related topics tend to be limited as we have presented. A broad view of psychology reveals that there are numerous topics and theoretical constructs that could be applied to the topic of leader development. This approach of looking to the extant literature as a guide should elucidate new information, theories, venues, and strategies for examining leader and leadership development in detail. More directly, this approach could uncover frameworks and models that could be put to use in



business and academia today to address clear needs in the complex area of leadership. This volume provides a method, opportunity, and examples for starting to fill this very clear gap.

## 1.4 Volume Organization Through the Historical Roots of Leader Development

Now that we have deconstructed the term *leader development* and demonstrated the gap that this volume begins to address, it is important to also connect this work to historical roots. In addition to their obvious utility for the topic and the broader discipline of psychology, these roots are also useful for organizing this volume. This volume is divided into three primary sections: (1) The Individual, Personality, and Cognition involved in Leader Development; (2) Considering Behavior in Leader Development; and (3) Social and Environmental Influences on Leader Development. Without a specific commitment to the ideas of either Kurt Lewin or Albert Bandura, dividing the book in this way echoes part of their work because there are programs focused on leader development that base their academic curricula on the concepts of these two prominent psychologists. These programs are generally focused in the areas of leadership, leader development science, and social or organizational psychology. Beyond academic programs, these three elements provide areas that practitioners can use for structuring their assessments, program development, and most importantly guiding developing leaders. Additionally, deconstructing leader development in these terms will allow readers and those participating in the process of deconstruction to maintain sight of a future reconstruction—we need to continue to consider leadership broadly, the context, and the whole of activities and situations involving leaders while further working to keep theoretical considerations and frameworks grounded and practical. Practical considerations are essential for effectively developing quality leaders.

Kurt Lewin is often tied to topics related to leadership, social psychology, and organizational behavior. He developed as a psychologist while also studying mathematics and physics (Miller, 1975). He eventually trained with other early Gestalt psychologists who firmly held that the whole must be considered in psychological research. Their view held that while the parts are obviously important, the interpretation of the whole is not merely a summation of the parts of an entire complex and dynamic phenomena.

These ideas are clearly descended from Gestalt psychology. In particular, Gestalten ideas and transformative field theories proposed and advanced by Albert Einstein and other physicists were developing at roughly the same time. Einstein played a significant role in updating physics by moving it away from an atomistic approach to one that considered interactive, and ever-changing, immaterial fields that act upon each other to produce the natural phenomena that exist in the physical world. In other words, Einstein recognized through these theories that there were

interconnected and nonlinear relationships with multiple contributing factors that created the physical world. Likewise, German psychologists, Max Wertheimer specifically, engaged Einstein in attempting to adapt these concepts when they developed Gestalt psychology. Accordingly, Gestaltists held that we take in the entire situation or event at once and not only through a collection of the individual parts. As quoted by Miller (1975) and in the forward to essays published by Wertheimer, Einstein commented on psychology and encouraged us to “beware of trying to understand the whole by arbitrary isolation of the separate components or by hazy or forced abstractions” (p. 75). In the end, Gestalt theory and Einstein effectively suggest that we need to appreciate an entire situation simultaneously while we examine the relevant parts in detail because they interact to create order in the world we experience.

Eventually, Lewin (1936) adapted this field theory approach to the topics of social and organizational psychology in an effort to better understand individuals in a complex and chaotic environment. In so doing, he created topological formulas to explore the entirety of the human experience, specifically focused on the whole situation. Lewin’s eq. (Lewin, 1936) is directly linked to his field theory and is examined in greater detail in Chap. 2, but it serves a good starting point for how we came to focus on the person, behavior, and environment in this volume.

The equation emerged from Gestalt logic that started with an examination of “life space” as a simplification of an individual’s total life experiences or phenomenal field (Schulz, 2013). The field of life space and the “whole psychological situation” effectively encompasses the person’s experience of self (P) along with their experience of the environment (E). Observable behavior (B) then was the result of a dynamic twofold interaction ( $f$ ) of the person and the environment. Therefore, Lewin’s equation states that behavior is a function of the person and his or her environment as

$$B = f(P, E)$$

He developed and published the equation more as a heuristic than as a strict mathematical formula in 1936, and a means of *unifying the different perspectives* within the field of psychology.

Lewin’s ideas guide leader and leadership development today in classes on organizational change at various graduate schools around the world as reflected by the use of Burke’s *Organizational Change: Theory and Practice* (Burke, 2013). In that text, Lewin’s ideas figure prominently. Lewin’s ideas have also likely been adopted in part because Lewin’s equation effectively simplifies the total situation and life space for leaders into two main elements and the process of how they interact. Developing leaders along these elements makes leader development more manageable and applicable in a way that it can be practically employed. Like Lewin’s original purpose for developing the equation, the process is directly relevant to the purpose and approach of *Leader Development Deconstructed* because our intent was to start a conversation among leader development researchers, behavioral scientists from a myriad of disciplines, and practitioners around the expansive and dynamic topics of leadership and leader development.

To further demonstrate the flexibility of this approach, the three main sections of this volume can also be viewed through the lens of Bandura's concept of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1971, 1977, 1978, 1983). Like Lewin's equation, reciprocal determinism also involves the person (i.e., including cognition), behavior, and environment. However, rather than being focused on a twofold interaction where behavior is the resulting outcome, behavior interacts with the other two factors in a threefold interaction. That is, the behavior on the part of the individual influences an individual's thinking and it separately influences the environment. The addition of another variable does not necessarily mean that the determinants operate simultaneously, only that over a given period of time they will eventually affect the others. This is important in the realm of development because there is not always a way to capture the temporal aspects of change over time, only that there will be a change.

One might argue that reciprocal determinism is functionally an extension of Lewin's ideas because his equation was conceived as a heuristic and not a strict mathematical model. Others may suggest that progress from Lewin's ideas to Bandura's concept illustrates the evolution of the science of psychology. For the purpose of this volume, that distinction is not important. What is important is that functionally and practically the three elements ultimately provide utility to practitioners who may wish to employ the ideas generated for and from this publication. That is, if one subscribes to Lewin's idea, then the processes you learn through this book can be thought of as the "function" aspect of his equation ( $f$ ). If you are more prone to reciprocal determinism, you will want to consider the ideas from this volume (and others that you can see in behavioral science literature) through the lens of any one of the three factors or through the interaction (i.e., the process of how each element interacts with one another) over time. In the end, either approach provides utility to the practitioner because you must consider all elements, the processes involved, and the whole aspect of developing the leader.

Effectively, either approach also provides the practitioner with flexibility until clearer models can be developed and validated from behavioral science research. That is, the three main elements remain the same, but the lens through which leader development is considered is slightly altered. Likewise, it is our hope that the concepts presented within this volume will grow and change over time and encourage others to adapt their focused theories, concepts, research, and evidence to the topic of leader development. Whether viewed through a different lens or presented as an evolution of an idea, both represent new and better ways of thinking about leader development, which we hope will lead to better leaders for an increasingly complex environment. As a practical matter, each element must be considered as a part of the whole person. Specifically, we all need more information on the fields and forces that are influencing us as leaders as we grow.

Within the section on the "Individual, Personality, and Cognition," ideas are presented related to psychobiosocial influences, general mental ability (i.e., intelligence), dark personality traits, courage, and leader developmental readiness. Chapter 2 explores how to develop "allostatic leaders" using a psychobiosocial approach firmly rooted in Lewin's ideas. This is original because psychobiological aspects of leadership, particularly the biology of leading and leader development,

are noticeably absent. These elements are clearly important when topics like stress and stress management are considered. Chapter 3 is on general mental ability and explores the role that intelligence plays in leader development. Specifically, it suggests that a leader's capacity for cognitive complexity is rooted in intelligence. Cognitive and behavioral capacity has been suggested as essential for higher levels of management and leadership, but the role of intelligence is largely ignored in the leadership literature. Chapter 4 explores the role of dark personality traits in leadership and leader development. There is a great deal of research examining the role that personality plays in leader and follower behavior, either through examination of the Big 5 personality traits or the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, but there is little in the literature related to negative personality traits like narcissism, Machiavellianism, or subclinical psychopathy. This chapter takes a provocative approach that forces readers to consider the "dark side of leadership" and how these traits can be utilized to *promote* leader development. This leads to Chap. 5 on courage and dialogue as variables people use to create quality leaders. This chapter seeks to operationally define courage and present the role that it plays in novel ways that can influence individuals, specifically considering and promoting updates to Bandura's concept of reciprocal determinism. While few of the chapters in the Individual, Personality, and Cognition section are addressed in leadership studies, Chap. 6 is focused on a topic that is currently gaining attention. Leader developmental readiness is a new theoretical framework that involves the ability to develop, personal motivation, and support context required for accelerating and facilitating growth in individuals. Collectively, this section focuses on more internal aspects within the leader.

"Considering Behavior in Leader Development" is the focus of the second section of this volume. This section begins with a focus on the follower. As noted, we take the position that leadership is ultimately an interaction. Therefore, any consideration of the whole situation of leader development must include the follower. Chapter 7 presents a new model for followership that is focused on follower behavior. Specifically, the chapter addresses how active and passive behaviors influence followers *and* leaders, which then clearly influences leader development. In addition to the model, the chapter makes a case for why organizations should invest in follower development as well as leader development. Promoting both should facilitate leadership and effective organizations. However, when there are challenges in leadership or an organization, we need effective behaviors for addressing conflict and for learning how to avoid it in the first place. Chapter 8 presents research and theories on the fundamental competence of conflict management. Through examination and use of organizational controls and the promotion of trust and fairness-seeking behaviors, developing leaders can learn to head off conflict before it occurs. This is a behavioral skill that leaders can develop. The chapter further explores effective methods for managing conflict when it occurs through existing literature on conflict management.

The next chapter in the Behavior section takes an original approach to character and creativity in leader development. Chapter 9 explores virtue and creativity as *skills* rather than as traits in leader development. Building on ideas from philosophy and social psychology, the chapter explores the challenges that creativity presents

for leaders, but also puts forth a concept that character can be developed through behavior. The chapter proposes that effectively creating quality leaders will involve both creative and virtuous behaviors. This chapter is followed by Chap. 10 on how to develop leaders through the process of guided inquiry and behavioral ways of developing epistemic cognition. That chapter presents a framework for developing the epistemic processes of leadership in growing leaders behaviorally through the act of engagement. This chapter is focused on application of how to grow leaders who can manage complexity primarily through structured academic programs of leader development.

The last section of the book is related to “Social and Environmental Influences” and it involves more discussion about leadership development, but it still looks at developing the individuals who become leaders. Chapter 11 examines the impact of selection and specifically the Assessment Center Method. The chapter explores the theoretical aspects of how selection and promotion can affect organizations and their developing leaders directly and indirectly. The method explores behavioral aspects as a key element in the Assessment Center, and thus the chapter transitions from behavior to the broader impacts, methods, and outcomes related to the selection of leaders in a given organization. Likewise, Chap. 12 deals with the topic of social support and leader development. This chapter addresses a topic that is often mentioned in other theories of leadership and leader development. However, the interesting aspect of social support in leader studies is that it is not entirely connected to an expansive literature on social support in other areas. This chapter addresses this gap by explicitly addressing how to employ social support and its influences. This connection provides a meaningful way to further research the specifics of social support while providing a mechanism for practitioners to evaluate and shape social support in business environments. The approach presented links social support back to various personal aspects within leaders that are discussed elsewhere in the volume including self-awareness, motivation, and competence.

The last two chapters are intended to be very practical and applied to specific challenges that are generally missing from academic publications of this type. Chapter 13 directly addresses how a leader development program and leadership model were developed where one did not previously exist. The chapter shares the lessons learned through that process. It also explores the challenges through the lens of an academic program at a medical school. While seemingly specific, many of the lessons and approach are readily applicable to other types of organizations. Chapter 14 closes out this volume and presents the unique challenges that exist in developing leaders in law enforcement environments. In addition to being topical, the examination is also applicable to other organizations where the developmental pipeline for leaders is very short or relatively thin. The chapter explores the question of how to develop influential and effective leaders in a highly visible and dynamic environment that generally only promotes from within. Like Chap. 13, while the topic seems focused on one type of organization, there are lessons to learn that may be relevant to industry, particularly to small businesses.

Ultimately, this volume of *Annals of Theoretical Psychology* endeavored to deconstruct leader development by examining key aspects of individuals, their

behavior, and their environment with a focus on specific areas that are poorly represented or underrepresented in the area. In short, there is a gap in understanding the “why” in leader development and consequently “how” to build that understanding despite a clear need. This volume will not cover all aspects of the topic and perhaps should have been titled *Deconstructing Leader Development* because there is still much to do. However, it is an introduction to the type of considerations that can occur and serve to challenge conventional thinking while leveraging theory, research, and development from across a wide array of subjects and disciplines. Through this approach, it is our intent to apply data-driven theory and proposals from diverse areas of behavioral, biological, and educational sciences to a practical challenge. Academics and practitioners alike will hopefully benefit from the examination and application of relevant theory and research to the underdeveloped area of leader development.

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**Part I**  
**The Individual, Personality, and Cognition**  
**Involved in Leader Development**

# Chapter 2

## Developing “Allostatic Leaders”: A Psychobiosocial Perspective

Angela M. Yarnell and Neil E. Grunberg

### 2.1 Introduction

Academic, business, and popular books, journals, magazines, and Internet sites discuss a couple of dozen major leader types including in alphabetical order: adaptive, affiliative, authoritative, autocratic, charismatic, coaching, coercive, courageous, cross-cultural, democratic, facilitative, innovative, inspirational, laissez-faire, pacesetter, participative, principle-centered, resonant, servant, situational, strategic, team, thought, transactional, transformational, virtuous, and visionary (Bean-Mellinger, 2017; Blanken, 2017; Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Covey, 1991; Day & Antonakis, 2012; Heifetz, Linsky, & Grashow, 2009; Johnson, 2017; Kilburg, 2012; Lewin, Lippit, & White, 1939; Northouse, 2013; Raza, 2017; Thornton, 2013).

Each of these and other leader types have merit and describe different types of effective leaders that appear to depend on individual differences among leaders, whom they lead, and the situations in which they lead. However, the ever-increasing list of leader types raises questions about the value of parsing leader types in so many ways and whether, in contrast, there is a way to describe an overarching leader type that could serve as an umbrella over the various leader types and could help guide education, development, and assessment of leaders. This is not to say that the

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dozens of types are not real or that they lack value; instead, they may best suit individual leaders, particular groups of followers, and situations, yet still be subsumed under a broader term and description.

This chapter takes a psychobiosocial approach in an attempt to identify an overarching leader type. We use the term “psychobiosocial” rather than “biopsychosocial” to highlight and underscore the psychological (behavioral, cognitive, and motivational) aspects of the leader with consideration of relevant biological and social contributing factors. We include biological factors within the leader and biological responses of leaders to stressful situations in our effort to identify a holistic definition of effective leaders. We include social factors because leaders influence others to execute leadership (Day, 2001).

To begin our search for an overarching leader type, we first considered the intellectual approach of field theory in the social sciences offered by Kurt Lewin (1936)—the Father of Experimental Social Psychology and mentor of Leon Festinger, Stanley Schachter, Morton Deutsch, Albert Pepitone, Robert Zajonc, and other major contributors to social psychology—to help identify an ideal leader type that can serve as an umbrella concept and term. We chose this particular theoretical approach because of its relevance to relationships among individuals and its inclusion of motivations, cognitions, and behaviors. We also decided to use Lewin’s bold intellectual approach because Lewin and his students initiated the scholarly study of leadership, identifying the three leader types of autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire (Lewin et al., 1939) and other aspects of leader-follower relationships and behaviors (see Cartwright & Zander, 1968 for review).

We next decided to consider the stress literature because this extensive conceptual and research literature provides a multidisciplinary perspective about psychobiological responses to challenging situations (physical and social). Our rationale for drawing from the stress literature and responses to stressors (positive [eustress] and negative [distress]) is that everyone experiences stress; leaders operate under and are “tested” under stress; and the role and influence of leaders are particularly pronounced under stressful and challenging situations (Heifetz, 2000; Kolditz, 2007). In addition, studies of stress have provided information and insights that have revealed psychobiological mechanisms and responses among a wide variety of individuals.

We believe that the inclusion and integration of these two conceptual and research literatures reveal an overarching leader style for which an appropriate term is “allostatic leader.” This term describes leaders who consider, respond, adapt, learn, and change in response to situations and demands to optimize their influence and effectiveness in present and future situations. This chapter reviews major points from field theory and the stress literature to explain why we suggest the term “allostatic leader.” Then, we provide suggestions regarding how to develop allostatic leaders.

## 2.2 Field Theory Relevant to Leaders

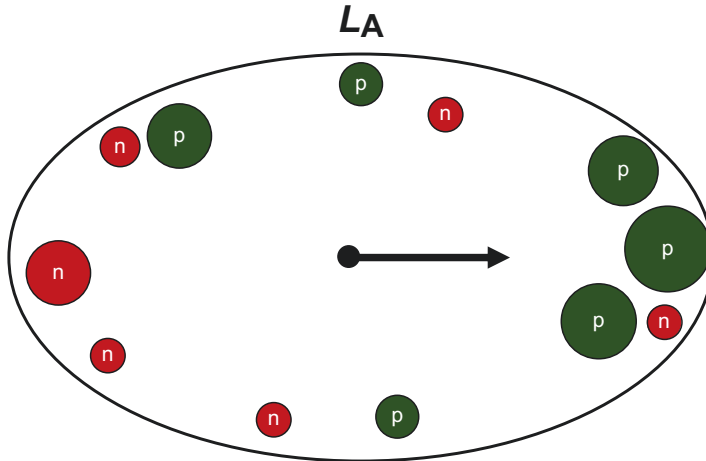
Kurt Lewin (1890–1947) was a research psychologist in the early twentieth century who believed that the social sciences should be based on sound principles and experimental evidence that is then applied to practical issues and social problems.

He is considered the founder of experimental social psychology and was a role model, mentor, and inspiration to many social psychologists. Lewin focused much of his research attention on leadership, group dynamics, communication, and social justice (Lewin, 1939, 1992)—all of which are relevant to this chapter and the volume in which it appears. With regard to this chapter’s particular goal—to identify an overarching leader type—it is Lewin’s broad conceptualization of psychology and field theory that is particularly useful and relevant in that social psychology examines relationships between individuals in dyads and within groups.

Lewin offered the elegantly simple but conceptually deep “equation” that behavior ( $B$ ) is a function of the person ( $P$ ) and the environment ( $E$ ):  $B = f(P, E)$  (Lewin, 1936). This equation was proposed to incorporate influences of “nature” and “nurture” on behavior, rather than favoring one influence over the other—an unusual position to take during the early twentieth century when the influence of nature vs. nurture on human behavior was a debate (Snibbe, 2004). Further, Lewin intended that this formulation would draw from evidence and concepts from all aspects of psychology (e.g., child psychology, animal psychology, psychopathology, social psychology) in order to explain individual behaviors (of leaders and followers, for example) within social groups, networks, and situations as described in his field theory (Lewin, 1951).

Lewin’s field theory proposed that each person’s behavior is a function of his or her “life space”:  $B = f(L)$ . Behavior includes all sorts of actions and reactions: innate and learned; intentional and unintentional; and planned, controlled, and impulsive. Moreover, behavior is a function of the entire situation,  $B = f(S)$ : physical, psychological, and social; past, present, and future. Lewin reasoned that the entire situation, or life space of an individual, can be usefully considered as the person ( $P$ ) and the environment ( $E$ ). With regard to the person ( $P$ ), Lewin included all aspects of the person; with regard to the environment ( $E$ ), Lewin included all aspects of influence on the person. To understand Lewin’s reasoning, especially for purposes of this chapter, it is relevant to know that he was educated in biology and spent some time as a medical student, but decided to alter his educational focus to philosophy and experimental psychology, and spent his career integrating information and approaches from these fields to apply them to real world and especially socially relevant issues (Schachter, personal communication, 1976). Lewin’s writings about the person ( $P$ ) focused on personality, attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, skills, needs (innate drives), and quasi-needs (drives developed by associations and learning). We submit that  $P$  also includes one’s physical characteristics; genetic makeup, predispositions, and epigenetics; gross anatomy and neuroanatomy; and central and peripheral physiological systems and functions (including the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis and psychoneuroimmunologic processes).  $E$  includes physical, psychological, social, and cultural environments, as well as past, present, and anticipated experiences.

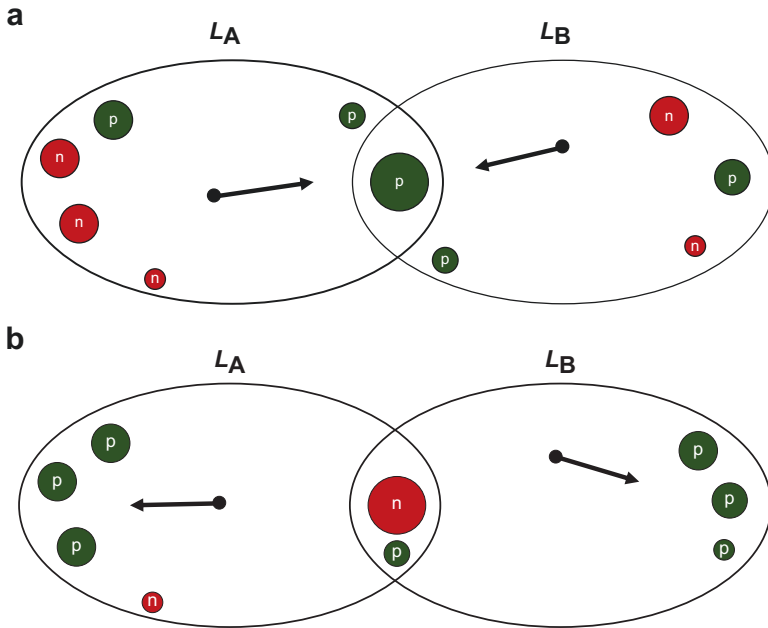
To understand Lewin’s equation, it is also important to know that he valued and championed the Gestalt psychology approach in that the combination of different variables (i.e., aspects of  $P$  and of  $E$ ) can and does result in “wholes” that are greater than the sum of the individual parts. It is noteworthy that his equation used a comma between the major factors (rather than a plus sign, multiplication sign, or other specific but limited mathematical operation) and that he expressed the equation as a



**Fig. 2.1** Life space ( $L$ ) of person A, where p and n represent positive and negative goal regions, respectively. The size of each region represents its importance or magnitude for A. The point represents where A is (psychologically) in  $L$ . The arrow represents A's locomotion (behaviors) based on tensions and forces (motivations and cognitions)

function ( $f$ ). This particular mathematical notation allowed for the Gestaltist result of behavior ( $B$ ) to have various “values” because of other influences that might best be expressed as a mathematical coefficient or exponent, depending on the individual and the life space, rather than behavior ( $B$ ) resulting in a single value based on some narrow consideration of person and environment.

With regard to life space ( $P$  and  $E$ ) and behaviors, it is important to understand (1) the role of forces, tensions, locomotion, and goal regions within one's own life, and (2) the influence of others' behaviors and life spaces. Interactions of behaviors and life spaces occur among leaders and followers; leaders and other leaders; and followers and followers. Lewin proposed that within a given life space, there are goal regions with positive and negative valence, depending on whether it represents something that the individual is drawn to (a positive valence goal region) or something that the individual is motivated to avoid (a negative valence goal region); see Fig. 2.1. Examples of positive goal regions in a given life space could include successful completion of an educational degree or program, attaining a particular job or promotion, or finding and developing a meaningful personal relationship. Examples of negative goal regions in a given life space could include failure or poor performance in an educational program, poor performance or losing a job, or an abusive or unfulfilling personal relationship. The magnitude of each goal region is represented by its size. Within a given life space, the individual (represented by a point) is at a certain “location” with “forces” acting on the individual that depend on current position relative to the various positive and negative goal regions within the life space. These forces are analogous to motivations, emotions, and influence of motivations and emotions. These forces give rise to “tensions” which can be considered as explicit and implicit cognitions (including attention to, thinking about, plan-



**Fig. 2.2** (a) Life spaces ( $L$ ) of persons A and B where they are motivated to come together and increase their relationship based on shared, positive goal regions. (b) Life spaces ( $L$ ) of persons A and B to move apart and decrease their relationship based on different, unshared, positive goal regions

ning for, dreams, and so on) as well as emotions (positive and negative) and biological states relevant to one’s psychological location within the life space. These tensions then give rise (or not) to “locomotions” or movements/actions within that life space (represented by an arrow) that “locomote” the individual toward or away from the various goal regions, based on the goal regions’ valences and quantities (or strengths of influence). In these ways, Lewin included motivations/emotions, implicit and explicit cognitive processes, and actions in the perceived and actual “movement” of the individual within the life space. In addition, Lewin’s theory accounted for behaviors that are influenced by aspects of physical and social reality (based on perception of most if not all individuals) as well as behaviors that are influenced by individual perceptions, including dreams and thoughts that may differ from reality as a result of sane or insane states of mind.

To further complicate and to fully consider and determine our behaviors, Lewin proposed that each of our individual life spaces interact with the life spaces of other people who are relevant to us; see Fig. 2.2. Figure 2.2a presents an example of two different people who share a positive goal region of substantial magnitude. As a result, these two individuals are drawn together. If several individuals also had the same, overlapping, positive goal regions, they would likely come together and form a cohesive group. A leader who either is part of that positive, shared goal region or influences others to share a powerful, positive goal region would be an effective leader.

Figure 2.2b, in contrast, presents an example of two different people who are “pushed apart” as they are drawn to goal regions that are distant from each other and away from a shared goal region which is negative within their life spaces. If a leader contributes to this decreased likelihood of the individuals working together, then the leader is ineffective at best or, perhaps, even toxic in the worst-case scenarios. In an attempt to describe exactly how these many life spaces interact, Lewin chose the mathematical principles of algebraic and geometric topology (or “rubber sheet” geometry)—a maximally flexible and non-Euclidian mathematical formulation that emphasizes physical relationships rather than discrete metrics. Lewin conceptualized influences within and among individuals as hodological spaces—i.e., interactive curvilinear vectors such as those that meteorologists use to represent the directions, magnitudes, speeds, and velocities of winds within a tornado or hurricane.

The conceptual and mathematical complexity of Lewin’s field theory and the changes within psychology following World War II (including Lewin’s own shift to study leaders and socially relevant topics) contributed to a decline in study and application of field theory after the mid-twentieth century. We believe that it is valuable to include the variables ( $B$ ,  $P$ ,  $E$ ) and relationships among variables and among people in field theory to guide a psychosocial conceptualization of leaders. Moreover, we believe that it is appropriate to include biological variables to forge a psychobiosocial perspective about leaders and to identify an overarching effective leader type.

### 2.2.1 Section Summary

Lewin’s field theory proposes that individuals’ behaviors ( $B$ ) are a function of psychological and biological aspects of the person ( $P$ ) and their physical, psychological, and social environments, including what has been, what is, and what is expected, including physical and psychological realities ( $E$ ). Individuals’ actions (or locomotions) within their life spaces ( $L$ , or  $P$  and  $E$ ) depend upon motivations and cognitions (forces and tensions); goal regions (with positive or negative valence of varied quantity depending on their relative, perceived importance); and interactions with other individuals whose motivations, cognitions, and behaviors depend upon their life spaces ( $L$ ),  $P$ , and  $E$ . This psychobiosocial conceptualization is relevant to understand individuals in various roles—including the role of the leader. With this background in mind, we next consider the stress literature as a source of information to reach our goal of identifying an overarching leader type. We chose this particular literature because stress is experienced by everyone; the stress literature is extant and well documented; and this literature is multi- and interdisciplinary, drawing from biology, psychology, and social interactions.

Following from Lewin’s emphasis on what constitutes life space ( $L$ ), it is relevant that physical and psychological stressors powerfully affect the environment ( $E$ ), and that biological and psychological characteristics of the individual person ( $P$ ) affect immediate and long-term responses to stressors and stressful situations. In addition,

under stress, leaders become more influential and followers turn to leaders for direction and guidance (Heifetz, 2000). Therefore, it is relevant to consider what is known about stress and stress responses to understand effective leaders and their behaviors.

### 2.3 The Stress Literature Relevant to Leaders

Stress is a psychobiological process that begins with the perception (an aspect of *P*) of a threat or challenge in the form of physical or psychological stimuli (aspects of *E*) (Baum, Gatchel, & Krantz, 1997; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Mason, 1971; McEwen, 2007; Selye, 1946). If the stimuli (i.e., aspects of *E*) are perceived to demand physical and psychological resources (aspects of *P*), then there is an integrated psychological and biological response by the organism (aspects of *B*) that acts to preserve or maintain physical or psychological well-being (i.e., aspects of *P*). Whether or not the stimuli are perceived as a threat depends on individual characteristics (i.e., aspects of *P*), which include but are not limited to biology, personal experience, and coping mechanisms. All elements of Lewin's formulation (*B, P, E*) can interact and affect each other. If the physiological and/or psychological response is compromised in some way (e.g., overactive or underactive), then physical or psychological injury or disease may occur. Responses to acute, moderate stressors (or challenges) usually are effective and may be adaptive. In contrast, responses to repeated, chronic, or extreme stressors often are disruptive to health. The influence of others (either to increase or to attenuate stress responses) adds the social element to this psychobiosocial perspective. How we respond to stressors, whether we adapt, and whether the adaptation is short-lived or results in change and preparation for future stressors/challenges are particularly relevant to the search for an ideal leader type.

#### 2.3.1 *Adaptive and Non-adaptive Responses*

Stress can have adaptive (usually beneficial) or non-adaptive (oftentimes harmful) effects depending upon timing, duration, intensity of the stressors (aspects of *E*), and individual differences (aspects of *P*). The acute psychological and biological effects of the stress response usually are adaptive and beneficial. The activation of the sympathetic nervous system, for example, mobilizes bodily systems to meet the demands placed on them. The activation of psychological processes, such as cognitive appraisal, allows individuals to draw from past experiences and available resources to respond effectively to the threat or challenge. The simultaneous activation of these systems to respond to stressors is essential to maintain psychological and physical well-being. When these systems are disrupted by repeated, chronic, or traumatic stressors or physical disease or injury, then the responses may be insufficient and even those responses that are acutely adaptive may break down



(McEwen, 2004; Selye, 1946). As the psychological and biological systems fail to operate effectively, becoming either non-responsive or overactive, the consequences may be increased insult or injury to psychological and physical well-being.

### 2.3.2 *Adaptation*

Early conceptualizations of stress were influenced by Darwin (1859), especially by the notion of “survival of the fittest” (i.e., organisms that adapt to their environments have increased likelihood of survival, whereas organisms that do not adapt die). The concept of adapting to an environment was extended by Claude Bernard (1957). Bernard suggested that an organism’s ability to move freely (i.e.,  $B$  in Lewin’s terms) in the external environment (one aspect of  $E$ ) depends on the capacity of the individual organism’s ( $P$ ) internal environment (or *milieu intérieur*) to respond to threats from the external environment. For example, the cold-blooded lizard’s body temperature depends entirely on the external environment, so its ability and motivation or drive to move is strongly affected by external environmental conditions. The warm-blooded mammal, in contrast, has internal temperature regulation that is modestly affected by temperature in the external environment, so it has greater freedom of movement ( $B$ ) within a given environment ( $E$ ) that depends on its own ( $P$ ) needs or biological drives. These concepts of adaptation are relevant to behaviors and biological systems and greatly influenced by Cannon (1935), who made major contributions to the stress literature.

### 2.3.3 *Homeostasis and the Fight or Flight Stress Response*

Walter B. Cannon introduced the term “homeostasis” to describe the function of biological systems to maintain balance and stability and to return to a given state after exposure to stressors or challenges (Cannon, 1935). Cannon focused on responses of several biological systems during the stress response, including release of adrenalin (epinephrine) from the adrenal medulla; decrease in digestive activity; increase in blood flow to the heart, lungs, brain, and large muscles; and decrease in blood flow closer to the surface of the skin. Consistent with Darwin’s emphasis on survival, Cannon reasoned that these particular biological responses to challenges/stressors must work to maintain or restore homeostasis in the face of threats. In addition, Cannon offered a psychobiological explanation that included descriptions of behaviors that accompanied the biological system responses to stress and described these responses as “fight or flight” (Cannon, 1914).

It is important to note that these biological and behavioral responses or adaptations were focused on operating in acute, challenging situations, and that these responses served to restore homeostasis. This concept of adaptive responses to acute situations certainly is important and we believe that it parallels responses of “adaptive leaders” (e.g., appropriate and varied responses to particular situations to optimize success and

survival). This concept, however, is not in our opinion the most overarching type of effective leader because it does not include learning, growth, or change with experience. The ideal leader—or “allostatic leader”—responds, adapts, learns, and changes with experience to become even more effective in subsequent situations. The conceptual basis for the choice of the word “allostatic” is discussed below.

Cannon also observed a point where homeostasis was no longer attainable, and the body’s ability to adapt in the face of change “broke down,” resulting in injury, illness, and death. In this way, he recognized the limits of the acute, adaptive response and foreshadowed later notions about stress responses that also inform the search for an overarching, ideal leader type. In other words, unless a leader learns from and changes after adapting to challenges and demands, the leader may burn out after repeated challenges. The ideal leader becomes stronger after repeated responses, adaptation, learning, and change and becomes better prepared for new challenges.

### 2.3.3.1 Breakdown of Adaptation

Hans Selye (1936) is credited with applying the term “stress”—which was originally used in physics—to the psychobiological responses to physical and psychological threats and challenges. Selye (1946) defined stress as a nonspecific response of the body to any demand for change and contributed to our understanding of the role of hormones in the stress response. He used general adaptation syndrome (GAS) to describe what happens to the body after repeated or chronic exposure to stress. GAS has three distinct stages: alarm reaction, resistance, and then exhaustion. The alarm stage describes reaction to stimuli before the organism has adapted. Resistance occurs after repeated exposure to the same stimuli and there is some adaptation in the responses. If and when adaptation is no longer possible or cannot be maintained, then exhaustion occurs and future resistance is minimal.

Another important contribution of Selye is the concept that similar stress responses can occur when exposed to either positive (“eustress”) or negative (“distress”) stimuli (Selye, 1973). Eustress occurs in response to an event or a circumstance perceived as positive (e.g., new job, new relationship, marriage), whereas distress occurs in response to an event or a circumstance perceived as negative (e.g., losing a job, divorce, death of a loved one). Following from this notion, leaders are under stress when they experience successes and failures. This stress can be magnified as leaders focus on the successes and failures of the people for whom they are responsible. As a result of this barrage of stressors, it is particularly important that successful leaders adapt, learn, and change after exposure to all types of stressors in ways that will help them respond to subsequent stressors and challenges more effectively and with less disruptive response.

### 2.3.3.2 Biological Stress Response

The stress response is primarily mediated by nervous, endocrine, and limbic body systems. Immediate response to threatening stimuli or stressors happens through activation of the sympathetic branch (SNS) of the autonomic nervous system, which

mobilizes parts of the body to meet the demands of the stressor (e.g., increased heart rate, blood flow) and suppression of the parasympathetic system to reserve energy for the SNS systems (e.g., decreased digestive activities). Activation of the SNS is what Cannon (1914) describes with “fight or flight.”

A longer lasting stress response is mediated through neuroendocrine pathways and specifically the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and associated chemicals, corticotrophin-releasing hormone (CRH), adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH), and cortisol. The process starts with the synthesis of CRH in the paraventricular nucleus of the hypothalamus, which is then secreted through the median eminence to the pituitary through a portal circulation system (Guyton & Hall, 2006). CRH in the anterior pituitary triggers the synthesis and release of ACTH into the bloodstream. When ACTH reaches its target tissue in the adrenal cortex, it signals the synthesis and release of other hormones. One hormone that is especially important in the stress response is cortisol. Cortisol has many actions in the body and its role is to mobilize energy to meet the demands of the stressor. Specifically, as a glucocorticoid, cortisol increases the level of glucose (sugar/energy) in the blood to be used by the brain, heart, and muscles by metabolizing fat stores and inhibiting insulin (Costanzo, 2010). Cortisol also inhibits the immune system to reserve energy for other systems (Costanzo, 2010).

Limbic input to the stress response process is characterized by “higher order” brain regions such as the amygdala, hippocampus, prefrontal cortex, and insula. These regions and associated neurotransmitters help to assign salience to incoming stimuli based on past experience and emotional content of the incoming information. This additional information contributes to the appraisal of whether or not the stimuli are threatening or exceed the resources available to meet the demands of the threat, which ultimately drives the activation of the SNS or HPA systems when necessary. This higher order preprocessing is what led the field of stress science to examine the psychological contributions to the body’s stress response.

### 2.3.3.3 Psychological Stress Response

The early conceptualizations by Bernard, Cannon, and Selye focused on biological aspects of the stress response. William Beaumont emphasized the role of psychological variables in the stress process. While treating abdominal wounds, Beaumont observed inhibited digestive activity in response to extreme emotional states such as anger or anxiety (Faraday, 2005). John W. Mason integrated Beaumont’s psychological observations with those of Bernard, Cannon, and Selye and proposed that the stress response includes the integrated activity of multiple endocrine systems, cognitive variables, personality factors, and environment/situational variables (Mason, 1968a, 1968b, 1968d)—reminiscent of Lewin’s broad inclusion of aspects of *P* and of *E* to influence *B*. Mason argued that psychological factors were necessary for the adrenal response to occur and that this psychoendocrine response was primarily anticipatory (Mason, 1968c, 1971). Moreover, Mason and colleagues suggested that psychological “defenses” could be learned and used to alter the way threats are perceived to attenuate the perception of danger and the stress responses (Bourne, Rose, & Mason, 1967).

### 2.3.3.4 Appraisal

Richard Lazarus and Judith Folkman built upon Mason's psychobiology of stress to include cognitive and emotional factors. They defined stress as a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or as exceeding his/her resources and endangering his/her well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)—Lewin's influence continued 50 years after his "equation" was introduced. The cognitive process of appraisal and the idea that a threat can be down-graded based on a person's experiences or perception are what Mason described as "psychological defenses" (Bourne et al., 1967). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) also pointed out that individuals can develop psychological coping mechanisms to alter perceptions of and reactions to stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

### 2.3.3.5 Individual Differences

The early conceptualizations of stress did not consider individual differences. In contrast, Mason's focus on the role of psychological variables and Lazarus and Folkman's emphasis on appraisal encouraged consideration of individual differences. Taylor, Klein, and colleagues (Taylor, 2006; Taylor et al., 2000) postulated that males and females respond differently to stress. Whereas "fight or flight" response is the predominant stress response of males, Taylor, Klein, and colleagues suggested that females (humans and animals) may have adapted and evolved to have an additional stress response system described as "tend and befriend" which is mediated through other chemicals (e.g., oxytocin) to deal with stressors. This distinction broadly tracks the survival-optimizing roles of females vs. males with females of any species that may be pregnant or responsible for caring for their young. It is likely that both types of stress response are available and can be expressed (effectively Lewin's *B*) by most if not all individuals, but that the predominant behavioral response depends on the individual (Lewin's *P*) or the situation (Lewin's *E*). With regard to effective leadership, the optimal response to challenge/threat/stressors should depend on the individual, resources available (physical and psychological), and the situation. The ideal leader responds optimally to the situation and to the needs of the individuals in the group being led.

### 2.3.3.6 Allostasis

Although the stress research summarized above continues to be valuable, this field has further developed in terms of underlying biological mechanisms as well as at the broader conceptual level. Sterling and Eyer (1988) and McEwen (2005) introduced the terms "allostasis," "allostatic load," and "allostatic overload" to provide an integrated explanation of stress responses that are protective and stress responses that are destructive or at least not sustainable. Further, allostasis considers social environment (or *E*) as well as the physiological and psychological variables

described above (or *P*). This way of conceptualizing stress responses (i.e., that includes psychology, biology, and social environments) is relevant to the present chapter, its psychobiosocial perspective, and the search for a way to describe an overarching leader type that will respond effectively to challenging and stressful situations.

The terms “allostasis” and “allostatic overload” have been offered to capture the protective and damaging effects of the biologic response to stressors, respectively (McEwen, 2005). These terms emphasize adaptive and subsequent effects of the physiologic mediators that maintain homeostasis in response to demands. In contrast to “homeostasis”—the stability of physiologic systems to maintain life—“allostasis” describes “the superordinate system by which stability is achieved through change” (McEwen, 2005, p. 316). Allostasis involves several biological systems and adaptive processes, including alterations in HPA-axis hormones, hormones of the autonomic nervous system (e.g., epinephrine, norepinephrine), and inflammatory markers (e.g., cytokines), and is generally adaptive in the short term. Over time and in response to various stressors, repeated responses and adaptations to stressors result in shifted and reset homeostatic set points and ranges; this process of responding, adapting, and changing is the central characteristic of allostasis.

The emphasis of allostasis on adaptation and change to survive distinguishes it from homeostasis, which involves a return to a baseline (or particular range around that baseline) after challenge and an acute response (sometimes referred to as “adaptation” but which involves a short-term and not a lasting change). Allostatic overload is used to describe situations in which the systems (psychological or biological) are not resilient, do not return to a safe range, and do not adapt and change. As a result, allostatic overload leads to pathophysiological or psychopathological end points. McEwen (1999, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2007) characterized allostatic overload by examining the effects of HPA axis over activation and excess glucocorticoids, like cortisol, on specific brain regions like the hippocampus, amygdala, and prefrontal cortex (PFC). These areas, which are essential for memory, emotional processing, and executive function, respectively, are both affected by stress and involved in regulating the stress response. Functionality of these areas can be disrupted with repeated activation by stress hormones, which can lead to problems with memory, emotion regulation, and inhibition and in turn result in dysregulated HPA axis function and further allostatic overload. While we borrow the term allostasis to describe characteristics of a leader who can adapt to challenging situations and learn to minimize the energy required to meet future challenges, it is also relevant to highlight how unchecked stress for a leader can manifest in psychological problems like memory, emotional regulation, and decision making or executive function. Therefore it is critical for a leader to manage his/her stress.

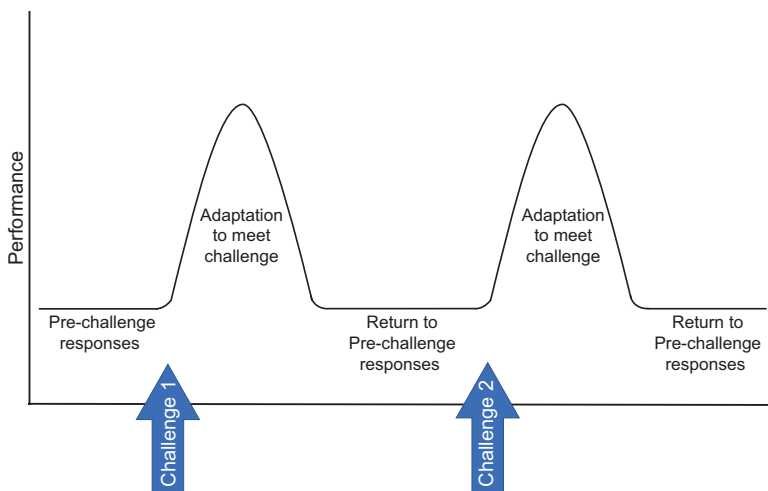
The allostatic leader’s dominant responses are developed and changed based on experience to optimize performance and survival of the leader and the group that is led. Allostatic overload for the leader would result in burnout and inability to lead effectively. Therefore, it is important to develop leaders who can avoid allostatic overload.

### 2.3.4 Section Summary

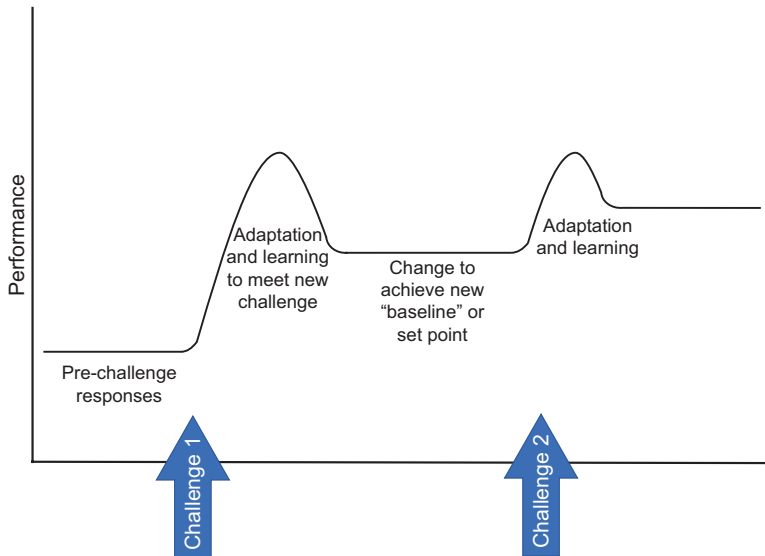
Allostasis refers to change to become stronger and more effectively responsive to future challenges. It differs from short-lived or acute adaptation and it differs from homeostasis—a return to safe values or ranges without subsequent change. Response, adaptation, and change in response to stressors and experience are central to the concept of allostatic leadership. We suggest that defining and developing allostatic leaders is an optimal strategy to create ideal leaders and that other effective leader types can be subsumed under this umbrella. The following sections discuss allostatic leaders and how to develop them.

## 2.4 Allostatic Leader

Heifetz et al. (2009) described “adaptive” leaders—a leader type that we agree is extremely important and effective. According to Heifetz et al. (2009), adaptive leaders use their skills and insights to deal with challenging situations; manage themselves depending on environmental demands; and help other people tolerate discomfort as they experience “disequilibrium” of challenging conditions. Although adaptive leaders respond effectively to challenging situations, it is not clear that they learn from and change as a result of these adaptations and experiences. Perhaps they do or, instead, they might return to the pre-situation state (similar to a return to homeostasis after disruption and response); see Fig. 2.3. Although the adaptive leader can respond effectively to a given situation or challenge, this type of leader is no better prepared for future challenges.



**Fig. 2.3** Adaptive leaders respond to challenges/stressors/situations and then return to pre-challenge levels



**Fig. 2.4** Allostatic leaders respond to challenges/stressors/situations and then change to respond to future challenges more effectively

To a great extent, descriptions of adaptive leaders are consistent with Lewin’s equation (by considering the person and the environment) and with phenomena involved in stress responses (i.e., responses followed by return to baseline ranges or homeostasis). We agree that these aspects of adaptive leadership are valuable. However, we believe that the “adaptive” leader type does not go far enough to reach an overarching ideal leader type. Instead, ideal leaders should adapt, learn, and change as a result of their experiences in various situations and environments (or *E*) and alter aspects of self (or *P*) to prepare them to respond optimally to future situations. In other words, leaders should become “allostatic leaders” who flexibly adapt, learn, and change to attain increased capacity to meet future challenges and minimize the likelihood of burnout or “allostatic leader overload”; see Fig. 2.4. The allostatic leader responds effectively to the challenge and is more prepared to respond to subsequent challenges, including more rapid and appropriate responses with less effort (or less change from the new baseline or set point).

### 2.4.1 Section Summary

The concept of “allostatic leaders” as an ideal, overarching leader type draws from the insights offered by Kurt Lewin’s psychobiosocial field theory of human behavior and social relationships and from the concept of “allostasis” which emphasizes adaptive change to maintain physical and psychological well-being in the face of

stressors, threats, and challenges. Allostatic leaders adapt to, learn from, and change in response to experiences and challenges in order to increase capacity to meet future challenges and to minimize burnout.

## 2.5 Developing Allostatic Leaders

This section discusses how to develop allostatic leaders. A conceptual framework for allostatic leaders is briefly presented that is designed to guide leader and leadership education and development (see Grunberg, Barry, Kleber, McManigle, & Schoomaker, [in press](#), in this volume for more details). Then, three particularly important categories of growth are presented: understanding and enhancing emotional and social intelligence; coping with and managing stress to maintain performance and to minimize burnout; and entraining effective dominant responses which will become pronounced under stress.

### 2.5.1 *The FourCe-PITO Conceptual Framework for Leader and Leadership Education and Development*

Recently, Callahan and Grunberg ([in press](#)) offered a definition of leadership as well as a conceptual framework for leader and leadership education, development, and assessment. According to these authors, “Leadership is the enhancement of behaviors (actions), cognitions (thoughts and beliefs), and motivations (reasons for actions and thoughts) to achieve goals that benefit individuals and groups” (Callahan & Grunberg, [in press](#); Eklund, Barry, & Grunberg, 2017). Further, these authors offer four major domains of leadership: character, competence, context, and communication that operate across four levels of interaction and awareness: personal, interpersonal, team, and organizational (see Callahan & Grunberg, [in press](#); Eklund et al., 2017; Grunberg et al., [in press](#)).

In brief, the FourCe-PITO leadership framework provides guidance regarding the major elements for educating and developing leaders and, therefore, can be applied to allostatic leaders. With regard to this overarching leader type, consistent with Lewin’s inclusion of “*P*” of the person (which relates to character, competence, and communication) and “*E*” (which relates to context), it is relevant to include all aspects of the FourCe-PITO framework with an emphasis on interactions among the elements of this framework. All leaders need to learn and develop in each of the four C domains across each of the levels of interpersonal interaction. With regard to character, for example, integrity, trustworthiness, self-confidence, humility, and self-awareness are key elements to become effective leaders. With regard to competence, leaders must develop role-specific skills and knowledge as well as transcendent leadership skills and knowledge, such as critical thinking, decision making,



and conflict resolution. With regard to communication, effective leaders must be skilled both at receiving and sending information, verbally and nonverbally. With regard to context, leaders must be aware and adapt to various physical, psychological, social, and cultural environments and situations, including stress. To become true allostatic leaders, development in each aspect of the FourCe-PITO framework is essential. Because allostatic leaders must learn to grow and change with experience, the following sections highlight several specific topics and ways to increase the likelihood of this type of growth and change.

### ***2.5.2 Emotional Intelligence (EI or EQ) and Social Intelligence***

The phrase emotional intelligence can be used to describe an individual's capacity to recognize, discern, label, and manage emotions of self or others (Goleman, 1998). "High" emotional intelligence has been related to better leadership. There are four domains that make up emotional intelligence: self-monitoring and self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. One must first attend to or be aware of emotions of self or others (aspects of *P*), and then one must practice management (aspects of *B*) of the emotions of self or others. Emotional intelligence is important for interpersonal interactions and leader-follower relationships are dependent on emotional intelligence. A leader needs to be able to perceive the emotions of others as well as generate and regulate his/her emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Emotional intelligence can be a leadership attribute (i.e., it comes naturally to some leaders) or it may require training and practice to accomplish it fully and genuinely. For a complete review and discussion of leadership competencies, which fall under these domains, see Goleman (1998); Morey, Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2013); and Boyatzis and McKee (2005).

Effective leaders are able to attend to others, the context in which the interaction is taking place, and the context from which the other person is coming simultaneously (two levels of *E*). The best way in which to accomplish this level of awareness is to plan for it, practice potential responses, and then interact/respond when ready. An example of a time that this level of awareness may be necessary is in the case of a difficult communication such as dealing with unprofessional behavior. Before reprimanding or critiquing the subordinate, the leader should: (1) collect all available information about the unprofessional behavior (e.g., talking to others that were involved); (2) determine the exact information that will be discussed with the subordinate (e.g., the leader will not likely divulge all the details that were shared with him/her, usually to protect the person who brought the unprofessional behavior to the leader's attention); (3) plan when and where the interaction will take place with special consideration for managing the situation (e.g., in a private place, with a neutral third party if necessary [human resources personnel], near the end of the work day, before the behavior is likely to happen again) and schedule it with the

other people; (4) practice or rehearse how the interaction will go to include making an outline of points to cover if necessary, and thinking through how the other person will react; and (5) during the course of the interaction be sure to attend to cues from the person receiving the feedback and adjust as necessary. This process may seem labor intensive to do each time a leader needs to interact with a subordinate, but the allostatic leader is able to integrate and automate these steps so that energy, effort, or time needed for every interaction is reduced. But the allostatic leader never underestimates the value of practice. Practice is vital to reaching this level of emotional intelligence, which allows the leader to anticipate emotions/feelings/reactions of others and plan and respond accordingly.

The allostatic leader works to observe people in the context of the situation, tries to understand different perspectives and how the context is impacting not just emotions but also thoughts and behaviors, and then adapts their responses to what is observed. This ability to adapt one's behavior to perform appropriately in social situations, by assessing those situations, is called self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974, 1987) and is also part of "social intelligence." Like emotional intelligence, social intelligence is important for a leader. A person with social intelligence is able to perceive and interpret social situations and is flexible and adaptable in their behaviors (Zaccaro, 2002). The higher an individual moves up in an organization, where he/she is likely to experience more complex social situations, the more important social intelligence becomes (Zaccaro, 2002). Social expressivity and social control reflect greater amounts of social intelligence, and high self-monitors are more effective in social situations and more likely to emerge as leaders. Further, socially skilled leaders perform better under stressful situations (Halverson, Murphy, & Riggio, 2004). The allostatic leader has both high emotional and social intelligence, exercising a mastery over each aspect of Lewin's eq. *B*, *P*, and *E*.

Being aware of and regulating emotions of self and others are difficult in general, but are particularly difficult under conditions of stress, when it is arguably most important to get it right. Given that most interpersonal interactions are likely to take place for a leader under stressful conditions, it is important to understand how the experience of stress interferes with one's ability to effectively manage emotions of self and others. The experience of stress decreases the capacity for attending to people around you (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). This reduced capacity may intensify the attention paid to self, at the expense of attending to emotions of others. A resulting overemphasis of one's own emotions can create a distorted view of the emotions of others and reduce the effectiveness of any ensuing interpersonal interaction. Further, stress forces black/white thinking versus integration of multiple perspectives/points of view (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). This limits perspective and sets the stage for ineffective interpersonal interactions.

Understanding the effect of stress on emotional intelligence gives the leader a starting place when considering, planning, or navigating interpersonal interactions (*P x E*). For example, if a leader knows that an individual is particularly stressed over an upcoming assignment, then the leader can take that into consideration when attempting to motivate that individual to prepare for and complete said assignment. In contrast, this is preferred over focusing on the completion of the assignment at the

expense of the individual who must complete it. Recognizing stress in others may be easier than having an awareness of or the ability to regulate one's own emotions, especially during interpersonal interactions. For this reason, a leader should learn how certain stressful situations affect them and what their reactions look like at that time. To accomplish this task, the leader needs to reflect on their emotions, reactions, and behaviors and try to understand how they contributed to the situation (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). The allostatic leader asks: "What is my part in creating this situation? What did I do that seemed right and what may I need to change in the future?" This type of reflection is key to allostatic leaders' success and growth.

While it may be simple to define these concepts, putting them into practice is much more difficult, especially under stressful situations. For some direction and principles to incorporate to allow for more effective interpersonal interactions, we can look at dialectic behavioral therapy (DBT) for insight into improving interpersonal interactions. DBT is a therapy designed to help individuals who have intense emotions change the thoughts and behaviors associated with those emotions (aspects of *P*, with a focus on *B*). This change is accomplished by recognizing and accepting the emotions and accepting that the emotions need to change so that they do not lead to problems with health and life (Linehan, 1993).

Two specific DBT principles that have been developed for parents which may be helpful for leaders to practice are (1) giving people the benefit of the doubt or consideration that they are "at their best," and (2) when there are intense emotions (e.g., anger, frustration) suppressing/controlling the first action that comes to mind. When leaders perceive others as "doing their best," leaders are more likely to be thoughtful and rationale in response to reactions or behaviors of others (Harvey & Rathbone, 2015). Without first passing judgment or presuming malice as a motivation in others, leaders will be more effective. By taking time to assess what is actually underlying the other person's emotions or behaviors, leaders can determine the optimal approach to each situation. When leaders experience intense emotions (*P*), it is wise to control that emotion or not to engage rather than make a mistake that is difficult to overcome. On the other hand, if the inclination is to avoid (*B*) a situation, then the leader may need to press into the interaction to ensure that the issue does not persist or become enflamed because of unresolved problems. Modulating one's responses and, at times, acting the opposite of one's knee-jerk reaction sometimes result in more effective responses because it can lessen the emotional intensity (Harvey & Penzo, 2009) and allow for interaction to occur (or not) which can facilitate communication, building a relationship and trust. These principles, when incorporated and practiced, can facilitate better interpersonal interactions and allow leaders more flexibility in decision making and in communications with others.

These simple practices may grant a leader some margin to enact some other practices that may be slightly more complicated. For example, sometimes leaders need to push their followers, but sometimes leaders need to pause, and recalibrate their interactions with others in order to be more effective. An allostatic leader is one who recognizes the needs of each situation, and can also anticipate, plan, and act accordingly in future situations.

Further, organizations are often action oriented versus reflection oriented, pushing the bottom line versus paying attention to how the process is impacting the people

contributing to the results. It is up to the leader to step in and take a strategic pause for self or others (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005). This capacity necessitates competence in the leader's job and position, but also the confidence to step out and put the needs of followers before the results the organization is expecting. The leader must slow down, assess their own and their followers' frustration, and then try to channel it away from subordinates. The allostatic leader has the flexibility, fluidity, and ability to adjust, learn, and change to respond with increased effectiveness to each subsequent situation (*E*) and to control emotional (*P*), cognitive (*P*), and behavioral (*B*) responses. The allostatic leader is not going to get bent out of shape by the demands of each situation and will not be inhibited by fear of failure, rejection, or looking bad. Instead, they understand and take steps in each Lewinian domain (*B*, *P*, and *E*) to be better prepared for each situation.

Allostatic leaders certainly experience stress, but they develop effective coping strategies to help minimize the burden of that stress, manage responses to stress, and avoid burnout (i.e., physical, behavioral, or mental collapse). The next section discusses several available strategies to manage stress.

### ***2.5.3 Stress Management and Coping Techniques to Minimize Burnout***

The preceding section discusses how stress impacts emotional and social intelligence and how an allostatic leader can respond within that context. This section addresses how the allostatic leader can work to decrease personal stress levels to minimize its impact and to prevent burnout. Reducing stress targets the elements of Lewin's equation by optimizing health-promoting behaviors (*B*), cognitions and emotions (*P*), and social environment (*E*).

Responses to stress can have positive or negative effects on performance, depending on whether the stressor is acute or chronic, whether the stressors are perceived as predictable and controllable or not, and characteristics of the individual who is experiencing the stress. It is also relevant to the present discussion of leaders to recognize that moderate amounts of stress usually have positive effects on performance, whereas minimal or maximal amounts of stress often have negative effects on performance. This inverted U-shaped relationship between stress (or arousal) and performance was described by Yerkes and Dodson (1908) and is generally true across people and situations. The difference of stress responses among people is characterized by how much arousal is associated with peak performance and the demands of the task at hand; the maintenance of optimal performance while exposed to stress; and to what extent performance deteriorates with exposure to increased levels of stress. Stress management usually refers to reducing high levels of stress that disrupt performance and health, including physical and psychological well-being. More broadly, it could refer to adjusting or "managing" stress to put it in the optimal performance range. The allostatic leader will be most effective when they can maintain moderate arousal in themselves and others. Managing stress and enhancing well-being can be achieved through increasing certain health-promoting

behaviors, cognitions, and motivations, and decreasing those that are harmful to health. This section describes the relationship between stress and some of these behaviors and cognitions.

**Exercise.** Regular physical exercise is associated with greater life satisfaction and happiness (Stubbe, de Moor, Boomsma, & de Geus, 2007). People who engaged in physical exercise two to three times per week reported less depression, anger, and stress (Hassmen, Koivula, & Uutela, 2000). Leisure activities, including Tai Chi (Wang et al., 2010), yoga (West, Otte, Geher, Johnson, & Mohr, 2004), and social activities (Trainor, Delfabbro, Anderson, & Winefield, 2010), also enhance psychological well-being (Pressman et al., 2009) as evidenced by improved mood and self-esteem, and reduced anxiety and feelings of social isolation. As discussed above with regard to the Yerkes-Dodson curve, there is an optimal arousal level. Therefore, physical activities are most beneficial in moderation. Leaders should participate in exercise and other leisure activities as part of their regular routines. For allostatic leaders, it is particularly important to engage in activities that will optimize ability to adapt, learn, and change in order to meet new challenges more readily, more effectively, and more efficiently; so any preparation that increases well-being is valuable.

**Eating.** A nutritious diet of fruits, vegetables, lean meat, fish, and whole grains is associated with physical and psychological well-being (Blanchflower, Oswald, & Stewart-Brown, 2013; Jacka et al., 2010; Tsai, Chang, & Chi, 2012), whereas diets high in processed or fried foods, refined grains, sugary products, and beer are associated with poorer health (Jacka et al., 2010). Undereating can result in psychological distress (Carter, Kruse, Blakely, & Collings, 2011) and poor nutrition that, in turn, affects mood, cognitive processing, and behaviors (DeWall, Deckman, Gailliot, & Bushman, 2011). Further, decreases in self-control as a result of hypoglycemia, or low glucose, especially in the part of the brain responsible for self-control (prefrontal cortex [PFC]), may be related to increases in aggressive and impulsive behaviors and interfere with judgment and decision making (DeWall et al., 2011). This emotional manifestation of a state of physiological need is important to consider when attempting to manage stress especially in leadership situations. Leaders need to be aware of the importance of good nutrition to maintain mental alertness and ability to respond well, physically and psychologically, to various situations.

**Sleep.** Sleep hygiene is relevant to performance and well-being (Steptoe, O'Donnell, Marmot, & Wardle, 2008). Most healthy adults require 7–9 h of quality sleep each night (National Sleep Foundation, 2015). Getting insufficient sleep is common among leaders and lack of sleep becomes a stressor. There is substantial evidence that insufficient sleep is related to several negative psychological and physical outcomes including compromised cognitive function, increased emotionality, compromised optimistic outlook and social functioning, and increased pain to name a few (Haack & Mullington, 2005). In contrast, 8 h of quality sleep increases optimistic outlook and social functioning (Haack & Mullington, 2005). The available data are somewhat mixed regarding extension of sleep on health and performance. Long sleep has been linked to greater mortality in the case of cardiovascular, metabolic, and other diseases, but it is unclear what role sleep plays beyond the

disease or simply being in bed and sedentary (Cappuccio, D'Elia, Strazzullo, & Miller, 2010; Knutson, 2010). There are some studies available that show that extending sleep or “sleep banking” can maintain performance during subsequent periods of sleep loss (Rupp, Wesensten, Bliese, & Balkin, 2009) and it is likely that individuals are carrying around a “sleep debt” so getting more sleep is generally encouraged (Dement, 2005). It is necessary for leaders to monitor effects of insufficient sleep on performance for not only themselves, but also their followers, and make adjustments when possible.

**Awareness.** Stress management techniques, as mentioned above, include physical activities and behaviors to prepare for stress and to reduce deleterious stress responses. In addition, stress management uses techniques that focus on the cognitive domain. Mindfulness and mindfulness meditation have become increasingly popular because they are associated with better leadership (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005), decreases in perceived stress (D. C. Johnson et al., 2014), and increased performance (Jha et al., 2015). Mindfulness meditation involves manipulating awareness, an aspect of consciousness and perception of one's environment. More concretely, people who “detach” from work during off hours are more satisfied with their lives, experience less stress, and become fully engaged at work (Sonnentag, 2012). Allostatic leaders have the ability to be fully present when engaged in the act of leadership, but also to completely detach periodically to recharge or, in toxic situations, to preserve their own capacity to respond to demanding or stressful situations. Ultimately, the allostatic leader is able to enact this level of cognitive manipulation or mindfulness even under conditions that are out of his/her control. Leaders may be able to use biofeedback techniques (e.g., monitoring heart rate variability and galvanic skin response) to map their response to stressors and practice controlling those physiological reactions, so they can more effectively respond to stress.

**Beliefs/appraisals (e.g., optimism).** Optimism—holding generally favorable expectancies for their future (Carver, Scheier, & Segerstrom, 2010)—is related to less stress (Augusto-Landa, Pulido-Martos, & Lopez-Zafra, 2011), whereas pessimism—believing that bad things will happen in the future (Merriam-Webster, 2015)—is associated with increased stress. Optimism is associated with better psychological and physical health, more persistence in educational efforts, and better relationships, especially under stress. In contrast, pessimism is associated with less life satisfaction (Chang, Maydeu-Olivares, & D'Zurilla, 1997) and more depressive symptoms (Chang et al., 1997; Chang, Sanna, & Yang, 2003). The ability to generate vivid mental imagery of positive future events, instead of focusing on negative thoughts or “thinking traps” (catastrophizing, focus on negative), is associated with greater psychological well-being (Blackwell et al., 2013) and reduced stress. An allostatic leader must be able to have an optimistic outlook especially under stress.

**Spirituality.** A full discussion of spirituality as it relates to leader development is beyond the scope of this chapter as there is some debate about how to define and quantify the association between the constructs; see Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) for a systematic review of the topic. For the purposes of this chapter it is important to point out that religiosity and spirituality are related to well-being

(Ellison & Fan, 2008; Koenig, 1994; Levin & Chatters, 1998; Patrick & Kinney, 2003). In particular, spiritual fitness enhances resilience, health, and well-being (Pargament & Sweeney, 2011) and may help a leader manage stress. Further, some experts suggest that organizations are more effective and perform better when their leader uses his/her personal spiritual values to make decisions and set standards (for a review see Dent et al., 2005). Of note, however is that consideration for the religiosity or spirituality of individuals within the organization should not be overlooked and should be incorporated into the other considerations leader make with regard to social and emotional intelligence. Spirituality relates primarily to *P*, but also may include *B* when considering religious practices (e.g., attending services, confession) and *E* for social elements of some religions.

**Social support.** According to Cohen and Wills (1985) social support is the perception of and access to help, assistance, and understanding provided by other people, which can reduce or “buffer” stress and the effects of stress. Structural social support is the availability of social ties like marital, family, or church affiliations (McNally & Newman, 1999) and functional social support means that the support provided is not only available, but is also able to meet an individual’s needs. Quality of the social environment determines how work stress affects morale and psychological health where the absence of social support puts individuals at risk for developing physical and psychological problems (Berkman & Syme, 1979; Helgeson, Cohen, & Fritz, 1998; House, Robbins, & Metzner, 1982; Reifman, 1995). The topic of social support in leader development outside of Lewin’s theory or the biological aspects is more fully considered in this volume by Gosnell in the chapter entitled, “Leading with Support: The Role of Social Support for Positive and Negative Events in Leader Development.”

Successful integration into a social group leads to a sense of belonging and increased self-worth (Greenberg & Jones, 2012). For the leader, the health-promoting effects of social support, which buffer harmful effects of stress on health (Cohen & Wills, 1985), can be seen in positive neuroendocrine and immune response biomarkers (Cohen, Sherrod, & Clark, 1986; Uchino, Cacioppo, & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996), reduced psychological despair (Thoits, 1985), and increased motivation to take care of self (van Dam et al., 2005). With regard to followers, when social support is lacking from leaders and peers more stress and more unfavorable work outcomes occur (Burke, Moodie, Dolan, & Fiksenbaum, 2012). Allostatic leaders seek out social support for themselves and create or contribute to environment in which individuals feel supported. Some examples may include individuals who feel supported to do their jobs well, as a valued member of the team, to offer their own point of view, to offer a counterpoint or different perspective, and to speak up when the situation calls for it.

Managing stress can be difficult and is an ongoing process. An allostatic leader understands how health-promoting behaviors and cognitions can be used to reduce stress for themselves and others, and practices these techniques to optimize performance and minimize burnout. While a certain amount of stress can be managed, stress is unavoidable even as an allostatic leader grows, learns, and changes to meet the ever-increasing demands of leading. Because of this fact, an allostatic leader

must develop dominant responses that are effective under stressful situations and social support provides a clear mechanism for effective coping (see Chaps. 6 and 12 in this volume for further discussion of social support).

### ***2.5.4 Developing the Dominant Response***

It is well established that dominant responses (i.e., the more likely response to a given situation which either is correct or incorrect, depending on knowledge, skills, and practice) become exaggerated under stress (Zajonc & Sales, 1966), including the stress experienced when observed or judged by other people. Allostatic leaders need to be sure to develop “correct” and “best practices” as dominant responses because so many of their decisions and actions are made under stress and even when a given environment or stressor may seem mundane or lack challenge. The fact remains that others (followers and observers) are watching, judging, and evaluating the leader—all conditions that maximize the operation of dominant responses.

The easiest way to develop desirable dominant responses is to practice over and over again, remembering that practice per se does not make perfect; instead, perfect practice makes perfect. To develop as an allostatic leader with regard to this goal, begin by identifying specific areas that need improvement and then start to slowly change the thought process or behavior. For example, if a leader is inclined to be defensive when receiving push-back or apparent criticism from subordinates, then practice to change this behavior. The leader can start by first not offering any response at all, but instead take all the information into consideration and allow some time to process exactly what is being conveyed. After taking that pause, the leader can then examine what the “first response is likely to be. Once that response has been reviewed, then make a judgment about whether or not that response is necessary in the situation. Further, assess whether responding in that way would improve effective interactions with subordinates. If not, then attempt to reconcile why the response is occurring (i.e., what can the leader be doing better or how do they need to change based on the feedback and/or the situation) and what alternative response is necessary to be effective. This change can be made by calling on all the principles discussed above regarding emotional and social intelligence and reducing stress if necessary. Then finally, trying out different kinds of responses until one works better than being defensive, practicing that correct” response, and ultimately work to have a more effective dominant response in the future.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The concept of “allostatic leaders” is an ideal, overarching leader type within a psychobiosocial framework. It is influenced by field theory of human behavior and social relationships and “allostasis”—a concept which emphasizes adaptation and change to



maintain stability when exposed to subsequent stressful conditions. Allostatic leaders adapt to, learn from, and change in response to experiences and challenges to increase capacity to meet future challenges and to minimize burnout. Allostatic leaders take on challenges and learn from mistakes. Allostatic leaders are effective regardless of the context which includes stress levels of self and others, emotions of self and others, and presence or absence of social support and/or constraints.

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# Chapter 3

## General Mental Ability (*g*) and Leader Development

Steven J. Condly

Among the chapters found in the book, this one is likely to prove the most speculative, not because little is known about either human intelligence or the development of leaders, but because there has been little direct research on the relationship between the two phenomena. Intelligence itself has been the subject of study since the end of the nineteenth century; the large research literature explains the results of studies into its nature, associations, and processes. Leader development on the other hand, as a scientific construct, has not enjoyed the same amount of attention. Indeed, the construct itself represents something of a reaction to the study of leadership development. That is, some researchers in the field of leadership began to concentrate more on *leaders* as the focus of study rather than on the concepts which collectively comprise leadership (such as integrity, initiative, and vision). It is the task of this writer to explain what intelligence is, describe how it influences a variety of activities and processes, and connect it with specific aspects of leader development.

This chapter consists of nine sections. The first reviews the various definitions of intelligence. The second is concerned with how intelligence is measured (and why that matters). Section III compares and contrasts the various major theories of intelligence. The next section examines the effect of intelligence on workplace and life performance and success. The next four sections are concerned with leadership and development. Specifically, Section V reviews the literature on intelligence and leadership. Section VI addresses the limited research on the role of *g* in human development to further set up Sections VII and VIII that examine the small literature on the relationship between intelligence and leader and leadership development, respectively (with attention paid to leader development itself and a theory of how intelligence relates to development itself). Finally, Section IX concludes with a summary and suggestions for future research.

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A final note: This writer uses *g*, intelligence, IQ, and general mental ability interchangeably. The four terms are mostly synonymous, differing only in their degree of specificity. Strictly speaking, *g* is a higher order factor extracted from a factor analysis. *g*, as a statistic, is said to stand for, or to represent, general mental ability. Intelligence is the more common or colloquial term. And IQ, or the intelligence quotient, is simply the calculated score from an intelligence test.

### 3.1 Definitions of Intelligence

Intelligence is one of the most studied phenomena in all of psychology (Galton, 1869; Guilford, 1956; Jensen, 1980, 1998; Sternberg, 1985; Terman, 1916; Thurstone, 1924, 1938). It is presumed to influence academic achievement, occupational success, and a host of other social and personal variables (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994). With such a deep research base it might appear that the phenomenon is well defined, but that is hardly the case. Sternberg and Detterman (1986) edited a book which had 21 authors submit essays describing the nature and definition of intelligence. Here are some of the submissions: Intelligence is a quality of behavior (Anastasi, 1986); it is the abilities in the achievement of rationally chosen goals (Baron, 1981, 1986); it is the sum of the processes and products of learning (Brown & Campione, 1986); there are at least seven distinct abilities which assist in dealing successfully with the environment (Gardner, 1983, 1986); it is the general factor which is found in the correlation matrix of various cognitive measures and which is involved in all intellectual functioning (Jensen, 1980, 1986a, 1986b); it is the use and understanding of scripts (Schank, 1986, 1990). Some contributors emphasized biological aspects which others concentrated on the cultural or contextual settings which influence cognition. In short, there is no wanting of definitions of intelligence.

This might, on the surface, make it appear that research into intelligence is atheoretical and directionless. In fact, in spite of the many different emphases on the various constructs associated with intelligent thinking and behavior, there is a remarkable amount of agreement on some of the essentials regarding intelligence. This is substantiated by the work of three sets of researchers.

In 1921 the editors of *The Journal of Educational Psychology* asked 14 prominent psychologists (such as Terman, Thorndike, and Thurstone) about their opinions on intelligence. As most of them were in schools of education, their interests lay in how intelligence could be measured effectively and how it influenced people's performance on cognitive tasks. In 1986 Sternberg and Detterman (see Sternberg & Berg, 1986) repeated the 1921 symposium, only this time with a larger number of researchers with broader research interests. Although the first symposium was more concerned with psychometrics and the second symposium with information processing, culture, and their complex interrelationship, there was much in common between the two sets of responses.

Experts at both symposia emphasized adaptation to the environment, the importance of some basic mental operations such as perception, higher order thinking, the

generality of intelligence, and successful responses as being very important to intelligence. Additionally, there was not much of a change in the area of unity versus diversity; that is, experts at both symposia continued to argue about the overall nature of intelligence, whether it was a single entity or if it consisted of layers, levels, and parts, or was simply a collection of differing abilities (e.g., Gardner, 1983, for the latter and Jensen, 1980, for the former). Modern researchers place a considerably greater emphasis on culture, executive processing, and exact role of knowledge in intelligent thinking.

Snyderman and Rothman (1987, 1988), at just about the same time, surveyed 661 experts in intelligence and intelligence-related research about their views on the subject. As with the Sternberg and Detterman (1986) study, there was considerable variation in opinion, but also large-scale agreement on many matters of import. For instance, 53% of respondents agreed that there was some form of consensus on the kinds of behaviors that are labeled “intelligent,” and regarding the elements of intelligence, 99%, 98%, and 96%, respectively, checked the following as important: abstract thinking or reasoning, problem solving, and capacity to acquire knowledge. In sum, it seems that there is overall agreement regarding the generalities of intelligence, its purpose and expression, but not on the specifics, and those specifics include a description of its structure and essence.

### 3.2 Measurement of Intelligence

Definitional controversies aside, there is also considerable disagreement over whether intelligence can be measured accurately, if at all. The common metric of intelligence is IQ, the intelligence quotient. Intelligence tests typically consist of a wide variety of questions that tap into spatial, verbal, mathematical, and other areas. When these various components are factor analyzed, a general factor emerges. This general factor, or *g*, is purportedly a fair representation of the test-taker’s general intellectual ability. Researchers such as Jensen (1980, 1998) and Eysenck (1998) vigorously defend the validity of intelligence testing and of the strong relationship *g* has with IQ. (Note that IQ is simply a test score while *g* is an artifact from a factor analysis; they are not, in fact, the same. The IQ score, then, serves as a proxy for general mental ability.) According to Jensen (1980, 1998), the more a test loads on *g*, the better its predictive and criterion validity.

With a history that includes eugenic and racist policies (see Brody, 1992; Eysenck & Kamin, 1981) IQ has been challenged in regard to its validity, and some have even questioned its usefulness at all (Flynn, 1991; Gardner, 1983; Gould, 1996; but see Carroll, 1995 for a critique of Gould, 1996). With expansions in intelligence theorizing (Ceci, 1996; Gardner, 1983; Sternberg, 1985) it is only natural that tests of intelligence which were based on more narrow definitions of intelligence would come under scrutiny. Nevertheless, to date, no other construct in psychology has shown the predictive and explanatory capability that intelligence, as represented by IQ, has shown (Anderson, 1992; Jensen, 1998).



### 3.3 Theories of Intelligence

Modern theories of intelligence attempt to define the construct, describe its structure, relate its amenability to measurement, and explain how it influences behavior. In considering all that, the theories necessarily differ significantly. Five such theories will be examined in order to give the reader an understanding of the present state of the affairs.

The first theory to be described is that of *g*, or the general intelligence factor, so-named by its discoverer Charles Spearman (1904, 1927). Perhaps the major proponent of this theory is the late Arthur Jensen. According to Jensen (1998), and borrowing from Spearman (1904, 1927), intelligence is considered to be a two-factor construct. One factor is general intelligence (*g*), a mental ability which pervades all intellectual functioning. The second is specific ability (*s*). Such abilities as musical pitch and letter memorization are unique and not generally transferable to other situations. Jensen (1969, 1980, 1998) hypothesizes a rather large heritability estimate for *g*, on the order of 0.80 (meaning that as much as 80% of general intelligence is the result of genetic influence). *g* has been shown oftentimes to be the best predictor of academic achievement (Brody, 1997; Jensen, 1980), and occupational success (Arvey, 1986; Brody, 1997; Gottfredson, 1986a, 1986b, 1986c; Hawk, 1986; Hunter, 1986; Hunter & Hunter, 1984; Jensen, 1986a; Ree & Earles, 1991, 1992; Ree, Earles, & Teachout, 1994), and to be a considerable influence on prosocial behaviors such as law-abidingness, likelihood of voting, and not going on welfare (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994). Some theorists posit that general intelligence underlies, to some extent, the present-day social structure in terms of social status and achievement (Eysenck, 1998; Herrnstein, 1971; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Lynn, 1987; Murray, 1998, 2002, 2013).

The reason for the large and pervasive influence of general intelligence has to do with its purported physiological basis in neural efficiency (Deary, 1993; Detterman, 1993; Jensen, 1998; Matarazzo, 1992; Reed & Jensen, 1991). If one brain is able to perceive, process, and transmit information (that is, electrochemical signals) more efficiently than another brain, that first brain is likely to be able to handle more total information, interpret more complex information, and execute behaviors that are both more complicated and adaptive. In psychological terms, those persons with higher levels of *g* can apprehend experience better, educate relations better, and educate correlates better than persons with lower levels of *g* (Jensen, 1998; Spearman, 1927).

A variation on the theory of *g* is that of Cattell and Horn (see Cattell, 1987; Horn, 1968; Horn & Cattell, 1966). In order to explain older persons' ability to learn, memorize, and perform on an even or slightly increasing gradient, but their relative inability to maintain high levels of success in dealing with novelty, general intelligence was thought to be composed of two separate entities: *g<sub>c</sub>* (crystallized ability) and *g<sub>f</sub>* (fluid ability). Crystallized ability is malleable, subject to cultural influence, and is able to maintain itself throughout the life span. Fluid ability is more culture free, not as subject to attempts at modification, cannot easily be taught, and seems to decline throughout the life span after hitting its zenith early in the third decade of life. The division of general mental ability into two components, one of which is amenable to educational influence and seems environmentally based, the other of which is more

impervious to modification and seems genetically based, accords nicely with behavioral genetic studies (Browne-Miller, 1995; Scarr & McCartney, 1983).

Sternberg (1985) has accepted the work of Spearman (1904, 1927) and Horn and Cattell (1966) and gone a step further. His triarchic theory of intelligence posits not one (*g*), or two (*g<sub>c</sub>* and *g<sub>p</sub>*), but three separate factors in mental ability. He accepts the existence of an overall general factor and of the predictive and explanatory validity of fluid and crystallized abilities, but he considers them, on the whole, to be inadequate. That is, there are certain situations where strong analytical skills are not needed. Thus, someone with such skills, though presumably intelligent, probably would not succeed if other skills were called for. Such an example would be one where a creative solution was needed, or where something had to get done “in the real world” as opposed to solving an academic theoretical problem (Sternberg, 1985). The triarchic theory hypothesizes intelligence to have three components: contextual, which involves adaptation, selection, and shaping of one’s environment; experiential, which includes dealing with novelty, automating procedures, and the relationship between those two processes; and componential, which includes metacomponents, performance components, and knowledge acquisition components. For Sternberg, general intelligence is found in one’s efficient use of metacomponents such as planning and monitoring, since these processes apply across domains. The triarchic approach represents an extension of intelligence theory out of the psychology laboratory and into the “real world” where attributes such as creativity and getting along with others can matter as much as analytical ability matters (Sternberg, 1999; Sternberg & Williams, 1996).

Another theory which accepts Spearman (1904, 1927) and Horn and Cattell (1966) is Ceci’s (1996) bioecological theory. By his own admission, “the bioecological theory is derivative from the triarchic theory but there are important differences” (p. 210). The bioecological theory, like the triarchic theory, considers context, components, and experience, and both theories allow for a consideration of development. Where they differ is in the importance accorded context. In the bioecological framework context does not just inform information processing and metacomponents, but also perceptions themselves. Additionally, knowledge is treated as a kind of context. Finally, in the triarchic theory the domain-general nature of metacomponents allows them to be considered as part of general intelligence, whereas in the bioecological framework there is no room for a general intelligence since even the metacomponents themselves are hypothesized to be domain specific.

A final theory that deserves mention only because of the amount of educational reform effort it has spurred is Gardner’s (1983) theory of multiple intelligences. Like Ceci’s (1996) bioecological theory, the theory of multiple intelligences does not posit the existence of a general factor of intelligence, but unlike any of the aforementioned theoretical perspectives Gardner’s (1983) theory considers intelligence to be so broad based as to include virtually all of human functioning. The theory is based on eight criteria (such as the isolation of the ability when brain damage is incurred, the existence of savants, and an identifiable set of operations) related to neuroscience and psychology that, when combined, leave eight distinct intelligences. (In fact, the eight intelligences are not the only intelligences that could be identified using Gardner’s criteria. Indeed, he originally identified seven, added an eighth—naturalist—and remains undecided on a ninth—existential). The theory has

been criticized as lacking a firm (or, indeed, *any*) experimental or statistical foundation (Brody, 1992; Ceci, 1996; Sternberg, 1990). In fact, one criticism is that the eight intelligences (such as linguistic and bodily-kinesthetic) are nothing more than talents or abilities (Carroll, 1993; see Deese, 1993, for a discussion of the differences between abilities and intelligence).

It can be seen in summary that intelligence, beyond basic descriptors, is not easily defined, its structure is not clearly visible, and its essence remains vague. It was for these and other reasons than no less a scholar than Jensen (1998) wrote the following:

My study of these two symposia (the ones in 1921 and 1986 mentioned by Sternberg & Detterman, 1986) and of many other equally serious attempts to define 'intelligence' in purely verbal terms has convinced me that psychologists are incapable of reaching a consensus on its definition ... Therefore, the term 'intelligence' should be discarded altogether in scientific psychology, just as it discarded 'animal magnetism' (and) as the science of chemistry discarded 'phlogiston.' (p. 48)

Nevertheless, he (and a great many others) maintains its usefulness in everyday life and in research (see Brody, 1992; Browne-Miller, 1995; Ceci, 1996; Eysenck, 1998; Gottfredson, 1997; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Locurto, 1991; Neisser et al., 1996; Sternberg & Detterman, 1986).

### 3.4 *g* and Life Success

What is the evidence that general mental ability affects life success? And if it does affect it, what is the degree of effect? Leadership can reasonably be considered a type of school, team, business, or military activity. If this is so, then it would follow that the factors which influence success in these areas would imply that they should also influence successful leadership. Furthermore, if one can develop into a successful school, team, business, or military performer, then it too stands to reason that one can develop into a successful leader.

Research conducted over the past few decades demonstrates that general mental ability is by far the single best predictor of occupational success. Ree and Earles (1991) tested the predictive validity of *g* and various specific abilities ( $s_1, s_2, s_3 \dots s_i$ ) regarding job-specific training grades for 82 Air Force enlistee jobs. Using the ASVAB, they demonstrated how the several specific abilities added almost nothing to the significant predictive effects of *g* on training success. In a following study (Ree & Earles, 1992), they examined the relationship between these predictors and actual job performance. Again, *g* was the only significant predictor ( $r = 0.33$ ), with the various specific abilities adding only 0.05 to predictive accuracy. Further research by Ree and Earles (Ree et al., 1994) confirmed this finding and a final study (Ree, Carretta, & Teachout, 1995) demonstrated the superiority of *g* to prior knowledge in predicting success for training in complex tasks. These findings are noteworthy in that *g* was essentially found to be the only valid predictor of job training and of job performance. Schmidt, Ones, and Hunter (1992) confirmed the aforementioned findings and a later review by Schmidt and Hunter (2004) concludes with the following data- and research-based assertion:

GMA predicts both occupational level attained and performance within one's chosen occupation and does so better than any other ability, trait, or disposition and better than job experience. The sizes of these relationships with GMA are also larger than most found in psychological research. Evidence is presented that weighted combinations of specific aptitudes tailored to individual jobs do not predict job performance better than GMA alone (p. 162).

Even when one might suspect that restriction of range might greatly mitigate the effect of intelligence on predicting occupational success, studies indicate that intelligence still manages to maintain its distinction as the preeminent predictor of success. Judge, Klinger, and Simon (2010) note that general mental ability not only positively affects income levels and occupational prestige, but that "the careers of high-GMA individuals ascended more steeply over time than those of low-GMA individuals" (p. 92). High-GMA individuals tended to attain more education, complete more job training (and complete it more successfully), and select more cognitively complex jobs. This is reminiscent of a portion of the title of Ceci and Papierno's (2005) article: *When the "have-nots" gain but the "haves" gain even more*. Spitz (1999, 2003) demonstrates that educational interventions designed to raise the performance of low-SES students do indeed work; but when similar efforts are directed toward similarly poor students with higher *g* levels, they gain even more from the interventions. Judge et al. (2010) note that more intelligent individuals take greater advantage of education, training, and job complexity than do less intelligent individuals. This is true even at the highest levels. Park, Lubinski, and Benbow (2008) show how even among the intellectually gifted, there is still a demonstrable rank ordering of "success" (e.g., number of publications; number of patents) based on a person's IQ quartile.

Finally, Coumbe, Condly, and Skimmyhorn (in press) document the history of officer testing in the US Army and note that years ago entrance into the US Military Academy (USMA) was a remarkably difficult task to accomplish. Prospective cadets would often attend, and even graduate from, Ivy League colleges in order to prepare themselves to sit the Academy's entrance exams (said exams taking 22 h to complete). USMA utilized the "Thayer method" of instruction whereby cadets would teach themselves the coursework and then demonstrate their mastery before professors. As the nation's premier engineering school for many years, and with a 50% attrition rate, it was no small feat to graduate. Of course, graduation did not imply promotion in rank beyond Second Lieutenant as there were also promotion exams to sit. It is no wonder then that officers in the US Army could ably plan, strategize, and fight wars as well as segue into the business world and become heads of corporations and railroads.

While it is well known that *g* affects school performance, there has been a tendency of late to place greater emphasis on factors such as self-efficacy to explain learning and performance. Pajares and Kranzler (1995) both found that mental ability and self-efficacy affect mathematical problem solving in school. However, in running a path analysis, they were able to demonstrate that mental ability also directly affected self-efficacy itself. Thus, they were able to demonstrate that ability has both a direct and an indirect effect on school performance. Sternberg (1997) maintains that intelligence matters for "lifelong learning and success" because of its ongoing effect on problem identification, data gathering, information processing,

and the like.  $g$  much more strongly predicts school achievement than does self-efficacy or subject interest (Spinath, Spinath, Harlaar, & Plomin, 2006), and the latest research (see Stankov & Lee, 2017) supports the interactions between self-beliefs such as self-efficacy and intelligence.  $g$  has even been shown to be the main personal protective factor when children live in extremely stressful (or toxic) environments (Condly, 2006). It is theorized that high intelligence allows the child to understand the situation, make appropriate adjustments, and develop plans to extricate himself or herself from the situation.

The estimated correlation of  $g$  with job performance averages 0.50, ranging from a low of 0.20 with low-complexity jobs to a high of 0.80 with high-complexity jobs (Gottfredson, 1997, 2002). All jobs, no matter the complexity, require learning on the part of the worker.  $g$  effectively constrains or affects the rate at which knowledge is gained, how the worker can transfer that knowledge from the classroom to the job site, and how well the worker can adjust to unforeseen or new problems. It also has an indirect effect on work performance in that it affects a worker's motivation (specifically, the worker's self-efficacy perceptions). The higher one's  $g$  level, the more a worker knows, the more he or she knows what he or she knows, and the more accurate those self-efficacy perceptions are likely to be. As a result, a high  $g$  worker is not only apt to be more skilled, but he or she is also better able to maintain levels of interest and self-efficacy necessary to sustain activity and problem solving (especially in the face of complexity or novelty). These relationships will be further explored in Section VIII and applied to leader development processes and constructs.

### 3.5 $g$ and Leadership

As the reader of this book is no doubt aware, *leadership* development is not the same as *leader* development. The former concerns a concept while the latter a person. Nevertheless, they are obviously related and, as such, leadership development should be discussed. An additional reason for its inclusion in this chapter is the fact that much more research has been done with regard to how intelligence and leadership relate than how intelligence relates to leader development, and thus the necessity of this section.

Early studies found a rather strong relationship between general mental ability and leadership. For example, McCuen (1929) compared the intelligence scores of the leaders of 58 different types of organization at Stanford University with the average scores of members in those organizations. He found that the intelligence of leaders was not very much higher than that of group members on average. Of course, since this is Stanford University, there was likely a severe restriction of range problem attenuating the correlation. Stogdill (1948), in his review of personal factors associated with leadership, found that studies reported a very wide variety of correlations between IQ and leadership. These correlations ranged from nearly zero (0.06) to nearly perfect (0.90). He concluded that most studies showed a positive relationship but that extreme differences between the IQs of leaders and group members typically reduced leader effectiveness. Two years later, Green (1950) was

able to differentiate effective and ineffective leaders in terms of their verbal intelligence scores. Using modern effect size statistics (i.e., Cohen's  $d$ ), the difference between most effective ( $n = 27$ ) and least effective ( $n = 27$ ) on verbal intelligence equaled 0.837. Cohen (1992) offers the convention that at least 80% of a standard deviation's difference in the scores of two groups is large, about the difference in IQ between the holder of a PhD and a typical college freshman.

A decade later, Mann (1959) reviewed 69 measures of intelligence (45 questionnaires and objective tests; 24 adjective ratings). Even though he found that 88% of the 196 results in the studies demonstrated a positive relationship between intelligence and leadership, two of the four most frequently used measures of intelligence are hardly measures of intelligence. "The four most frequently used measures of intelligence are: school or college grades, American Council of Education (ACE) Psychological Exam, Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16 P.F.) Factor B, and total number of responses on the Rorschach" (p. 243). Nevertheless, even with such a collection of measures, the results indicated that verbal intelligence was a better predictor of leadership than was nonverbal tests of memory or mathematical ability. In somewhat more careful research 4 years later, Ghiselli (1963a, 1963b, 1963c) provided strong evidence of a relationship between intelligence and managerial and leadership success. However, echoing Stodgill (1948), he stated that the "Results ... suggest that the relationship between intelligence and managerial success is curvilinear with those individuals earning both low and very high scores being less likely to achieve success in management positions than those with scores at intermediate levels" (Ghiselli, 1963a, p. 898). However, the relationship between measured intelligence and job level was essentially linear and positive. He hypothesizes that a trait such as high intelligence acts as a gatekeeper for promotion and thereby for success.

These older studies all give evidence of a positive and, more often than not, strong relationship between intelligence and leadership. However, more modern studies are often equivocal. When studying managers and subordinates, for example, it is possible that intelligence differences are simply an artifact of the entire selection process (Jago, 1982). That is, if above-average intelligence (whether determined through an actual test or inferred from the possession of a graduate degree) is a criterion for consideration for promotion to management, then it must necessarily be the case that management will ultimately be shown to have higher intelligence than ordinary employees. This objection aside, Lord, De Vader, and Alliger (1986) reanalyzed Mann's (1959) data and concluded that "the 'true' correlations between leadership perceptions and intelligence ... were significant ... (I)ntelligence is a key characteristic in predicting leadership perceptions" (p. 407). Two late 20<sup>th</sup> century studies (Atwater, Dionne, Avolio, Camobreco, & Lau, 1999; Smith & Foti, 1998) continued this new trend in equivocal results. Studying leadership among cadets at USMA, Atwater et al. (1999) found evidence that intelligence, as measured by the SAT (not an actual intelligence test, but typically used as one in educational and psychological research), predicted who would be more likely to emerge as a leader, but not who would be more effective. Slightly earlier, however, Smith and Foti (1998) did find evidence of a significant positive relationship between intelligence (as measured with the Wonderlic Personnel Test) and both leadership ratings and rankings.

More recently, twenty-first-century studies continue this trend in equivocation. In Mumford et al., 2000, researchers investigated leadership in the US Army; specifically, identifying what type of person entering the Army was likely to promote to high ranks. Referring to measures of personality, motivation, and ability, they found no evidence for a strong direct relationship with leader performance. However, they do note that “patterns of personality, motivation, and ability did exert somewhat stronger effects on skill development and performance” (p. 130). In testing whether tacit knowledge could predict leader effectiveness (in both the military and in corporations), Hedlund et al. (2003) found that it did predict effectiveness beyond a test of general verbal ability. However, it is important to note that general verbal ability did correlate with leader effectiveness by itself.

Replicating previous literature reviews such as Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959), but utilizing modern meta-analytic techniques, Judge, Colbert, and Ilies (2004) meta-analyzed 150 samples from 96 sources. They correct the restriction of range problem with Mann’s (1959) study and reported a correlation of 0.27 between intelligence and leadership. Correlations of leadership with “paper and pencil” measures of intelligence were lower than were correlations with perceptual measures. This led them to conclude that “the relationship between intelligence and leadership is considerably lower than previously thought” (p. 542).

Furthering these increasingly weak findings are the studies conducted by Furnham, Crump, and Chamorro-Premuzic (2007); by Gottfried et al. (2011); and by Li, Arvey, and Song (2011). The first group used two different intelligence tests and found no distinction among managers of managers, managers, and non-managers on either test. (Cohen’s *d* statistics were generally below 0.20; by convention [see Cohen, 1992], results below 0.20 are considered to be trivial.) The second group found no effect of IQ on motivation to lead. However, since the population was gifted students, there is the problem of restriction of range. Using the very reliable Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (the WAIS-R), Reichard et al. (2011) correlated IQ with leadership work duties, work leadership positions, non-work leadership positions, and transformational leadership. The correlations were 0.16, 0.14, 0.28, and 0.09, respectively. In this study, only the relationship between intelligence and non-work leadership was noteworthy. Finally, the third group sought to determine how strongly general mental ability, self-esteem, and family SES were related to leadership role occupancy and to leader advancement. General mental ability was measured with the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). Li et al. (2011) found that “the influence of general mental ability on the two leadership variables was not significant for either males or females, but the difference in its effect on the initial status of supervisory scope for males and females was significant” (p. 520). Again, these represent weak findings which contradict research conducted years ago. An excellent summary of present-day findings comes from Kanape-Willingshofer and Bergner (2015):

The fact that leadership tasks are of high complexity and that understanding complex issues is a core duty of leaders, suggests that cognitive ability is even more important for leaders compared to non-leaders. Interestingly, empirical research only partly supports this assumption .... With regard to the relationship between cognitive ability and leadership it could also be argued that this relationship is a curvilinear one are linear approaches are simply not

able to correctly characterize it. Several early studies around Ghiselli (1963) and Stogdill (1948) reported that individuals with either very high or very low IQ-scores had a higher chance for career derailment. In fact, this inverted u-shaped correlation between cognitive ability and leadership might be due to the discrepancy between the leader's and the follower's cognitive ability. The more or respectively less intelligent a leader is the more his or her vocational objectives communication strategies, interests, and behavioral patterns will diverge from those of the followers (cf. also Simonton, 1985). (pp. 179–180)

### 3.6 g and Development

In spite of the thousands of articles and books written on the subject of intelligence, surprisingly little has been written on how intelligence affects human development. One book on the subject, Anderson's (1992) *Intelligence and development: A cognitive theory*, contends that intelligence places a constraint on development (in terms of capacity and rate). He further states that "intelligence and development are regarded as merely different ways of talking about the same thing. If we are interested in intelligence, we talk about the steady state structure of cognition; and if we are interested in development, we talk about how this structure changes" (p. 1). (Note: The development to which Anderson refers is more specifically *cognitive* development rather than social or physical development.) Anderson's position is that intelligence and development are separate phenomena that influence each other but which "are based on quite different kinds of mechanisms" (p. 3).

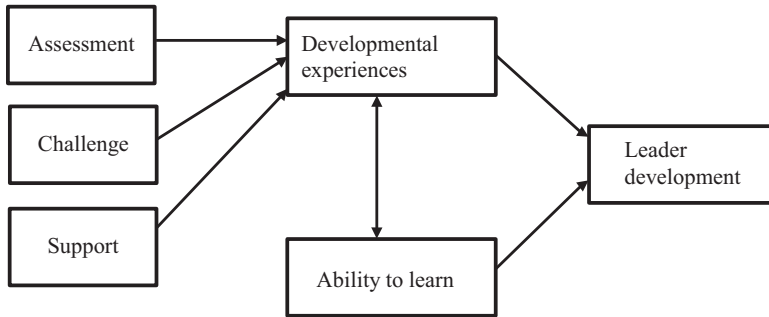
Central to nearly all theories of development is the notion of stages, that is, collections of related thoughts, beliefs, processes, and actions which are qualitatively different from the stages which precede them and which come after them. Piaget (Piaget & Cook, 1952), for example, posits the existence of four stages in intellectual development: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational. According to Piaget, understanding *conservation* is not something that occurs in the first two stages because the child lacks the necessary skills and capacity to engage in such thinking. Kohlberg (1984) applies such stage theorizing to moral development. He identifies six stages of moral reasoning that, again, are qualitatively different from each other. For example, a person operating at Stage 3 (the good-child orientation) lacks the capability of judging what is moral based on abstract ethical principles of justice and equity (which are Stage 6 moral principles). Unlike Piaget, however, Kohlberg is like most developmental theorists in that he also posits the notion of crises that arise and have to be overcome in order to progress from one stage to the next. A final example is Erickson's (Erikson, 1968) eight psychosocial stages theory. In his theory, individuals develop when they confront a conflict involving ourselves and how we relate to other people. An example is the crisis of industry versus inferiority that individuals face in their middle childhood. Here, individuals compare themselves to others and receive either praise or criticism from others relative to their learning and work. Praise tends to build a sense of achievement (industry) while criticism (or the mere lack of praise) tends to build a sense of inferiority.



Since  $g$  typically has been studied as an individual differences phenomenon, most developmental psychologists have paid it little mind. Even Piaget (Piaget & Cook, 1952), writing as he did on intellectual development and cognition, was more concerned with what distinguished children of different ages; he did not compare high- and low-performing children of the same age. This dearth of research on the relationship of intelligence and human development has not served the scientific community very well; in fact, it is something to be regretted. People do differ in terms of general mental ability, and people do have differing developmental trajectories. Since  $g$  has been shown to be a factor of singular importance in a great many phenomena (such as academic achievement, accident-proneness, occupational success), it simply stands to reason that it would play a strong role in how, and in how well, people develop. A more detailed examination of the relationship between general mental ability and development could perhaps serve the purpose of this publication most directly. This assertion is founded on the notion that the capacity for developing the ability to operate at increasing levels of cognitive complexity is potentially linked to an enhanced ability to perform at higher levels of leadership. This too serves as the basis for a more detailed examination of  $g$  and leader development explicitly and guides future research on the topic as discussed below.

### 3.7 $g$ and Leader Development

This writer agrees with Dalakoura (2010) that we must distinguish between leader and leadership development. In the case of the former, we ask “What qualities do we need to develop in our leaders?” while in the latter we ask “What qualities do we need to develop in our organization?” While chemistry and physics have the planetary model of the atom and psychology has Carroll’s (1993) three-stratum model of cognitive abilities, leader development unfortunately has no such generally accepted and comprehensive model. A wide variety of concepts, constructs, processes, systems, and other inputs are identified and asserted to influence leader development. More often than not there is overlap between various models offered (as is not surprising). Avolio and Hannah (2008), for example, while admitting that “a validated framework and theory for leader development does not yet fully exist” (p. 331), identify five factors related to leader development readiness. These are learning goal orientation, developmental efficacy, self-awareness, leader complexity, and meta-cognitive ability. McCauley, Kanaga, and Lafferty (2010) posit a two-part model (see Fig. 3.1). In their model, the power of developmental experiences is influenced by assessment, challenge, and support. They further specify that the process of leader development is a function of the interaction of the variety of those developmental experiences and of the ability to learn. It is reasonable to combine these two as the efficacy of a model-based system or process dealing with people will depend greatly on their readiness to learn and to develop. (Note: This model has not been subjected to statistical verification utilizing hierarchical linear regression, path analysis, or structural equation modeling [SEM]. The model’s veracity is based on reviewing the literature, distilling concepts, and professional experience. This is not to cast aspersions at the model; it is merely to make clear that this is not a scientifically tested model.)



**Fig. 3.1** Leader development model

McCauley, Van Velsor, and Ruderman (2010) are quite clear that “developmental experiences and the ability to learn have a direct impact on each other” (p. 5). What is also clear from this model, however, is that *ability to learn* has not only a direct effect upon *leader development* but also an indirect one (through those *developmental experiences*). Conversely, the model states that *developmental experiences* directly influence *leader development* and indirectly influence it through *ability to learn*. Again, while there is no direct experimental scientific evidence to support the veracity of the model and its relationships, the remaining parts of this chapter reference the research literature which supports or casts doubts upon these claims.

Little direct and specific research has been done examining how general mental ability affects leader development. What little research has been done all seems to have been conducted in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Boyce, Zaccaro, and Wisecarver (2010) ran a structural equation model analysis on the propensity for self-development of leadership attributes. The path between cognitive ability (as measured by the Wonderlic Personnel Test) and two types of skill (self-directed learning competencies and self-regulatory skills) was found to be an insignificant path in the model. However, these two types of skill were not actually measured; instead, the researchers used Likert-scale items to measure perceptions of ability or self-efficacy. This means that it might have been possible to show a significant path had these skills been properly measured. Three years earlier, Foti and Hauenstein (2007) examined the effect a variety of cognitive factors (e.g., intelligence, dominance, general self-efficacy, and self-monitoring) had on leader emergence and leader effectiveness. They reported that “(p)ersons scoring high on the set of individual difference variables emerged as leaders, were promoted to leadership positions, and were rated by their superiors as effective leaders” (p. 347).

Two more studies realized positive effects as well. Blair, Gorman, Helland, and Delise (2014), using the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal to measure intelligence, and after controlling for industry type, found support for their two hypotheses ( $H_1$ —intelligence positively related to goal quality;  $H_2$ —intelligence positively related to the correspondence between feedback and goals). More substantial support for the relationship between intelligence and leader development comes from Daly, Egan, and O’Reilly (2015). Using a cohort of nearly 17,000 individuals in the United Kingdom, the cohort was given the British Ability Scales test at age 10. Results were as follows:

On average a 1 standard deviation increase in cognitive ability predicted a 6.2 percentage point higher probability of leadership role occupancy. In Study 1, adjusted models showed that 37.3% of high cognitive ability children (+1 SD) occupied leadership positions compared to 25.4% of low cognitive ability (−1 SD) children and this gap was even more pronounced in Study 2 (27.8% vs. 15.1%). Cognitive ability showed a graded association with the number of employees supervised in both studies and educational attainment. (p. 323)

However, just as there was equivocation in the results of studies on *g* and leadership, so too here not all studies agreed. For example, Guerin et al. (2011) found that “(a) adolescent IQ had neither a direct nor an indirect relationship with adult leadership potential, nor did it interact with extraversion in predicting adult leadership potential” (p. 482). Thus, even in the far smaller field of *g* and leader development studies, there is no consensus on findings.

### 3.8 Correlates of *g* and Leadership

The relationship between *g* and leadership has a long but only somewhat deep history; *g* and leader development, on the other hand, have only a recent and thin history. But there is good news: Correlates of *g* (such as learning, knowledge, and reflection) have been studied much more frequently as *personal characteristics* of leaders and as *essential elements* in leadership practice. These studies are herein reviewed.

A great many studies refer to skills that are asserted to be essential for good leaders to possess and utilize. Skills are a form of procedural knowledge (Anderson & Lebiere, 1998; Gagné, Yekovich, & Yekovich, 1993) and are best defined as “knowing how” (in contrast to its companion form, declarative knowledge, which is knowledge that something is the case). Through deliberate practice one can completely automate the execution of the skills one possesses so that they operate cleanly, efficiently, quickly, and unconsciously (Ericsson & Charness, 1994). Campbell and Dardis (2004), for example, explain the US Army’s “Be, Know, Do” model of leadership. The know component is composed of interpersonal skills, conceptual skills, and technical skills. It is clear that these would all be strongly affected by general mental ability.

The Spring 2000 edition of *The Leadership Quarterly* (see Yammarino, 2000) is devoted to the topic of leadership skills. In this issue Connelly et al. (2000) give a very detailed study examining relationships among complex problem-solving skills, social judgment skills, and leader knowledge with respect to leader achievement and quality of solutions to ill-defined leadership problems. Marshall-Mies et al. (2000) sought to identify those skills to be measured cognitively and metacognitively in order to predict leadership potential. The skills they identified are general problem solving; planning and implementation; solution construction; solution evaluation; social judgement; and metacognitive assessment. These skills vary in terms of their content and methods of execution, but they are all obviously strongly affected by *g*. Although causality was not determined, Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, and Reiter-Palmon (2000) found that as they tested increasingly higher ranked officers—there were six levels from Second Lieutenant to First Lieutenant to Captain to Major

to Lieutenant Colonel to Colonel—problem solving, systems, and social skills were all increasingly superior. They concluded that “(l)eaders, no matter how gifted, initially enter organizations as novices. Thus, they lack basic concepts that provide them with an understanding of the work, organizational contexts, and leadership roles” (p. 89). Zaccaro, Mumford, Connelly, Marks, and Gilbert (2000) give details about the development of the instruments used in the aforementioned analysis. This research gives clear support for two related notions. One is that *g* plays a role in promotion. Since skill acquisition and development are primarily mental, it is reasonable to conclude that higher levels of *g* will assist any one person in mastering those skills. And such a person would thereby be more likely to be promoted as he or she shows himself or herself to be more expert and more professional. The other related notion is that skills, even complex ones, are indeed learnable; through practice and support individuals can learn, develop, and master skills and knowledge.

Other researchers use a term related to skill: ability. Within psychology skill and ability are readily differentiated, but not all leadership researchers are psychologists. Ability is typically imagined or assumed to be more fundamental to a person than a skill is and also somewhat less amenable to intervention. This writer acknowledges the use of the term and offers this brief summary review. Campbell and Dardis (2004), in their aforementioned “Be, Know, Do” model, identify intelligence as a fundamental mental attribute (one of seven such) of their model. They define intelligence as “the ability to think, learn, and reflect, and then to apply what has been learned” (p. 29). Pech (2003) lists nearly 50 abilities (e.g., assessing, guiding, analyzing, perceiving) as part of the MAPA leadership architecture. Such abilities as these would likely be strongly influenced by general mental ability and thus show a positive relationship between *g* and leadership. Among the factors which Murphy and Johnson (2011) identify as essential for engaging in leadership tasks are the ability to grasp abstractions and social ideals. And on a related note, Vaculik, Prochazka, and Smutny (2014) wrote of “competencies” rather than abilities; however, the results are what would be expected. Task-related competencies, as opposed to people- and self-related competencies, were correlated with group performance, leadership self-efficacy, and perceived leadership effectiveness. All three were correlated with leadership emergence.

Some researchers speak of leadership and leader development in self-development terms. That is, rather than emphasizing what training can deliver *to* the person, these theorists suggest that what matters more is what the person does *for* himself or herself. Day (2001), for example, states that “within this tradition, development is thought to occur primarily through training individual, primarily intrapersonal, skills and abilities” (p. 583). But he also emphasizes that the “the overarching development strategy is to build the intrapersonal competence needed to form an accurate model of oneself (Gardner, 1993, p. 9), to engage in healthy attitude and identity development (Hall & Seibert, 1992), and to use that self-model to perform effectively in any number of organizational roles” (p. 584). That self-based models of leader development would be influenced by general mental ability is rather clear given this quotation from Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, and Walumbwa (2005): “A key factor contributing to the development of authentic leadership is the self-awareness or personal insight of the leader ... (T)he second fundamental component of authentic leadership development is self-regulation” (p. 347).

Learning seems to get top billing on the list of desirable or essential skills, traits, characteristics, abilities, or competencies for leader development. For example, Popper (2005; see also Popper & Mayseless, 2007) asserts that “three developmental psychological principles are essential for leaders’ development, i.e. experiential learning, vicarious learning, and the suitability of certain developmental aspects to relevant critical periods” (p. 62). Here, learning appears twice; the strong relationship between  $g$  and learning need not be reasserted. And Marcy and Mumford (2010) demonstrated how training in causal analysis greatly improved leader performance, particularly on increasingly complex tasks. Although not supportive of the practice, Reichard and Johnson (2011) note that “(l)eadership development usually takes the form of formal training, job rotation, or off-site workshops where the instructor or coordinator of the program determines what and how the leader will learn” (p. 34). Here too one can infer that  $g$  would play a strong role in leader development since  $g$  affects the efficacy of training, job rotations, and workshops.

Whether leaders develop their skills, knowledge bases, competencies, and abilities or continually learn how to deal with complexity, the results are unambiguous. Individuals who are more skilled, have wider and deeper knowledge bases, are more competent and able, and learn efficiently tend to make better workers in general and leaders in particular. That  $g$  would play a role in this is most certainly to be expected.

### 3.9 Conclusions and Future Research

Since leader development is the newer field (compared to leadership development), the field can advance by incorporating the rich research history of general mental ability with efforts at understanding, explaining, and influencing leader development. The importance of  $g$  has been well documented in this chapter, but the following from Jensen (1998) should suffice to allay any potential objections to its singular influence on a wide variety of outcomes.

The  $g$  factor (and highly  $g$ -loaded test scores, such as the IQ) shows a more far-reaching and universal practical validity than any other coherent psychological construct yet discovered. It predicts performance to some degree in every kind of behavior that calls for learning, decision, and judgment. Its validity is an increasing monotonic function of the level of cognitive complexity in the predicted criterion. Even at moderate levels of complexity of the criterion to be predicted,  $g$  is the *sine qua non* of test validity. The removal of  $g$  (by statistical regression) from any psychometric test or battery, leaving only group factors and specificity, absolutely destroys their practical validity when they are used in a population that ranges widely in general ability.

The validity of  $g$  is most conspicuous in scholastic performance, not because  $g$ -loaded tests measure specifically what is taught in school, but because  $g$  is intrinsic to learning novel material, grasping concepts, distinctions, and meanings. The pupil’s most crucial tool for scholastic learning beyond the primary grades—reading comprehension—is probably the most highly  $g$ -loaded attainment in the course of elementary education.

In the world of work,  $g$  is the main cognitive correlate and best single predictor of success in job training and job performance. Its validity is not nullified or replaced by formal education (independent of  $g$ ), nor is it decreased by increasing experience on the job.

Although *g* has ubiquitous validity as a predictor of job performance, tests that tap other ability factors in addition to *g* may improve the predictive ability for certain types of jobs—tests of special ability for mechanical jobs and tests of speed and accuracy for clerical and secretarial jobs.

Meta-analyses of hundreds of test validation studies have shown that the validity of a highly *g*-loaded test with demonstrated validity for a particular job in a particular organizational setting is generalizable to virtually all other jobs and settings, especially within broad job categories.

The *g* factor is also reflected in many broad social outcomes. Many social behavior problems, including dropping out of school, chronic welfare status, illegitimacy, child neglect, poverty, accident proneness, delinquency, and crime, are negatively correlated with *g* or IQ independently of social class of origin. These social pathologies have an inverse monotonic relation to IQ level in the population, and show, on average, nearly five times the percentage of occurrence in the lowest quartile (IQ below 90) of the total distribution of IQ as in the highest quartile (IQ above 110). (pp. 270–271)

In view of this summary, and in light of the relative youth of the study of leader development, the following recommendations are proffered:

- *Identify and specify the key components of a model of leader development.* Before details emerge of just how general mental ability relates to the development of leaders, that developmental process, though likely complicated, needs to be represented in a comprehensive model. All sciences use models to explain how things work (e.g., the planetary model of the atom in chemistry; a globe in geography). The science of development, specifically leader development, may be quite nascent, and it may also be quite complicated due to the fact that it pertains to humans and their thoughts, behaviors, and social interactions, but it nevertheless behooves researchers in the field to agree their general position.
- *Include measures of mental ability in studies of leader development.* The importance of *g* cannot be ignored. The literature reviewed in this book chapter gives ample evidence of its general importance in life and its likely importance in the development of leaders. Instruments such as IQ tests abound; researchers can use data that come from their use as they develop their models and study the various interactions among variables.
- *Perform SEM analyses in order to determine causality, directionality, and strength of direct and indirect influences of *g* on leader development.* SEM represents a grand leap forward for the social sciences. For the first time, researchers have in hand a tool that merges statistics and measurement (see, for example, Loehlin, 2004). It allows for the determination of causality in the first and corrects for error in the second. Development is a complicated, iterative, recursive process that involves multiple variables interacting directly and indirectly, and that utilizes various feedback loops. SEM, more so than perhaps any other statistical tool available, can help shed light on just how the variables and factors purported to be involved in the development of leaders actually act and interact.
- *Test interactions of the many variables which have been shown, or purported, to influence leader development.* This is a recommendation for a finer grained analysis (which may or may not involve the use of SEM). An advantage of this more limited analysis is that it will not necessitate the use of large sample sizes that

SEM does. Multiple regressions, simple linear regressions, and correspondence analyses are some techniques that can prove beneficial to our understanding of how leaders develop, and what develops them, beyond simple correlations and descriptive statistics.

- *Apply findings and principles from the literature on the development of advanced expertise to leader development.* Given the rather strong genetic basis of *g*, some people are likely to be put off and conclude that leaders are more discovered than made. However, the extensive literature on human expertise, certainly from the 1980s, gives great cause for hope (see, for example, Ericsson & Smith, 1991). There is an abundance of evidence that people of all intellectual stripes can become expert in any given domain by committing to deliberate practice and when receiving corrective feedback. General mental ability certainly plays a role in this endeavor (see Detterman, 2014, on the special edition of *Intelligence*), but leadership is a domain like tennis, chess, or culinary arts. The degree to which *g* constrains how easily one develops as a leader, or how one transfers knowledge and skills from one situation calling for leadership to another, remains a good question for ongoing research. But the vast literature on expertise development, indeed on training and education, gives one reason for hope that even basic research can have positive real-world effects in developing competent and effective leaders.

**Disclaimer** The views expressed here are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy position of the United States Military Academy, the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the US Government.

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## Chapter 4

# Dark Leadership: The Role of Leaders' Dark Triad Personality Traits

Marco R. Furtner, Thomas Maran, and John F. Rauthmann

For a long time leadership research has primarily focused on “good” leadership and has until recently ignored the “bad” or “dark side” of leadership (Higgs, 2009). Leadership research has extensively dealt in the past 30 years with the most powerful form of leadership behavior that has been described so far: the charismatic approaches of transformational and charismatic leadership. Based on its frequency and citations, transformational leadership occupies the top position in leadership research.

But from where does the fascination for charismatic leadership come from? Transformational and charismatic leadership describes a romantic and idealized form of leadership. Their models have been influenced by powerful and influential persons who shaped human history: heroes, martyrs, saints, as well as political and religious leaders. All of these people obtained the highest fame and success. All have in common that they are attributed charisma. In short, transformational leadership has a great historical model: the hero. Usually a hero has a socialized power motive with altruistic components. This means that own power and strength are not used for egoistic purposes or even abused, but employed for the benefit of the social community.

Although showing an unbroken enthusiasm for the charismatic leadership approaches, criticism emerged (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Conger & Kanungo, 1988): How many transformational and charismatic leaders with a highly socialized power

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motive actually exist in daily business? And a second crucial question emerged to which the two most prominent representatives of charismatic leadership approaches had to give an answer: Might there also be a dark side of idealized transformational and charismatic leadership, which pursues selfish goals? Both Bernard Bass with transformational leadership and Jay Conger with charismatic leadership had to counter this criticism. Bass (1990) referred to the dark side of transformational leadership as pseudo-transformational and Conger (1990) delineated a dark side of charismatic leadership. The bright and the dark sides of charismatic leadership approaches describe two sides of the same coin. The bright and idealized side represents the prototypical prosocial hero. The dark side refers to the anti-hero, which is characterized by a selfish orientation. This is akin to the concepts of good against evil, yin and yang, bright against dark, and hero versus anti-hero—they all describe antagonistic pairs.

Although it is a positive and idealistic notion that good always triumphs over evil or that leaders should correspond to the ideal image of a hero, the reality of daily leadership is different. For example, Maccoby (2000) postulates that many leaders are narcissists. Indeed, people seem to be fascinated by narcissists. But where does this fascination of anti-heroes come from? According to Jonason, Slomski, and Partyka (2012), popular characters such as Batman or James Bond have dark personality traits (Jonason, Li, & Teicher, 2010). The fascination of the selfish anti-hero can be explained by the fact that they ignore existing laws as if they were above them or larger than life. Despite the strong differences between “good” and “evil,” both may have a common motive: They both pursue the goal of power. Heroes and anti-heroes cross borders. They disregard conventions and are driven by a higher personalized or socialized ideal. Heroes are self-controlled, socially responsible, honest, and advocates for social community. Anti-heroes are more impulsive, less socially acceptable, selfish, and perhaps even dishonest. However, both heroes and anti-heroes have an agentic social style (Jonason et al., 2010). Dark leadership represents a part of leadership reality and describes the dark part of the coin, a selfish and impulsive leader, which may nonetheless be as effective or successful as bright and prosocially oriented leaders. Thus, a counter-trend to the investigation of very positive and idealized constructs can be found since the early 2000s in personality research with the dark triad of personality (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). This chapter deals with the dark side of leaders’ personality. Furthermore, the strengths and weaknesses of the dark triad are discussed for the purpose of leader development. On the one hand, dark leaders have excellent strengths (e.g., self-confidence and dominance) which could be considered in leader development; on the other hand, the knowledge about the weaknesses of dark leader traits could be used to handle or neutralize them effectively.

## 4.1 The Dark Triad of Personality

Paulhus and Williams (2002) coined the term “dark triad of personality” for three similar albeit distinct subclinical dark traits: narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. The concepts of narcissism and psychopathy originated in clinical literature. On the other hand, Machiavellianism stems from the philosophy and tactical recommendations of Niccolò Machiavelli, a political advisor to the Medici family

in the 1500s (Christie & Geis, 1970). Despite their different origins, narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy overlap empirically: They all entail a character who exhibits selfishness, emotional coldness, duplicity, and manipulation (Furnham, Richards, & Paulhus, 2013; Paulhus, 2014; Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Still, narcissism is considered among these three traits the most adaptive and desirable construct, while psychopathy seems least adaptive and acceptable (Rauthmann, 2012). The strongest mean correlations can be observed between psychopathy and Machiavellianism, and the lowest associations between narcissism and Machiavellianism (Furnham et al., 2013).

Of particular interest may be studies bringing together the dark triad and interpersonal behaviors (Rauthmann & Kolar, 2013). For example, Dongwillo and Pincus (2017) showed that the dark triad projected differently onto the interpersonal circumplex (IPC). The IPC postulates that two basic themes underlie social relationships (Bakan, 1966): dominance/agency, related to autonomy and superiority, and affiliation/communion, related to helping and forming nurturing relationships with others. Narcissism is characterized by high dominance, psychopathy by a mixture of high dominance and low affiliation, and Machiavellianism by low affiliation. In accordance with Paulhus (2014), psychopathy has the highest impulsiveness, followed by narcissism and the relatively self-controlled Machiavellianism (Malesza & Ostaszewski, 2016). Psychopathy and Machiavellianism share both a high level in manipulation. Narcissism exhibited the highest level in grandiosity, followed by psychopathy, while Machiavellianism does not tend to be associated with grandiose fantasies. In contrast to Machiavellians and psychopaths, who exhibited a greater tendency to negative humor styles (aggressive, self-defeating), narcissists showed a positive affiliative humor style (Veselka, Schermer, Martin, & Vernon, 2010). Further, narcissism seems to be positively, Machiavellianism negatively, and psychopathy both positively and negatively related to socio-emotional skills (Nagler, Reiter, Furtner, & Rauthmann, 2014). Thus, on average, narcissists still appear as the more social among dark personalities. We should mention here that the terms “narcissist,” “Machiavellian,” and “psychopath” are used as abbreviations for people who score highly on standardized measures of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy as continuous trait dimensions. No psychopathology or diagnostic labeling should be inferred here. Paulhus (2014) gives an overview of the key features of the dark triad relative to the average population-wide level (see Table 4.1).

### 4.1.1 *The Dark Triad*

*Narcissism.* Narcissists are grandiose self-promoters who strive for admiration from others (Paulhus, 2014). Narcissists exhibit an excessive ego and show selfish behavior (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Raskin and Hall (1979) introduced the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), which represents a subclinical version of the DSM-defined personality disorder. On a conceptual level, the main facets of the NPI include grandiosity, entitlement, dominance, and superiority (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). More recent conceptualizations distinguish between narcissistic grandiosity

**Table 4.1** Key features of the dark triad (based on Paulhus, 2014)

Key features	Narcissism	Machiavellianism	Psychopathy
Callousness	++	++	++
Impulsivity	+		++
Manipulation	+	++	++
Criminality		Only white collar	++
Grandiosity	++		+

Note: ++ high levels of a given trait, + slightly elevated levels

and narcissistic vulnerability (e.g., Cain, Pincus, & Ansell, 2008). In a similar vein, Back et al. (2013) described a “bright” and a “dark” side of narcissism, narcissistic admiration and rivalry. Narcissistic admiration involves the pursuit of uniqueness, grandiose fantasies, and charming behavior. Narcissistic rivalry is characterized by the pursuit of superiority, devaluation of others, and aggressive behavior. While narcissistic admiration leads to a self-confident, dominant, and expressive appearance, narcissistic rivalry entails arrogant and contentious behavior. In the mid- to long-term time range, narcissistic rivalry leads to a strong decrease in popularity in social groups (Leckelt, Küfner, Nestler, & Back, 2015).

*Machiavellianism.* According to Paulhus (2014), Machiavellians are master manipulators, pursuing a long-term oriented calculated social manipulation. As Hawley (2003) notes, Machiavellians are “coercive controllers” with an adaptive combination of pro- and antisocial tactics to best achieve their career-success-related goals. Machiavellians are cynical and tactical, and believe in interpersonal manipulation as the key for life success (Furnham et al., 2013). They are cold-hearted and callous, and their primary motivation lies in obtaining money, power, and status (Furtner & Baldegger, 2016). In contrast to narcissists, however, they do not need admiration per se; rather, that would only be good if it were also useful towards some other ultimate goal (e.g., if it resulted in more power or money). Thus, self-promotion and self-aggrandization are not ultimate goals per se for Machiavellians, but rather means to another end.

*Psychopathy.* Psychopathy is characterized by impulsivity, thrill seeking, low empathy, callousness, and interpersonal manipulation (Cleckley, 1976; Hare, 2003; Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Psychopathy can be divided into two interrelated factors (Hare, 2003): Factor 1 with callous and manipulative traits (primary psychopathy) and Factor 2 with antisocial behavioral tendencies (secondary psychopathy). Factor 2 differs strongly from narcissism and Machiavellianism (Jones & Figueredo, 2013). Jones and Paulhus (2011b) showed that psychopathy is related to dysfunctional impulsivity, whereas narcissism is associated with functional impulsivity. Psychopaths are unable to inhibit antisocial impulses and show high risk-taking behavior (e.g., persisting in gambling which leads to financial misbehavior; see Jones, 2014). In contrast to narcissism, psychopathy and Machiavellianism show stronger positive relations to self-reported violence (Pailing, Boon, & Egan, 2014). Moreover, psychopathy is most strongly associated with bullying behaviors, followed by Machiavellianism, and narcissism (Baughman, Dearing, Giammarco, & Vernon, 2012). Thus, among the dark triad, psychopathy seems to be the socially most aversive, partly dysfunctional, and thus “darkest” trait.



### 4.1.2 *Is There a Common Dark Core?*

Recently, researchers raised the question whether antisocial dark triad personalities exhibit a common dark or “evil” core and what that core would be (Book, Visser, & Volk, 2015; Jonason, Li, Webster, & Schmitt, 2009; Jones & Paulhus, 2011a; Jones & Figueredo, 2013). Although there is an overlap and a potential dark core, the dark triad traits should best be viewed as separate domains. Indeed, recently developed inventories confirm unique contributions of each trait to laboratory behaviors and real-world outcomes (Paulhus, 2014). Within the five-factor model of personality (Big Five: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness; Costa & McCrae, 1992), low agreeableness is the strongest negative correlate of the dark triad (Furnham et al., 2013). Another potential dark core could be honest-humility from Ashton and Lee’s (2001) HEXACO model (basically the Big Five plus a sixth factor). This sixth dimension distinguishes between prosocial and antisocial behavior and therefore may be better qualified to explain the dark triad. Lee and Ashton (2005) showed that all three dark triad traits were strongly negatively correlated with the honest-humility factor (all  $r_s > -0.50$ ).

Besides basic personality traits, a second possible core of the dark triad could be lack of empathy or callousness (Jones & Paulhus, 2011a; Paulhus, 2014). While narcissists, Machiavellians, and psychopaths exhibit a certain degree of callousness (Jonason, Lyons, Bethell, & Ross, 2013), they are nonetheless able to cognitively understand the emotions of others, though without an affective response to this information (Book, Quinsey, & Langford, 2007; Wai & Tiliopoulos, 2012). Thus, they have no impairment in cognitive empathy, but exhibit a specific form of cold empathy. Moreover, Machiavellians have the ability to adapt their empathy to current situations (McIlwain et al., 2012).

A third possible core may be psychopathy itself. Primary psychopathy could potentially represent the core of all three dark personalities. This approach would support empirical findings in which psychopathy is strongly related to narcissism and Machiavellianism, whereas narcissism and Machiavellianism are not as strongly interrelated (Furnham et al., 2013; Paulhus & Williams, 2002). However, psychopathy should still be regarded as an independent construct (Book et al., 2015).

Another explanation for a common dark core may lie in the leadership-relevant trait of social dominance. For example, Jones and Figueredo (2013) could show that social dominance orientation has the same common core as the dark triad. Social dominance and need for power are important targets for leader development (McClelland, 1975). “Friendly” leaders with a high need for affiliation could learn from a leader coach how they can increase their leader effectiveness with a more dominant appearance and a stronger social dominance orientation (controlled conversations). Overall, future research should provide further evidence that, despite differences between the dark triad traits, there may be a common core.

## 4.2 Origins of the Dark Triad

### 4.2.1 *Evolutionary Theory*

At the core of all evolutionary approaches to personality is an important behavioral ecological concept called life history theory (Del Giudice, Gangestad, & Kaplan, 2015; Rushton, 1985; Stearns, 1992). Life history theory proposes that trade-offs considering the investment of energy in somatic growth versus recreational effort and quality versus quantity of offspring underlie individual differences in personality (Ellis, Figueredo, Brumbach, & Schlomer, 2009; Kaplan & Gangestad, 2005). It has been argued that dark personalities have a fast life history strategy in exhibiting short-term mating, selfishness, and other antisocial manifestations (e.g., Brumbach, Figueredo, & Ellis, 2009; Jonason et al., 2009). Life history strategy is shaped by the environment early in life (between birth and the age of 5 years), promoting either a slow strategy associated with long-term investments to the future or a fast strategy characterized by the opposite pattern (Belsky, Schlomer, & Ellis, 2012; Ellis & Del Giudice, 2014). Del Giudice (2014) links fast life strategies with traits such as low empathy, poor executive control, low agreeableness, enhanced impulsivity, risk taking, opportunistic interpersonal intercourses, and volatile mating (Glenn, Kurzban, & Raine, 2011). All these features could be targets for leader development and increase the awareness about the dark side of dark leader traits. They share one commonality, which is constitutional for a fast life strategy: they lead to short-term advantages, but entail social and even formal sanctions and punishments over the long term. McDonald, Donnellan, and Navarrete (2011) showed that antisocial impulsiveness in secondary psychopathy, entitlement in narcissism, and Machiavellianism are associated with a fast life strategy. By contrast, a slow life strategy has been linked to fearless dominance, which is assigned to primary psychopathy.

However, one may ask how evolutionary approaches to dark triad personality traits can be linked to leadership. As noted previously, dark traits can be described as an excessive dominance motivation (see Johnson, Leedom, & Muhtadie, 2012): Narcissistic leaders desire social power and aspire to be in leader positions, psychopathic ones usurp resources in an aggressive manner, and Machiavellian ones exploit others by deception and manipulation (Grijalva & Harms, 2014; Jones & Figueredo, 2013). Thus, dark personalities seem to encompass a variety of behavioral dispositions, which qualify them as leaders (Grijalva & Harms, 2014).

### 4.2.2 *Psychogenic Motives and Values*

Motives represent the basic drive for human action. Three particularly fundamental motives have been repeatedly identified in literature: need for power, need for achievement, and need for affiliation (McClelland, 1985). Need for power corresponds to the desire of a person to take influence and control other people. Need for achievement represents a certain standard of excellence that someone strives

towards. People with a high need for achievement strive to improve constantly their own performance. Need for affiliation aims to build, maintain, or restore positive relationships with others.

Jonason and Ferrell (2016) examined relations between these three central human motives and the dark triad. The dark triad showed particularly positive relations with need for power (being dominant and powerful). Merely narcissism was additionally related to the need for affiliation. Both Machiavellianism and psychopathy showed only low and negative relations to the need for achievement, while narcissism exhibited inconsistent relations to the need for achievement. While Machiavellians and psychopaths had no need for social attachments, narcissists require other people to obtain social appreciation (Jonason & Ferrell, 2016). Another relevant study comes from Kajonius, Persson, and Jonason (2015) who examined relations between the dark triad and 10 universal Schwartz values (e.g., power, security, and benevolence). Machiavellianism and narcissism showed positive relations to the values achievement and power, whereas psychopathy was positively associated with hedonism and power. Overall, all three dark triad traits exhibited strong relations with power motives and values. As need for power, which can be developed in leaders (McClelland, 1975), is a central foundation for leadership, dark triad traits may also play an important role in leadership (Furtner & Baldegger, 2016). Specifically, a strong power motive may be assessed at the beginning of leader development sessions because it could be cultivated and formed to something productive. On the other hand, the more agonistic and combative traits that come with the dark triad could also be harnessed, especially in settings with high and fierce competition. Thus, leader development trainings may benefit from assessing dark traits because these may come with certain strengths (e.g., need for power, social dominance) that confer an adaptive value in certain work environments (e.g., high competition).

### 4.3 The Dark Triad at Work

Dark personalities at work are relatively understudied (Spain, Harms, & Lebreton, 2013), though there is a recent surge in interest for this topic (Cohen, 2016; Harms & Spain, 2015). However, workplace behavior is one of the major outcome domains of the dark triad (for a review, see Furnham et al., 2013). In a meta-analysis (245 independent samples), O'Boyle, Forsyth, Banks, and McDaniel (2012) examined associations between the dark triad, job performance, and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). Results showed that Machiavellianism and psychopathy were negatively related to job performance. All three dark triad traits were positively associated with CWB. This means that the assessment of, and also reflection about, dark triad traits in ourselves (and others) may help us learn to shape our behavior as a leader. Such reflection, in turn, may be able to make us more effective. However, no studies have so far (to the best of our knowledge) examined the beneficial effects of self/insight into one's dark traits. Context effects, in the form of level of authority

and organizational culture (in-group collectivism), were also taken into account in the meta-analysis (O'Boyle et al., 2012). While Machiavellianism consistently showed negative effects on workplace behavior across all situations (independent of their level of authority and degrees of in-group collectivism), narcissism showed a more complex picture: Narcissists in positions of higher levels of authority showed stronger negative relations to performance. Narcissists also performed more poorly in organizations with high degrees of collectivism. Authority did not moderate relations between narcissism and CWB. Furthermore, the relation between narcissism and CWB became weaker when collectivism increased. Authority weakened associations between psychopathy and CWB. Psychopaths, who are able to gain higher positions in organizations, may better control their impulsivity and antisocial tendencies. However, there were only small effects between the dark triad and job performance as well as small-to-moderate effects to CWB. Due to predominantly weak effects, Cohen (2016) suggests various mediators (e.g., perception of organizational politics) and moderators (e.g., political skill, organizational culture/climate) which should be considered in future studies.

Jonason et al. (2012) investigated associations between the dark triad and tactics of workplace manipulation. Psychopathy was associated with hard tactics (e.g., threats), narcissism with soft tactics (e.g., offering compliments), and Machiavellianism with both. Compared to women, men showed a more aggressive style of interpersonal influence. Overall, though, dark triad personalities tended more towards hard than soft tactics, such as social influence and manipulation at the workplace. Further, in a recent experimental design, Roeser et al. (2016) examined the effects of the dark triad and unethical behavior (operationalized by cheating and lying). While Machiavellianism positively predicted cheating and psychopathy impulsive cheating and lying, only narcissism did not predict unethical behavior (cheating and lying) in this study. Thus, narcissism can be expected to be the most socially adaptive dimension among the dark triad (Rauthmann & Kolar, 2012, 2013).

Jonason, Wee, Li, and Jackson (2014) dealt with the question of which vocational interests are related to the dark triad. The results of their study suggest that the dark triad may be useful for career inventories and talent management. For example, in terms of person-job fit, dark personalities may be specifically interested in, select themselves into, and excel at specific jobs and vocations. Psychopaths were more interested in realistic (e.g., building kitchen cabinets) and practical jobs (e.g., repairing motor vehicles). Machiavellianism was negatively related to social (e.g., teaching children), caring (e.g., treating people who are sick), and practical jobs. Narcissism correlated positively with cultured (e.g., acting in a film) and caring jobs. Psychopaths preferred jobs where they have little social interaction and were relatively autonomous. Narcissists chose workplaces which have positive effects regarding social admiration. Machiavellians avoided jobs that do not lead to status (Jonason et al., 2014). But how do dark triad personalities perceive their workplaces? Machiavellians and psychopaths perceived their workplaces as more competitive, whereas narcissists experienced them as prestigious and more autonomous. Moreover, perceived prestige was a positive predictor of job satisfaction (Jonason, Wee, & Li, 2015).

Can dark personalities have successful careers? Spurk, Keller, and Hirschi (2016) examined in early-career employees the relations between the dark triad and subjective as well as objective career success. Narcissism was positively associated with

salary, and Machiavellianism with leadership position and career satisfaction. Only psychopathy was negatively associated with all career outcomes. Thus, narcissism and Machiavellianism were positively related to objective career success. Furthermore, the dark triad traits of leaders can have specific effects on followers' career success. For example, Volmer, Koch, and Göritz (2016) showed in a longitudinal study that narcissism had positive effects on followers' subjective (e.g., follower career satisfaction) and objective career success (e.g., follower salary and promotions). The authors suggested that narcissistic leaders try to retain and reward their followers to get consecutive admiration and appreciation. Conversely, psychopathic leaders showed strongly negative effects on followers' well-being and job satisfaction (Mathieu, Neumann, Hare, & Babiak, 2014).

## 4.4 Dark Leadership

All three dark triad traits are related to need for power and have a social dominance orientation (Hodson, Hogg, & MacInnis, 2009; Jones & Figueredo, 2013). A social dominance orientation means that individuals prefer to control conversations and put pressure to others. This fits to Altemeyer's (2004) observation that dominant people are power hungry and manipulative. Thus, social dominance could be a viable construct to distinguish leaders from non-leaders (Mann, 1959). Indeed, dominance was described as one of the first traits related to leadership (Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009). Dominant people have a higher probability to emerge as leaders and be promoted to positions of authority (Son Hing, Bobocel, Zanna, & McBride, 2007). Dominant leaders appear as competent and emit strong authority. Interestingly, they are perceived as competent, even when they are not (Judge et al., 2009). Although dominant leaders exhibit a politically oppressive style, each of the dark triad traits may have a specific dominance style: Narcissistic leaders have a strong egoistic focus (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001); Machiavellian ones a cold, calculating, long-term oriented and strategic style (Jones & Paulhus, 2009); and psychopathic ones an impulsive and antisocial style (Williams, Paulhus, & Hare, 2007). The particular uniqueness of the dark triad traits has different effects on leadership styles. In their theoretical-conceptual work about the bright and the dark sides of leader traits, Judge et al. (2009) focused on Machiavellianism and narcissism, though they disregarded psychopathy. Although psychopathy is the "darkest" and most malevolent type of the dark triad which could arguably deal out strong damage to an organization, its role in organizational leadership is the least explored (Mathieu et al., 2014). To approach the phenomenon of dark leadership, narcissistic leadership, Machiavellian leadership, and psychopathic leadership are described below in some detail.

### 4.4.1 Narcissistic Leadership

According to Maccoby (2000), many dominating military, religious, political, and economic leaders have a narcissistic personality (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Narcissistic leaders are perceived as arrogant, dominant, and authoritarian. They are

effective leaders and emerge as leaders in group settings (Nevicka, Ten Velden, De Hoogh, & Van Vianen, 2011), probably because of their extraversion (Grijalva, Harms, Newman, Gaddis, & Fraley, 2015). Rosenthal and Pittinsky (2006) emphasize that one should remove the idea whether narcissistic leaders are “good” or “evil.” Rather, the context has to be considered (e.g., accordance between narcissistic leaders’ and organizational goals). Cultural factors (e.g., individualistic culture), environmental factors (e.g., instability, crisis), and structural factors (e.g., absence of strict information control) have an important role in the emergence of narcissistic leadership (Ouimet, 2010). Narcissistic leaders could show a beneficial or a harmful behavior for organizations. It is therefore not surprising that Judge et al. (2009) describe the bright and the dark sides of narcissism, Maccoby (2000) the pros and cons, and Rosenthal and Pittinsky (2006) the upside and the downside of narcissistic leaders (see Table 4.2).

In a military context the best rated leaders represented the bright side of narcissism (e.g., high in egotism and self-esteem), but without the dark side of manipulativeness and impression management (Paunonen, Lönnqvist, Verkasalo, Leikas, & Nissinen, 2006). For practitioners, this knowledge could be used to focus and develop more strongly the strengths of narcissists while trying to work against negative aspects of manipulativeness and impression management. As can be seen in Table 4.2, narcissism shows particularly important associations to charismatic leadership.

Furtner, Rauthmann, and Sachse (2011) examined associations between self-leadership and the dark triad. They could show that self-leadership was positively related to narcissism. In turn, self-leadership is an important basic skill for active and effective leadership behavior, in particular transformational and charismatic leadership (Furtner & Baldegger, 2016; Furtner, Baldegger, & Rauthmann, 2013). Rosenthal and Pittinsky (2006) describe narcissism in a framework of two related leadership models: power motivation and charismatic leadership. The authors state that power is one of the great motivators for narcissistic leaders. Need for power is also one of the most central motivational tendencies of the entire dark triad. Interestingly, the power motive of US presidents has been related to charisma, communication ability, humor, combative skill, aggressiveness, and exploitativeness (Deluga, 1997; Winter, 2005). Narcissistic leadership is related to a specific subtype of power motivation, the personalized power motivation. Leaders with a high personalized power motive have a charismatic, selfish, and aggressive style. Charisma, in turn, is one of the most important positive traits of narcissism (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Not surprisingly, narcissism is also positively related to presidential charismatic leadership and performance (Deluga, 1997). Charismatic leaders are exceptionally gifted (both intellectually and socially), though charisma also has its dark side (see Conger, 1990, for charismatic leadership). Similar to a personalized power motive, the dark side of charismatic leadership is closely related to narcissistic leadership (Furtner & Baldegger, 2016; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006).

Previous studies on narcissism and leadership showed mixed results. The relationship between narcissism and leader effectiveness could only be observed in self- but not in other-ratings (e.g., supervisor- and subordinate-report). Grijalva et al. (2015)

**Table 4.2** The bright and the dark sides of narcissism

<b>Bright and dark sides of narcissism</b> (Judge et al., 2009)	
<i>Bright</i>	<i>Dark</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charismatic leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grandiose self-love (others are inferior)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High leader performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reputation-dependent decisions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus oriented in political and influence processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrogance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High organizational performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insensitive and hostile</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of empathy</li> </ul>
<b>Pros and cons of narcissistic leaders</b> (Maccoby, 2000)	
<i>Pros</i>	<i>Cons</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great vision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitive to criticism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charismatic and gifted in attracting followers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor listeners</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of empathy</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of mentoring others</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire to compete</li> </ul>
<b>Upside and downside of narcissistic leaders</b> (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006)	
<i>Upside</i>	<i>Downside</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supreme confidence and dominance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrogance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspiring followers with great visions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feelings of inferiority and emptiness about themselves</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context-dependent necessity (e.g., social crisis)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for recognition and superiority</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shape the future</li> <li>• Great charisma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypersensitivity and anger</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of empathy</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amorality</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrationality and inflexibility</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paranoia (e.g., creating enemies where there had been none)</li> </ul>

demonstrated that an optimal, mid-range level of leaders’ narcissism is positively related to leader effectiveness. Thus, very high and very low levels of narcissism are hindering, whereby moderate narcissism is positively related to leadership effectiveness. Among the dark triad traits narcissism is very agentic in nature and shows the strongest associations with extraversion and openness (e.g., Paulhus & Williams, 2002). To foster leader emergence and effectivity, narcissists should focus more on the “bright” side of narcissism and show a moderate form of narcissistic characteristic (see Table 4.2). Ong, Roberts, Arthur, Woodman, and Akehurst (2016) observed positive and negative effects of narcissistic leadership on leader emergence and leader effectivity. While narcissists can be perceived at the beginning as transformational and charismatic (i.e., leader emergence), the attractiveness of narcissists in peer ratings, after a brief “honeymoon” period of leadership, declined rapidly (i.e., leader effectivity). This is also in line with other researches demonstrating that narcissists’ initial positive appearance and effects diminish after prolonged interactions (Küfner, Nestler, & Back, 2013; Leckelt et al., 2015; Paulhus, 1998).

#### 4.4.2 *Machiavellian Leadership*

Judge et al. (2009) emphasize the important role of Machiavellianism in leadership, and similar to narcissism, they describe a bright and dark side of Machiavellianism. Machiavellians strive to leadership positions in which they can plan, coordinate, organize, and control. They are very effective in organizational administration (Calhoun, 1969) and exhibit a high calculative motivation to lead. Using an experimental design Drory and Gluskinos (1980) compared high versus low Machiavellian leaders in task group settings. High Machiavellian leaders gave more orders, showed a greater responsiveness to situational demands, exhibited a more participative style under unfavorable conditions, and were consistently less concerned with their group members' feelings. They had a wider range of appropriate behaviors than low Machiavellian leaders. These findings fit to the conceptualization of Machiavellian leaders as very strategic in their thinking and able to navigate power dynamics in their business and organizations. Such leaders exhibit a wide range of different influencing tactics to build political relations (Judge et al., 2009). According to Simonton (1986), Machiavellian presidents had more legislative victories. Additionally, Machiavellian presidents were highly effective by demonstrating intellectual brilliance.

Although narcissists are usually perceived as more charismatic, Machiavellian leaders may be experienced as charismatic under specific circumstances (e.g., occupation of very powerful positions). For example, Deluga (2001) analyzed 39 American presidents and showed that presidential Machiavellianism was positively associated with charismatic leadership and rated performance. In a historiometric examination, Bedell, Hunter, Angie, and Vert (2006) showed that charismatic (e.g., John F. Kennedy, Benito Mussolini), ideological (e.g., Mohandas Gandhi, Fidel Castro), and pragmatic (e.g., Warren Buffet, Al Capone) leaders differentially exhibited Machiavellian characteristics. Charismatic leaders showed moderate and pragmatic leaders the highest levels of Machiavellianism. Pragmatic leaders used a more functional, problem-based approach that deals with present situations and demands. Personalized leaders with a strong ego focus exhibited more extreme Machiavellian characteristics, while surprisingly also socialized "altruistic" leaders used Machiavellian strategies. They manipulated given situations to obtain efficient and practical solutions. The dark side of Machiavellianism can be attributed directly to the observations of Niccolò Machiavelli. To reach their long-term goals, Machiavellian leaders abuse their leadership position for personal purposes and reduce the work-related intrinsic motivation of their subordinates (Judge et al., 2009).

Based on the results of three studies, Kessler et al. (2010) proposed a three-dimensional model of Machiavellianism: maintaining power (e.g., "An effective individual builds a powerbase of strong people"), management practices (e.g., "It is important for an individual to learn about the mistakes of unsuccessful people"), and manipulative behaviors (e.g., "Since most people are weak, a rational individual should take advantage of the situation to maximize his/her own gains"). The first two dimensions are more positive in nature: maintaining power and management practices



were positively associated with conscientious and negatively to CWB, while manipulative behaviors were positively related to CWB. Machiavellian leaders showed positive associations to subordinates' perceptions of abusive supervision. These relations were fully mediated by subordinates' perceptions of authoritarian leadership. Therefore, Machiavellian leader tendencies will strongly express authoritarian leadership behaviors (Kiazad, Restubog, Zagenczyk, Kiewitz, & Tang, 2010).

Not only leaders, but also followers, could have high Machiavellian tendencies. In a recent study Belschak, Den Hartog, and Kalshoven (2015) demonstrated that transformational leadership has a positive influence on Machiavellian followers. Transformational leadership moderated relations between Machiavellian followers and organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is also known as the good soldier syndrome (Organ, 1988). Citizenship behavior often goes beyond an employee's job description, for example helping others or putting in extra hours (Bolino, Klotz, Turnley, & Harvey, 2013). With leaders' transformational leadership the selfish Machiavellian follower could be transformed in pro-organizational behavior. Nevertheless, it has to be considered that Machiavellians may use OCB and prosocial behavior for selfish purposes. Thus, a dark side of organizational citizenship behavior may also exist (Bolino et al., 2013). There are positive as well as negative Machiavellian tendencies which could be considered in leader development. Machiavellian leaders are relatively self-controlled, acute, and pragmatic. They exhibit high flexibility and are excellent business administrators. Additionally, Machiavellian leaders have excellent negotiation skills (Judge et al., 2009). The more negative aspects of Machiavellian tendencies would need to be recognized, reflected upon, and eventually neutralized (or at least somehow channeled into more constructive ways). For example, Machiavellian leaders are strongly manipulative and dishonest. They exhibit an extrinsic (calculative) form of motivation to lead which reduce intrinsic work motivation of followers. These tendencies will have to be kept at bay.

### ***4.4.3 Psychopathic Leadership***

Psychopathy is the "darkest" dark triad trait in organizational leadership and also the least explored (Mathieu et al., 2014). There is little evidence in terms of psychopathy and leadership (Boddy, 2015a). To describe psychopathic leadership, the more general term of a "corporate psychopath" is broadly used. Approximately 1% of the population who work for organizations are estimated to be psychopaths (Coid, Yang, Ullrich, Roberts, & Hare, 2009). How do psychopaths obtain organizational leadership positions? As soon as psychopaths are in organizations, they use diverse strategies of impression management to reach their goal of rising to the top of the organization. Psychopathic leaders ally themselves with their promotors and at the same time they oppose their enemies which in their view constitute an obstacle to a successful organizational career. Chiaburu, Munoz, and Gardner (2013)

showed that primary psychopathy is an important predictor of careerism. According to Babiak and Hare (2006), psychopaths divide organizational members into two fractions: One fraction is composed of their supporters, and the other fraction of their detractors who recognize that the organization is in danger. Psychopaths try to outmaneuver and remove their detractors to better ascend to power. According to Babiak, Neumann, and Hare (2010), about 4% of leaders at the senior management level of organizations are psychopaths. Psychopathic leaders were associated positively with perceived charisma and presentation style, including excellent communication styles (Babiak et al., 2010). Psychopathic leaders can be predominantly found in senior management levels (Spencer & Byrne, 2016). Thus, good presentation skills and excellent communication styles could be considered as strengths to build upon in leader development, especially as they seem to promote organizational career.

Psychopathic leaders are very sensitive in the selection of their followers, who must pay them absolute loyalty. Conformity and dependability of subordinates may play an important role for the success of psychopathic leaders. Regarding the relationship between psychopathy and the full-range leadership model (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership) two studies with relatively similar results revealed no associations between psychopathy and charisma (Mathieu, Neumann, Babiak, & Hare, 2015; Westerlaken & Woods, 2013): Psychopathy was positively correlated with passive leadership (management by exception and laissez-faire leadership) and negatively with active and effective leadership (transformational and transactional leadership). Thus, psychopathic leaders avoid decision making and do not care about their followers. Mathieu et al. (2015) concluded that, like narcissism, psychopathy may be associated with leader emergence or a surface identification with leadership, but not with leader effectiveness. Mathieu and Babiak (2015) also demonstrated that leaders' psychopathy was a stronger predictor for employee attitudes (job satisfaction, turnover intentions, work motivation, job neglect) than the three dimensions of the full-range leadership model. Mathieu and Babiak (2016) also found that psychopathic leaders were positively associated with abusive supervision and employees' turnover intentions, and negatively to followers' job satisfaction.

In summary, Boddy (2015a) expects a variety of negative consequences of psychopathy for organizations (e.g., corporate failure, fraudulent activities, exploited followers, workplace bullying, and short-term decision making). In a longitudinal case study of a corporate psychopath as CEO, Boddy (2015b) describes the negative long-term effects of psychopathic leadership. The delineated leadership style showed strong similarities to laissez-faire leadership with negative outcomes related to bullying, staff withdrawal, and high turnover rates. A high corporate psychopathy score of the CEO also reduced employees' organizational commitment, creativity, and innovation. Furthermore, the psychopathic CEO focused on the strength of his own position and external reputation while implementing a climate of organizational fear. The dark aspects of psychopathic leadership should be counteracted in leader development as they show a broad variety of negative outcomes for individuals, teams, and organizations.

## 4.5 Dark Leader Traits and Leader Development

Leader development focuses on the intrapersonal development of skills (e.g., self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation) which are required for their formal leadership roles (Day, 2000). These skills lead to increased individual knowledge, trust, and personal power (Zand, 1997). The dark triad traits, rather than being purely maladaptive, can be seen as adaptations promoting benefits for an individual primarily over the short term in an unpredictable environment, along with some facets promoting also long-term success (McDonald et al., 2011). This aspect can be employed for developing leaders.

How can the knowledge about dark traits be used for leader development? Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy are relatively stable personality traits, which should be targeted through the selection process of leaders (Reichard & Johnson, 2011). The knowledge about the dark personality traits of leaders could be used to determine the extent to which a development readiness already exists in leaders (Avolio, 2004). Narcissists could show the strongest development readiness, followed by Machiavellians and psychopaths (Harms, Spain, & Hannah, 2011).

Among the dark triad, narcissism is the trait that is most strongly associated with agentic traits (openness, extraversion) and self-leadership (Furtner et al., 2011; Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Self-leadership, in turn, is an important prerequisite for charismatic and transformational leadership (Furtner et al., 2013). Thus, narcissistic leaders may be perceived as charismatic. Narcissists strive for social recognition and admiration. Both the leadership position and the leadership process can fulfill their basic motive for social recognition and admiration. Narcissists enjoy the leadership process per se and show a high intrinsic (affective) motivation to lead (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). The intrinsic motivation of narcissistic leaders, in turn, increases their charisma (Barbuto, 2005; Furtner et al., 2013; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Charisma is a key tool for narcissistic leaders to receive social recognition and admiration. Not only the intrinsic motivation to lead increases the charismatic perceptions of narcissists, but also their dominant, self-confident, and at the same time charming appearance. On the basis of their central need for power, recognition, and admiration, the development of charisma is a socially adaptive strategy of narcissists. In summary, narcissists have good requirements to benefit from leader development as they are open to new experiences and insatiable learners. They incorporate new knowledge (e.g., about self-motivation) quickly to continually improve their personal effectivity and ultimately reach their central goal.

On the basis of their relative good self-control, high adaptability, and flexibility for situational demands, Machiavellians may also benefit from leader development. Machiavellians could show a high learning ability in the framework of leader development, if the mediated knowledge (e.g., increasing one's self-regulation) serves for their personal long-term goal (attaining power and status). Machiavellians are masters of manipulation and tactical deception. They have the highest self-control among the dark triad traits (Paulhus, 2014), show a high adaptability, and must exert a certain degree of awareness to flexibly adapt to specific situations. On the basis of increased awareness (of internal and external processes) and the acquisition

of new and personally relevant knowledge, Machiavellians could also benefit from leader development.

Psychopaths have a great interest in experiencing new things and are very adventurous. Despite their high impulsivity and their relatively short-term focus, psychopaths who strive for high leadership positions in organizations could also obtain advantages from leader development. To reduce their central weakness of low self-control, an emphasis should be put on the training of specific self-regulatory techniques (e.g., cultivation of mindfulness skills).

How can the strengths and weaknesses of dark leaders be utilized in leader development? The knowledge about the pros (adaptive advantages) and cons (maladaptive disadvantages) of the dark triad traits can be very useful for leader development programs and leader coaches. Dark leaders can reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and develop a plan to use their strengths and neutralize or eliminate their weaknesses. Young executives, “bright” leaders (e.g., empowering leaders), and leaders with a high need for affiliation as well as a low social dominance orientation could learn from the strengths of dark leaders. For example, affiliative leaders may become aware that they may not be sufficiently dominant and effective in their leadership role.

With the central aim of leader development in improving leaders’ individual knowledge, trust, and personal power as well as to promote the human capital of individual leaders, Table 4.3 summarizes the key strengths and weaknesses of leaders’ dark triad traits. This knowledge can be utilized directly in leader development.

## 4.6 Conclusions and Future Research

The dark side of leadership has long been ignored in leadership research and is still under-researched. Currently, many different terms are used for the dark side of leadership (e.g., destructive leadership: Krasikova, Green, & LeBreton, 2013; toxic leadership: Pelletier, 2010; abusive leadership: Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao, & Chang, 2012; unethical leadership: Brown & Mitchell, 2010). Yet, a uniform concept of dark leadership does not exist, but would be highly conducive for the exploration of the dark side of leadership. Focusing on dark triad traits of leaders may be a fruitful foundation for dark leadership research. Krasikova et al. (2013) describe the dark triad leader characteristics as predictors of engaging in destructive leadership. While personality research has investigated the dark triad of personality for over 15 years, leadership research focused more recently and independently of personality psychology on narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. Following the issue whether there is a dark common core of the dark triad of personality, the question arises if there is also a common dark core in leadership. Different potential cores of the dark triad have been proposed, such as disagreeableness (Furnham et al., 2013), low honesty/humility (Lee & Ashton, 2005), callousness (Jones & Figueredo, 2013), need for power (Jonason & Ferrell, 2016), and social dominance orientation (Jones & Figueredo, 2013). In leadership context need for power (McClelland, 1975) and social dominance orientation (Judge et al., 2009) may play the most important role for dark leadership.

**Table 4.3** Strengths (to be developed) and weaknesses (to be worked on) of the dark triad in leader development

Dark trait	Strengths (to be developed)	Weaknesses (to be worked on)
Narcissism	• Self-confident	• Arrogant
	• Dominant	• Selfish
	• Intrinsic (affective) motivation to lead	• Oversensitive to criticism
	• Self-leading	• Exaggerated self-love
	• Charismatic	• Competing
	• Visionary	• Lack of empathy
	• Innovative	
	• Charming	
Machiavellianism	• Sensitive to social cues	
	• Dominant	• Manipulative
	• Self-controlled	• Selfish
	• Highly flexible in social situations	• Cheating
	• Astute and strategic thinking	• Inconsiderate
	• Pragmatic	• Extrinsic (calculating) motivation to lead
	• Effective in business administration	
Psychopaths	• Tactical negotiating skills	
	• Broad variety of influencing tactics	
	• Dominant	• Impulsive
	• Communicative	• Selfish
	• Thrill seeking	• Callous
		• Lack of empathy
• Unpredictable and irrational behavior		
• Paranoid		
	• Terrifying	

Narcissistic leadership, as the most adaptive and brightest side of leaders’ dark tendencies, has received the most attention so far. The darker the personality trait, the less it has been researched. As such, psychopathy, being the most malicious dark triad trait concept (Krasikova et al., 2013), has hardly been investigated. Generally, narcissists are deemed most qualified as leaders and may indeed also be effective in leader roles. Besides narcissists also Machiavellians and psychopaths strive to power and leadership positions. Nevertheless, among the dark triad, narcissism could have the most important role in leadership research. It is likely that a lot of leadership positions are occupied by narcissists (Maccoby, 2000). Positive relations between narcissism and leader emergence confirm this (Mathieu et al., 2015; Ong et al., 2016). As narcissists always want to approve their own grandiosity and dominance, they strive for unrestricted social appreciation and acceptance. They have an inherent interest in leadership and exhibit a high affective (intrinsic) motivation to lead.

An additional strength of narcissistic leaders is demonstrated by the fact that, based on their visions, dominance, and strong social influence, they exhibit the most powerful forms of leadership behavior, transformational and charismatic leadership. The key force of narcissistic leaders is that they are perceived as charismatic. Nevertheless, it must be considered that selfish narcissists are driven by a personalized power motive and therefore exhibit a dark and personalized form of transformational and charismatic leadership.

In contrast, Machiavellian leaders are typical managers and administrators. They have a special talent for planning, organizing, and controlling. Machiavellian leaders feature a high personalized power motive and a calculative motivation to lead (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). On higher leadership levels Machiavellians could even be perceived as charismatic, although commonly charisma may be stronger attributed to narcissistic leaders. With their charismatic qualities narcissistic leaders can stimulate the intrinsic motivation and performance of their followers (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006), while due to their pragmatic perspective Machiavellians reduce followers' work-related intrinsic motivation (Judge et al., 2009). Just as narcissistic leaders, Machiavellian leaders show a strong authoritarian leadership behavior. The powerful leadership approach of transformational leadership, which is more demonstrated by narcissists, can be a means to motivate Machiavellian followers to a pro-organizational behavior.

Based on their personalized power motive and social dominance orientation, psychopathic leaders show the strong desire to get to the top of an organization. They exhibit a non-altruistic/antisocial motivation to lead. Psychopaths polarize and hence know only friends or enemies. In organizational context psychopathic leaders exhibit an unpredictable and impulsive leadership behavior. Psychopathic destructive leadership behavior could have strong negative effects on organizational members and effectivity (Boddy, 2015b). Despite their high impulsivity, psychopathic leaders use a wide range of strategies and tactical arrangements, though these are usually geared more towards short-term benefits and hence not calibrated to long-term consequences. Although psychopathy is positively associated with leader emergence it is negatively associated with leader effectivity (Mathieu et al., 2015), and often, psychopathic leaders show a very passive and ineffective leadership behavior (e.g., management-by-exception, laissez-faire) and similar to Machiavellian leaders are not interested in leadership per se. As a consequence, they entail a variety of negative effects for their followers (e.g., low job satisfaction, work motivation, high turnover intentions, and job neglect) and their organizations (e.g., corporate failure, workplace bullying), making them truly toxic and destructive in leadership contexts.

Investigating the dark triad in the context of leadership is a nascent field. There are several avenues for future research. First, there is currently no clear picture of psychopathy's role in leadership. Results are inconsistent and sometimes contradictory (e.g., successful vs. unsuccessful careers). Second, more studies are needed which examine the dark triad directly with different types of leadership behavior and relevant outcome variables (e.g., leader effectiveness, followers' job performance). Third, in the framework of the dark tetrad, subclinical sadism is discussed as a fourth important malevolent dimension, which also has high callousness (Paulhus, 2014).

Yet the role of sadism in leadership is completely unknown. Fourth, not only dark leaders, but also dark followers and the situational context (e.g., organizational individualism vs. collectivism), should be considered more. Fifth, two-way interaction effects of pairs of dark triad traits (e.g., a leader could exhibit high narcissistic and Machiavellian characteristics or Machiavellian long-term strategies could buffer psychopathic impulsivity) should be examined in the leadership context.

Finally, the effects of the dark triad on leader development, leader emergence, and leader effectivity should be investigated in detail. For example, there exists only one study examining the influence of dark personality traits on leader development (Harms et al., 2011). The authors demonstrated that although several dark personality dimensions were negatively associated with change in leadership, other dimensions of the Hogan Development Survey (HDS) (cautious, bold, colorful, and dutiful) showed positive relations to leader development over time. Bold (overly self-confident, arrogant, and entitled) was positively associated with narcissism, primary psychopathy, and Machiavellianism. Colorful (dramatic, attention seeking, and interruptive) was positively related to narcissism and primary psychopathy (Douglas, Bore, & Munro, 2012). Bold and colorful are particularly interconnected with narcissism and development (Harms et al., 2011). Narcissists are insatiable learners (Maccoby, 2003); for example, Napoleon had an enthusiastic interest for works of military history and philosophy. The connections between psychopathy and leader development remained unclear, although bold and colorful were also related to psychopathy. Furthermore, bold was also associated with Machiavellianism. Machiavellians are highly adaptable and flexible. Besides narcissism Machiavellians and psychopaths may also benefit from a leader development program. First, this program could contain the strengths and weaknesses of leaders' dark triad traits. Second, it could also initiate specific behavioral changes. As self-influencing processes towards behavioral change, self-leadership facets (e.g., self-goal setting, self-observation, self-reward, and self-cueing) could be used (Lucke & Furtner, 2015). Young or ineffective leaders could also benefit from a specific focus on leaders' dark triad traits. Passive leaders or leaders with a high need for affiliation could reflect about their (in certain environments) inappropriate leadership behavior and learn from the strengths of dark leaders (e.g., need for power, social dominance orientation). In the context of leader development, leader coaches can especially use the knowledge and strengths of the dark triad to increase individual knowledge, trust, personal power, and leader effectiveness.

But one must never forget that what narcissists, Machiavellians, and psychopaths have learned will be used exceptionally for selfish purposes and goals. Thus, despite their poor self-control and on the base of personal goals, it's possible that narcissists, Machiavellians, as well as psychopaths could increase their personal effectivity with a leader development program, while narcissism as the most adaptive trait of the dark triad promises best learning outcomes (Spain et al., 2013).

Due to their high personalized power motive, strong social dominance orientation, charisma, and impression management narcissists, Machiavellians, and psychopaths have in common that they strongly and inexorably strive for leadership positions, which are directly related to power and success. Therefore, it can be assumed that a variety and possibly the majority of leadership positions are occupied

with dark triad personalities. As Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009) noted, “the period that leadership theory and research will enter for the next decade is indeed one of the most exciting in the history of this planet” (p. 442). Concerning this, the focus on the role of leaders’ dark triad personality traits and dark leadership could improve our understanding of the complex field of leadership research, which for long time has only been fascinated of “good” and “idealized” leadership behaviors.

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## Chapter 5

# Leadership in Dialogue: How Courage Informs

Craig W. Gruber

Effective and dynamic leadership is a dialogue among leaders and the people they lead. Effective leaders engage in that dialogue both verbally and nonverbally. Effective leadership depends on the ability to engage in two-way communication among all parties. For most leaders who have risen to new posts of leadership, or those who find themselves leading large groups “accidentally,” that open dual-direction *communication requires courage*.

The dialogue between leaders and the people they lead takes many forms in order to be effective. Developing leaders must learn to listen to the people they lead. Listening takes many forms. Conversational learning in dialogue involves speaking. For leaders to really engage in conversation first and foremost, they need to listen. By engaging in the listening portion of the conversation, leaders can listen and internalize what individuals need. For those working with effective leaders, they feel listened to and appreciated. For leaders, this can be counterintuitive. Leaders must have the courage to lead by listening. An example of this comes from the following passage:

An educational team was working on a definition for an educational content “domain.” One member of the team (not an educator) asked the leader (department chair) for the definition upon which everyone could comment. The department chair did a brief course correction on that tasker, and requested that every member of the team create a definition and submit that. The rationale for the change in course was the belief that if the department chair had written the definition, all members would have agreed to that definition, whether it was correct or not. By insisting that every member provide a definition, the chair would be able to create a more holistic and encompassing view of the “domain” and also be able to get a better view on what each member of the team perceived the “domain” to be, and thus enabling a fuller comprehension of each members’ understanding of the task and their view an approach.

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Typical of this approach is the built-in dialogue among the leader and the team. By requiring each member to provide input the final product is not the one that comes from leaders to the led, but rather becomes a generative process. The final product developed by this approach was thorough and complete and incorporated the ideas and concepts of 12 different team members. The almost universal response upon reading the completed product was, “Wow, I hadn’t thought of that part!” each referring to a different aspect of the work.

While it may be tempting to think of this exercise in dialogue as a one-off process in which voices were given a forum in which it was guaranteed that they would be heard, it is part of a much larger trait in leadership. The trait is that of courage. In regard to dialogue, courage is the factor that allows for leaders to be informed by the people they lead. It takes courage for leaders to encourage or to inform people to tell them things they may not want to hear.

## 5.1 Historical Background on Courage as a Trait

When we look at definitions of the word “trait” we come to two main categories of definition: (1) a distinguishing quality or characteristic, typically one belonging to a person (The Oxford English Dictionary, 2017), or (2) a genetically determined characteristic (The Oxford English Dictionary, 2017). When defining courage, past research demonstrates that definition 1 (“a distinguishing quality or characteristic”) is the most applicable (Gruber, 2009, 2011, 2012a).

The courage that leadership requires is that which allows the leader to be both right and wrong in the same instant. In many ways, leadership is the Schrödinger’s Cat of great organizations. Great leadership, like courage, can exist simultaneously in many states. As an example, Rollo May identifies different types of courage (May, 1975, 1983). May’s work on courage is a direct result of his association with Paul Tillich. Tillich was his professor and lifelong friend. As an existential philosopher, Tillich had no issue with unobservable traits. Through extensive and lifelong correspondence with May, Tillich spoke of courage and its implications for people every day. In addition, based on May’s notes for the text of *The Courage to Create*, it was most likely Tillich’s (1959) book *The Courage to Be* that gave May his formative ideas in constructing courage in his approaches to therapy and theory in general.

Tillich wrote of courage in the context of being, vitality, participation, individualization and transcendence, which he refers to as the courage to accept acceptance. As Tillich writes, “Courage is the self-affirmation of being in spite of the fact of nonbeing. It is the act of the individual self in taking the anxiety of nonbeing upon itself by affirming itself either as part of an embracing whole or in its individual selfhood. Courage always includes a risk ... whether the risk of losing oneself ... or losing one’s world in an empty self-relatedness” (Tillich, 1959, p. 155). Put another way, courage is the willingness by an individual to face the unknown and accept a certain level of risk. For Tillich, most of his arguments were framed in the context

of religion. For May, as an ordained minister, this was certainly a consideration, but courage “transcended” that context.

After his graduation, ordination, and establishing a private psychological practice, Rollo May continued his association with Tillich (Rollo May Papers. HPA Mss46. Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, n.d.). Tillich’s voice can clearly be heard in many of May’s writings, such as *Love and Will* and *The Courage to Create*, to name but two. While May’s contributions to mainstream psychology have been in the area of humanistic approaches to psychology, he is most well known for the books he published on psychology, primarily in the area that we would now call “self-help.” Aside from his 1956 book, *Existence*, and 1965’s *The Art of Counseling*, his remaining writings were intended for the mass market. In this respect, as in so many others, he was quite successful and generous. Numerous congregations asked him to speak, which he did, but there is no record of him collecting a speaker’s fee or an honorarium from them. This is in stark contrast to his engagements for psychological meetings, in which he was quite explicit about timing and expenses (Rollo May Papers. HPA Mss46. Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, n.d.). Most of what can be said about May’s theories and approach to psychology is that he began his career as almost an existential therapist, but either he or the discipline changed so that he is now best known for his influence on humanistic psychology. It is because of this change that his work gains relevance in the current research. The applicability of his work beyond what he envisioned speaks to the relevance of his research and theory to the modern day. One of his best “unread” books remains “The Courage to Create.” An interesting note about this book is that its central tenets of courage and creativity postulated by May are dealt with only in “The Courage to Create.” Although courage is especially difficult to find as a separate construct in May’s writings, the concepts and ideas from which his courage stems are almost ubiquitous in his writings. Specifically, courage is described in the meaning and word of Tillich’s acceptance in *Love & Will*, *The Meaning of Anxiety*, *Man’s Search for Himself*, and *Existence*. The idea of needing courage to accept and be accepted is seen throughout these writings.

For Rollo May, courage was only one aspect of his research and writing. He is most well known for his work in the area of existential psychology. Through his experiences of personal tragedy and varied educational settings (Rollo May Papers. HPA Mss46. Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, n.d.), it is not hard to trace how he developed his approaches to theory and psychology. The mentoring he received under Paul Tillich gave him a first-hand account of European existential thought. This background enabled May to incorporate some of these thoughts and beliefs into his own therapeutic and belief system. This can be seen in his writings and notes both from his time as Tillich’s student and his manuscripts from years later (Rollo May Papers. HPA Mss46. Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, n.d.).



### 5.1.1 *Courage as Viewed by May*

May describes courage as having the root of *cœur* (heart), yet implies that courage is much more than simply heart. It is courage that helps individuals set out on their own; it is courage that allows individuals to make decisions, impact their surroundings, and influence others. Courage is the necessary element that requires an individual to become exactly that, an individual. It is courage, in May's view, that allows the individualism of a person to come through; and this happens in a variety of settings, the interpersonal as well as therapeutic. For May, courage is what completes a person; in leadership, courage is what allows a leader by title to become a great leader of people.

His continued correspondence and interaction with Tillich make clear (through inference since, sadly, most of it has been lost) that although courage may not have been the central tenant of his writing, it figured prominently in his practice and therapeutic interventions. From his remaining notes at the Humanistic Psychology Archive, courage is an expression seen in many pages of notes, unsorted anonymous client files, and drafts of writing projects (Rollo May Papers. HPA Mss46. Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, n.d.). He was certainly interested in expanding and developing theory and humanistic approaches. May approached Carl Rogers to discuss formalizing the humanistic theoretical approach, and in February of 1975, Rogers responded, "We will need to build upon earlier attempts at theory formation . . . . I would revise some of the later propositions now, but they may have some usefulness in stimulating discussion" (Rogers, 1975). May shortens Rogers' points as follows: (1) field theory, (2) growth, (3) subjectivity, and (4) process (Rogers, 1975). May is not taking away meaning, just abbreviating for consumption sake. Rogers' statement regarding "process" makes clear that the development of theory is not finalized; rather, "It (courage) will need to be a theory of process, rather than one stressing static elements. (Process is particularly in the realm of theory, since science usually measures static slices, particular moments, and the flow of process must be inferred by theory)" (Rogers, 1975).

May writes of four types of courage: physical, moral, social, and creative. Each of these has its own explanation and relevance. As May says of physical courage, "I propose a new form of courage of the body (physical courage): the use of the body not for the development of musclemen, but for the cultivation of sensitivity" (May, 1975). Here May is clearly indicating that physical courage serves a purpose beyond physical strength. Physical courage is courage *not* to be physical in nature. In terms of moral courage, the concept is more complex than physical courage, "It is highly significant, and indeed almost a rule that moral courage has its source in such identification through one's own sensitivity with all the suffering of one's fellow human beings. I am tempted to call this 'perceptual courage' because it depends on one's capacity to *perceive*, to let one's self see the suffering of other people. If we let ourselves experience the evil, we will be forced to do something about it" (May, 1975). Social courage, "... is the courage to relate to other human beings, the capacity to risk one's self in the hope of achieving meaningful intimacy. It is the courage to invest one's self over a period of time in a relationship that will demand an increasing openness" (May, 1975). May is not speaking of a physical intimacy,

but rather as May says, “Authentic social courage requires intimacy on many levels of the personality simultaneously” (May, 1975). Lastly, May describes creative courage. He states that creative courage is the most important kind of courage. “Whereas moral courage is the righting of wrongs, creative courage, in contrast, is the discovering of new forms, new symbols, new patterns on which a new society can be built” (May, 1975). May’s construction of courage allows for a trait which is not only present in individuals, but also allows (and in some cases requires) individuals to grow and develop. In other words, that development can be seen as learning, i.e., courage can be learned, developed, and improved in people.

## 5.2 Can Courage Be Learned?

The ability to learn courage is also a component of the writings of Rollo May. Courage is a trait; yet it is one that acts as an enabler. In essence, courage is the trait that fosters its own increase in capacity, i.e., something that can be learned within its own scope and capacity to build. Although he does not explicitly indicate that courage can be learned, May applied it to so many situations that the ability to learn courage appears to be a natural fit. More than a natural fit for learning courage, May suggests that the components that represent or illustrate physical, moral, social, and creative courage can be developed and grown. This has been demonstrated to be the case through the work of additional researchers such as Woodard (2004), Woodard and Pury (2007), and Walton (1986). Some individuals may not have each of the courage components, but that does not mean that they cannot ever have them, just that they need to be learned, and developed over a period of time (May, Angel, & Ellenberger, 1958; May, 1969, 1983).

Based on this work, others such as Woodard (2004), Valsiner (2007), and Woodard and Pury (2007) have continued with the research and writing into the development of courage as a trait that can be learned. When examining the psychology of courage, and the cognitive constructs that develop courage, we can see that, not unlike Bandura’s work in reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1986), others have developed and expanded that model to look at the interactions of cognition, behavior, environment, and courage for establishing and maintaining a stable individual such as Woodard (2004), Glăveanu (2011), and Gruber (2009, 2012a). It is that multifaceted, dynamic interaction that includes courage as an essential facet of interdependent decision making that demonstrates its applicability to leadership in dialogue as an essential trait of effective leaders.

Earlier, I described leadership as a “Schrödinger’s Cat” component of courage. That description fits in that courage, like leadership, can and does exist in many forms simultaneously and that leadership and courage are equally confused, but also equally important. Observation is what delineates the aspect of courage we see at any given point in time, similar to the function of quantum physics in the famous thought experiment (Gribben, 1984).

Quantum physics aside, courage, as discussed in the leadership as dialogue model, is a multifaceted cognitive construct. As seen above in the work by May, there are multiple definitions of courage. Defining courage “as persistence or

perseverance despite having fear or apprehension” (Woodard, 2004) has led to a variety of evaluative tools for assessing courage in individuals. This definition has a great degree of usefulness in educational and developmental paradigms, as we will see below and in future chapters. This definition, however, does not completely address the issues outside of educational situations. A subsequent definition of courage postulated by Woodard and Pury (2007) is more effective as an operationalized definition and functions effectively in a greater variety of situations. This definition states:

“Courage is the voluntary willingness to act, with or without varying levels of fear, in response to a threat to achieve an important, perhaps moral, outcome or goal.”

Other, broader components of courage have also been noted: physical, moral, and vital (Lopez, O’Byrne, & Peterson, 2003), moral courage (Walton, 1986), moral or ethical integrity in the presence of social disapproval (Putman, 1997), social courage (Larsen & Giles, 1976), existential courage (Maddi, 2004), and psychological courage (Putman, 1997).

I propose the following definition of courage here:

“Courage is the cognitive, *voluntary mental* process used to *enact change* on a *stable system* for the intention of a *positive* outcome in the absence of pure risk-taking behavior.”

For clarity, operationally defined terms that appear in italics above are described as follows: *voluntary mental* processes are those in which the person actively engages and can cognitively manipulate at will (an example would be a simple mathematical calculation such as arithmetic); *enact change* means to have an agentic effect or in some way transform the behavior or cognitions of an individual; *stable system* is used to refer to an individual and their cognitions that include thinking or behaving in a consistent and predictable manner over time; lastly *positive* outcome refers to the value-based affective outcome of the cognition or behavior as perceived by the individual or those around him or her.

From existing theories, relevant pieces of various theories can be utilized to construct models involving courage for future use. In this thesis, cognitive behaviorism, which was developed by Bandura in the mid-1980s, takes a place of prominence as a building block of the humanistic cognitive behavioral theory (HCBT) model (Gruber, 2012a). Reciprocal determinism consists of the components of behavior, cognition, and the environment (as introduced in the introductory chapter) and all three components interact with each other in a balanced system. A change in one component would throw the system (and subsequently the person) out of equilibrium, thus causing adaptations in the remaining areas to restore the individual to balance (Bandura, 2008). This system is graphically represented in Fig. 5.1. A reciprocally determinant system seeks to maintain itself in balance; therefore, a change in one component of the model will necessitate a change in the other two in order to maintain balance (Bandura, Social Cognitive Theory of Personality, 1999).

Bandura’s approach, which examines the individual as an active element of his or her environment, is an attractive one. However, regardless of the fully developed nature of Bandura’s theory, reciprocal determinism lacks the ability to account for

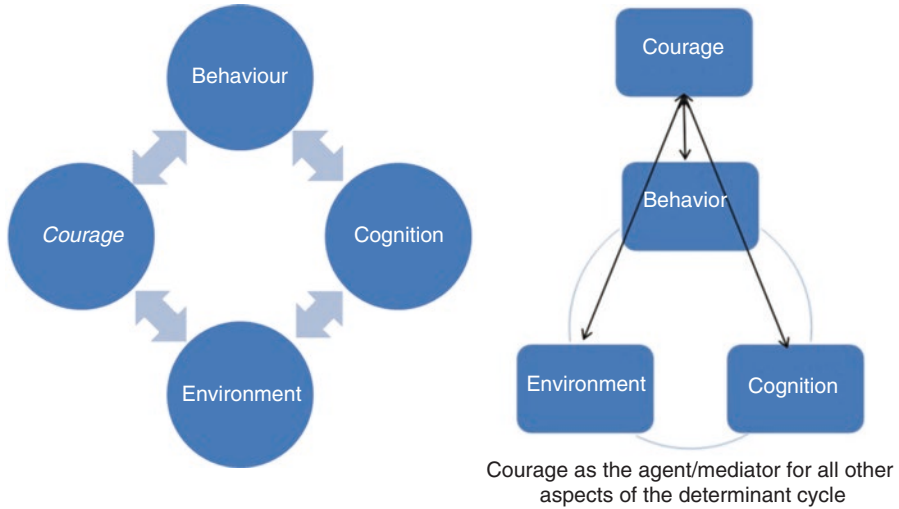


Fig. 5.1 HCBT model as represented in literature and teaching models

independent activity that may fall into risk-taking behavior or thinking/activity that is inherent in a specific individual. Risk taking cannot really be accounted for in deliberate, thoughtful action. By its very nature, it disregards the cognitive aspects of decision making, especially when viewed in light of the proposition that the act of taking a “risk” disregards the cognitive processes associated with making deliberate decisions. If reciprocal determinism is indeed the case, then growth cannot occur because of the natural drive to create stability in the balanced system represented by reciprocal determinism. Courage then is necessary to *productively disrupt that stability* so that the system is forced to adapt, thereby creating an opportunity to grow.

This inability to take into account risk-taking behavior that deviates from normal behavior is one of the issues that needed to be investigated. I here suggest linking that question with the work of Rollo May. May sees risk taking as a part of personal growth and being. For him it is an essential part of the creative, growing person (Rollo May Papers. HPA Mss46. Department of Special Collections, Davidson Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, n.d.). In *The Courage to Create* (May, 1975) he speaks of the (moral) courage necessary to stake one’s own claim on the world of ideas and not only strive for that independence, but also to demand nothing less from oneself and the world around us, regardless of the perceived cost. It is this that he calls courage. In the example of dialogue demonstrated at the beginning of this chapter we see the same aspect of *courage manifested as leadership*.

The system designed by Bandura contains a cognitive component and, in his perspective, that cognitive component is relegated to a rational one which appears to be delineated in nature, that is to say, more unidirectional. This is in contrast to the phenomenological/existential approach of May, which is more ordered towards cognitive activities, aligning themselves more to risk taking in a “safe” sense of the

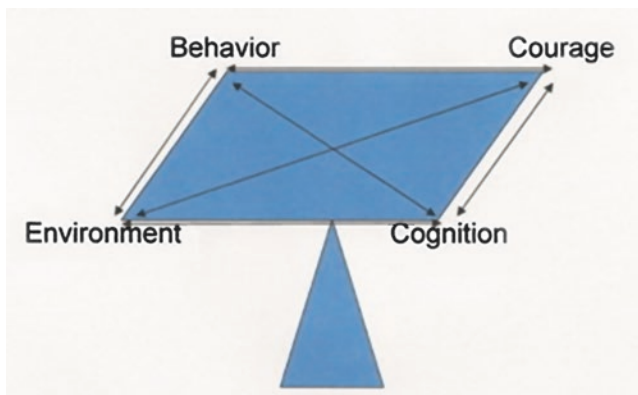
term. For May, this involves creativity, independence, and autonomous thought. What makes the combination of these theoretical constructs so exciting is that the applications of this combination go far beyond the obvious connotations of courage. This thesis represents the nexus of the approaches of both May and Bandura.

The intention here is to say that simply acting on a stable system (consisting of behavior, cognition, and environment) is not enough for courage; it is the desire for a positive outcome that is necessary. The desired outcome could be a betterment of one's environment, cognitions, or behavior. The intention is essential, yet it does not have to be realized for the act (and in this instance a cognitive process is considered an act) to be courageous. It is in this context that courage is the value-added/agentive property that impacts life and decision making.

### 5.3 Interactional Framework/Model

As we see in the four-sided figure in Fig. 5.2, no one component is immune from the effects of another component. In simple terms, in a stable system, a change in any of the four components (cognition, behavior, environment, or courage) will necessitate a change in the other three to return the individual to a stable state. Figure 5.2 shows a representation of the system in a stable individual.

The four points of the parallelogram are each of the four components of the model, while the bidirectional arrows again show how each influences the other. The parallelogram is "balanced" representing how the system functions in a stable individual. Note that the individual can be maladaptively stable, such as one with a history of poor academic performance, or individuals with self-destructive tendencies such as those towards addiction or other self-destructive behavior. Simply because an individual has a history of poor decision making, low courage, nonoptimal environmental considerations/choices, and self-destructive behavior does not



**Fig. 5.2** Diagram of HCBT model showing balance lines in stable individual

mean that he or she is unstable in the sense of the HCBT model, rather that his or her system is, in fact stable, but in a maladaptive way. It is because of this that change is so difficult. In reciprocal determinism postulated by Bandura (1986), there is no real impetus for change, nor a mechanism specifically designed for it. Essentially, courage is what allows for change.

One of the strongest arguments for the establishment of a new theory comes from Bandura. In his 2004 article, "Swimming against the mainstream: the early years from chilly tributary to transformative mainstream" Bandura describes not only the necessity for, but also the difficulty in, establishing a new theory and the resistance it encountered at the time. The HCBT model follows along a similar line in that research is clear in terms of the need and applicability of the new theory which incorporates courage (Gruber, 2009, 2011, 2012a, 2012b).

#### **5.4 Courage and HCBT as Dialogue in Leadership**

Each of the four theoretical aspects of HCBT exist to be interactional with each other. Specifically, in the context of leadership, that interactional framework rests in both dialogue and behavior. From a behavioral point of view, leadership can be viewed as a skill. Dialogue is a representative behavior that essentially demonstrates a behavioral manifestation of courage. Dialogue can be a way to assess and evaluate courage so that it can be developed in others. Charismatic leaders in business can motivate their teams, groups, and organizations with seemingly little effort, demonstrating courage and empowering those around them to engage, take risks, succeed, and more importantly fail in an environment that allows for recovery, both from a business and reputational standpoint. The behavioral component of the personal construct of courage is actual "doing" something and taking action.

An example of this flexible behavioral approach to leadership can be seen in a dramatized manner in the film *12 O'clock High* (Zanuck, 1949). On multiple occasions, the lead character, Brigadier General Frank Savage (played in the film by Gregory Peck), adopts different leadership postures and communication styles directly related to the behavior and cognitive factors of the men he leads, many times in the same scene. He does this by language, tone, body position, and room geography (his location in the room in relation to the other person). The courage and communication of his leadership is omnidirectional; it informs and is simultaneously informed by the people with whom he is speaking. The impact of this is that the lead character modifies his leadership style in a dynamic, seemingly instantaneous manner, matching the needs of the men he leads. Some need top-down, dictatorial leadership, while others need more of a "soft-power," coercive approach, while others simply need to be released to reach their full potential. The ability to recognize who needs which leadership style when, and in what circumstances, is the basis for the dynamic and successful leadership demonstrated in the film. It also shows how an interactional approach is essential for good leadership to thrive. In addition, courage plays an essential role in the film for the lead character. He speaks

of courage to the men he leads, but also confides in his superiors that he may not have the requisite courage needed to turn the group around. He also demonstrates an uncanny ability to actively listen to people so that he can incorporate their thoughts, ideas, and actions into his plans, an essential component of that dialogue. He learns his courage and applies his dynamic approach to leadership in such a way that by the end of the film, the 918th group is the model of efficiency, excellence, and pride.

While the example above is fictional, it demonstrates the applicability of the dialogue model of leadership and courage. When we examine dialogue between the four aspects of HCBT and tie in leadership for (1) the individual, (2) the team, and (3) the organization, we can see that while each of the four aspects of HCBT can be viewed alone, the agentic factor moving individuals towards change is courage. This is seen in the work of May (1960). Courageous leadership in dialogue makes organizations grow and strong. That means that individuals are empowered with courage to take risks and learn from mistakes to improve. While expressing their courage through action and communication, they must ensure that they also take the courage to listen to their subordinates. This requires a safe environment and courageous leadership to ensure that individuals up and down the “food chain” can take risks, and are supported by leadership to be courageous and make a difference.

#### ***5.4.1 Leadership as Dialogue in the Setting of Courage***

As we have seen above, dialogue plays a key role in leadership. The ability to effectively communicate the goals and aspirations of the unit/company/enterprise is essential to its overall success, and the commensurate success of the leader. Courage provides the setting in which effective leadership takes place. Take, for example, a situation in which a leader must pass along an “unpopular” initiative. Although the outcome for the enterprise is intended to be positive, it may not be a popular course of action for the individuals who must implement the change. In this case, let’s assume that the change is to an HR policy (the change would increase the cost of benefits for employees, and hence increase the profit margin for the company). Knowing that a change to a popular benefit is necessary, the messaging of the implementation of this is essential, and requires thoughtful and deliberate communication of how and why the change is to be implemented. If communicated improperly, it could be a disaster. However, leaders who have learned how to effectively communicate can make the messaging and implementation both seamless and angst free. As we see in courage, leadership can be learned. A leader who has not developed or learned skills and aptitude in effective communication and leadership is not going to succeed (unless they have a high-level sponsor, but that is for another article).

The communication styles needed to succeed can be learned, and those are a component of effective leadership, along with vision and courage. The ability to communicate without the vision to advance the enterprise or the courage to make mistakes, and empower others to make mistakes as well (courage), is simply talking in a vacuum, or as one Jesuit put it, “A shepherd without a flock is just a guy going

for a walk in a field with a stick” (Bollman, 2005). The analogy is that a leader without followers is no leader. As such, it is incumbent for leaders to both learn and refine the skills of leadership and courage. Those skills can be learned and refined through dialogue with teams both above and below their current position.

Oftentimes, leaders are assessed on how well their subordinates progress and advance. In some military settings unit commanding officers are evaluated on how well they have prepared junior officers and enlisted members of their unit to advance and get promoted (Moran, 2015). This emphasizes that leadership is a trait that must be passed along to others. In the military this means to “train the next generation of leaders” or the next division officer, department head, executive officer, commanding officer, or admiral/general. While some may argue that there are “born leaders,” even those “born with it” can benefit from coaching and mentoring to both enhance and develop their skills as leaders and communicators. In addition, aside from communication, it is the necessity of sponsoring individuals for positions of greater responsibility and empowering them to forge new paths (courage) (Ambrose, 2016).

### 5.4.2 *Courage in Dialogue with Leadership*

There is a need for courage in dialogue involving leaders across levels and followers. The problem that dialogue addresses is the ability to communicate among the constituencies, and to help grow and promote leaders. Courage is the agentic property for action and courage addresses the need for communication by allowing (or requiring) leaders to hear information they do not necessarily want communicated (even though they need to hear it).

Courage can have tremendous impacts on the three constituencies identified earlier ((1) the individual, (2) the team, and (3) the organization). For the individual, courage, which we defined as “the cognitive, *voluntary mental* process used to *enact change* on a *stable system* for the intention of a *positive* outcome,” presents both challenges and opportunities. Courage is volitional. For individuals to engage in positive change from both a leadership and courage perspective, they must intend to do it. The outcome or effect can be for the positive result/outcome for either themselves or their organization. In social psychology, when we examine group dynamics, courage for the team comes into view. The challenge on the team level is to create a group of equals whose collective courage will develop the positive outcome. This positive outcome is translational to each member and to the organization writ large. Granted, this is only in a functional team with shared goals and vision. Teams which are too large, exist for too long, and encompass individuals of wildly disparate talent levels will produce leaders within them to shepherd the individuals to produce the end product.

At the organizational level, courage can be a core value. There are examples of corporate cultures where courage and courage-like attributes are needed to do a “course correction” (Wood & Hughes, 2017). In those situations, instilling courage as a value requires extraordinary leadership, as instilling a new culture (or aspect of



culture) is exceedingly difficult (Valsiner, 2007). Behavioral courage in business is a function of effective leadership. While most organizations rely upon corporate culture as a standard by which they can continue progressing as they always have, organizational behavioral courage to change culture takes volitional action to an entirely new paradigm. In that situation, the requirement is not only to change the organization, but also those who are attempting to lead the change. It is a dialogue both within and among the top leaders of the organization, but also for the organization to engage in that dialogue with those who work within it across all levels of the organization. This is wholesale courage and is both individual and collective in nature.

## 5.5 Conclusion

The role of communicating vulnerability through dialog is an important component of effective leadership. Trust is often defined as a willingness to be vulnerable. One can't just be vulnerable, but also be able to communicate that vulnerability clearly. This requires courage by any definition (Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007). Leadership through dialogue is similar to courage in dialogue. For either to be effective, there needs to be communication both within and without. Scientific philosophy speaks to this dichotomy with the argument that to form beliefs, to judge them, to change them, to weigh actions, and to distinguish real from merely verbal differences, by the canons of scientific philosophy, are essential to the positive outcomes one desires (Reichenbach, 1961). The volitional constructs moving towards positive change in leadership and courage can sometimes be constrained by the "rules" of scientific discovery and data analytics.

Through dialogue, courage is expressed as listening, vulnerability, and trust. These elements are critical for leaders and must be considered when developing leaders. Likewise, each of these elements have great potential to disrupt the status quo that exists between cognitions, behavior, and the environment for individuals and the organization. This allows us to see that courage as dialogue is a necessary part of creating the instability and, hence, opportunity for change and growth for individuals, teams, and organizations. Developing the leaders of the future who can manage complex and ambiguous situations will need experimenting with courage as dialog in order to better build the capacity for leading in the areas of courage and communication.

Courage has sometimes been seen as a difficult trait to measure, research, and develop (Woodard & Pury, 2007; Woodard, 2004). Leadership has demonstrated itself to be no less complicated. The dialogue between and among them (or even construing leadership as dialogue) requires a thoughtfulness and willingness to expand the boundaries of current thinking and think of them as useful and meaningful for change. As the children's story says, "Thomas, you are a very useful engine" (Awdry, 1996); so both are leadership and courage. The judgment required for both is essential for success in the individual, and speaks to the nature of the trait being learned and required for the effective leaders of the future.

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# Chapter 6

## Leader Developmental Readiness: Deconstructed and Reconstructed

Rebecca J. Reichard and Jason E. Beck

In recent reviews of the leadership scholarship field, authors report the existence of more than 60 different leadership theories (Dinh et al., 2014) and opine regarding the infancy of theory integration (Meuser et al., 2016). In contrast to the leadership field, scholarship on leader development (i.e., expansion of an individual leader's capacity; Day, 2000) and leadership development (i.e., expansion in the collective leadership capacity of a group or an organization) is in its nascent stages (Day & Dragoni, 2015). With so few theories of leader development available to guide empirical research, theory development is more necessary than theory integration. Until recently, leader development scholars focused on identifying the "right" theory of leadership and then trained leaders to behave in alignment with that theory (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). Day et al. (2014) argue, however, that the field must go beyond this approach and toward understanding the process of *development*.

One of the few theories of leader development, leader developmental readiness (LDR) (Avolio & Hannah, 2008) addresses the state of the leaders embarking upon development as a central determinant of developmental success. Given the ongoing and dynamic nature of leader development, it is not surprising that the effectiveness of leader development initiatives is highly variable (Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan, 2009). Some leaders grow by leaps and bounds to attain high levels of leader development outcomes (e.g., efficacy, self-awareness, leader identity, leadership knowledge, and skills; Day & Dragoni, 2015), while others fail to change at all. Several explanations exist for the variability of development in leaders who seem to have similar leadership experiences, yet one explanation that stands out is the individual leader's *readiness* to learn and grow. Those leaders who are "developmentally ready" maximize growth from leadership experiences or formal training (Hannah & Avolio, 2010). LDR refers to "the ability and the motivation to

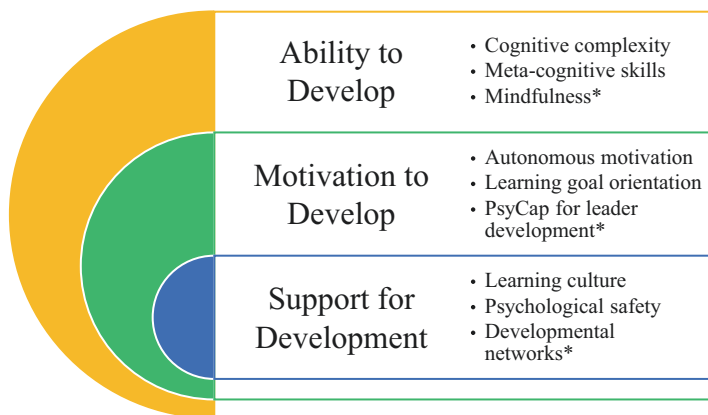
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attend to, make meaning of, and appropriate new leader KSAAAs (knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes) into knowledge structures along with concomitant changes in identity to employ those KSAAAs” (Hannah & Avolio, 2010, p. 1182). Beyond the individual’s ability and motivation to develop, the readiness of the organization to support leader development rounds out the LDR framework (Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009).

The purpose of this chapter is to first deconstruct LDR into its various pieces and parts around the three pillars of (a) ability to develop, (b) motivation to develop, and (c) support for development. At first glance, LDR is a relatively new idea with the first papers on this topic published within the past decade (Avolio & Hannah, 2008). However, when we deconstruct LDR, we see that it is composed of ideas that scholars have studied for quite some time, yet the concepts may be novel when applied to developing leaders. As part of our deconstruction and shown in Fig. 6.1, we examine both the established components of LDR such as metacognitive ability, learning goal orientation, and learning culture, and also introduce new constructs and argue for their inclusion in LDR, including mindfulness, psychological capital for leader development, and developmental networks. Finally, we reconstruct the higher order construct of LDR by examining interactions between its parts.

By examining LDR in this way, we contribute a situated understanding of LDR within broader discussions on learning and development. We conceptualize LDR as an overarching framework with components that can be flexibly identified depending on the purpose (e.g., selection, needs assessment, and preparation). We also introduce and argue for new components to the LDR framework that extend prior work. Finally, by reconstructing interactions among LDR components, we establish an agenda for future research.



Note. \*reflects newly proposed components of leader developmental readiness

**Fig. 6.1** Deconstruction: leader developmental readiness components

## 6.1 Situating Leader Developmental Readiness

To begin, we situate LDR in the broader context of training and development. Because leader development is one component of the larger training and development function within organizations, some parallels can be drawn between these two areas. Specifically, analyzing LDR prior to leader development is akin to conducting a needs assessment prior to employee training (e.g., Noe, 2013). Needs assessment—the first step in the training design process—consists of three components: task analysis, person analysis, and organizational analysis. In the leadership realm, task analysis can be equated to identification of the organization’s leadership competency model, which defines the knowledge, skills, abilities, or other characteristics necessary for leadership success within the organization (Sanchez & Levine, 2009). Second, person analysis reflects an examination of the ability and motivation of individuals entering leader development (i.e., the first two pillars of LDR). Finally, organizational analysis questions the degree of support of the organizational context to support the leader development program (i.e., the third LDR pillar). From our observations of the extant literature, needs assessment—particularly person analysis—is a step that is skipped in the design and delivery of leader development programs. Knowing which employees are able and motivated to learn from leader development opportunities and understanding the transfer climate of the organizational context the employee is operating within (i.e., support pillar of LDR) are essential to development success.

## 6.2 Deconstructing Leader Developmental Readiness

To deconstruct LDR, we distinguish between readiness to *develop* leadership and readiness to *enact* leadership (see Table 6.1). Although both require an interest in leadership and are likely to result in leadership behaviors, what it means to be *ready to develop* as a leader is conceptually distinct from what it takes to be *ready to perform* as a leader. For example, being ready to perform means the leader is technically competent and knowledgeable of the domain (ability to lead), is confident and

**Table 6.1** Distinctions between readiness to develop as a leader and readiness to perform as a leader

	Readiness to develop leadership	Readiness to perform leadership
Ability	The leader has the ability to learn from experiences (e.g., metacognitive skills)	The leader is technically competent and knowledgeable of domain (e.g., interpersonal skills)
Motivation	The leader is driven to develop as a leader, to experiment with leadership behaviors, and to learn from mistakes	The leader is confident and interested in leading
Support	The group supports the leader in making mistakes and learning new leadership skills	The group supports or endorses the leader to take charge of the group

motivated to lead (motivation to lead), and has the support of the group to take on the leadership role (support for leadership). In contrast, readiness to develop as a leader refers to preparedness to benefit and learn from a developmental experience (Day et al., 2009), which is often very different.

To distinguish between these overlapping concepts, we consider ability, motivation, and contextual support to develop leadership versus enact leadership. First, a leader with high levels of LDR has a strong ability to learn from experiences, not necessarily perform as a leader. One's ability to develop is likely to result in the development of leadership ability over time—which, fundamentally, is the goal of emphasizing LDR. Different abilities are required to develop as a leader (e.g., metacognition) than those abilities required to lead (e.g., interpersonal effectiveness).

With regard to motivation to develop, a leader is motivated to develop leadership skills, to try out different behaviors, see what works and what doesn't, and learn from mistakes. Again, this form of motivation to develop is distinct from one's motivation to lead. Chan and Drasgow (2001) describe three different motivations to engage in leadership—*affective identity* (“I am motivated to lead because I identify myself as a leader. It is who I am.”), *social normative* (“I am motivated to lead because I feel an obligation to others. It is my moral responsibility.”), and *non-calculative* (“I am motivated to lead *not* because of the costs and benefits of leading.”). Someone high in motivation to lead may view oneself as such an excellent leader that they do not perceive a need to develop.

Finally, perhaps the starkest contrast between readiness to develop and readiness to lead is apparent when examining the third pillar of LDR—the context. With LDR, the context is suited to support the development of the leader by allowing for experimentation and freedom to learn from failure. On the other hand, a context supportive of leader performance is reflected by the granting of power by the group to the leader coupled with the high expectations for group outcomes. Distinct from readiness to lead, LDR is considered to be a function of the *developmental* orientation of the leader's ability, motivation, and context (Day et al., 2009). Next, we deconstruct each of the three pillars of LDR in turn.

### 6.2.1 *Ability to Develop as a Leader*

The first of the three pillars of LDR is the ability to develop as a leader. The basic premise is that leaders possessing the right mix of individual differences in their ability to develop will glean more from leadership experiences or formal programming and thus the expansion of their leadership capabilities will be accelerated (Avolio & Hannah, 2008).

A key dimension of ability to develop is referred to as leader complexity (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Hannah & Avolio, 2010), which refers to a leader's ability to differentiate and integrate new knowledge regarding oneself and regarding leadership into mental schemas. Although not mentioned by prior authors, we argue that high levels of cognitive complexity are a function of a leader's global intelligence, more accurately referred to as general mental ability. In fact, general mental ability has been defined by

Schmidt (2009, p. 4) as the “ability to learn” and has been found to predict acquisition of job knowledge (Schmidt & Hunter, 2004). In effect, general mental ability will facilitate a leader’s success in processing, interpreting, and integrating new developmental experiences into a more complex understanding of oneself and of leadership.

According to meta-analytic findings, the relationship between intelligence and leadership is positive yet weaker than previously thought ( $r = 0.27$ ; Judge, Colbert, & Ilies, 2004), perhaps because what matters is that the leader’s intelligence is comparable to their followers (Ghiselli, 1963). More relevant here, however, is that no studies have directly examined the relationship between intelligence and leader *development*, which may be an oversight given the role of intelligence in learning. The absence of an explicit discussion of intelligence in the leader development literature may be due to the adverse impact that intelligence tests have on minority groups (Schmidt, 2009), making the concept out of favor. Adding to the adverse impact limitation, the inclusion of general mental ability within the ability component of LDR is not useful beyond a selection function because intelligence is a fixed trait and not open to development. Moreover, higher order mental abilities are more relevant than general mental ability to the specific context of leader development (e.g., Kovacs & Conway, 2016).

If we deconstruct the ability to develop into higher order, specific skills, practitioners are able to go beyond merely selecting intelligent leaders for development programs. Instead, by understanding the ability to develop as specific, learnable practices, practitioners can foster the development of LDR in leaders prior to and during developmental experiences or formal training. In other words, the objective of a formal leadership training should be to increase leaders’ ability to develop so that they can glean more from stretch experiences on the job. We offer two skill-based practices composing the ability to develop, with the first—metacognitive skills—being previously discussed as a component of LDR (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Black, Soto, & Spurlin, 2016) and the second—mindfulness—being a new addition to the LDR framework with promising applications.

**Metacognitive skills.** Kitchner (1983) identifies three levels of cognition. Standard cognition, the first level of cognitive process, is simply memorizing, reading, and solving problems. Metacognition is a second-level cognitive process that develops early in life and is utilized throughout one’s life. The third level of cognitive process, epistemic cognition, develops in adult years and focuses on how individuals contemplate the nature of knowledge (an approach for developing epistemic cognition in academic environments is explored in Chapter 10). We will focus on metacognition for its role in leader development. Specifically, metacognitive skills refer to the capacity to facilitate “thinking about thinking” and “monitor and control cognition and one’s awareness of cognitive strengths and weaknesses” (Hannah & Avolio, 2010, p. 1184). It requires an active reflection about the thinking process itself. Reflecting on thinking leads to knowing what we know and how we learn what we know. At its core, metacognition includes (1) monitoring, (2) controlling, and (3) reflecting on cognition.

These processes aid in leader development for several reasons. First, monitoring one’s awareness of cognition provides a heightened understanding of one’s own learning patterns (Garner & Alexander, 1989; Pressley & Ghatala, 1990). Simply being skilled at monitoring one’s cognition allows for a deeper involvement in the processes of learning. For example, leaders can practice think-aloud learning by



verbally processing their learning experience. This will help leaders become more aware of their learning process. Metacognitive skills enable leaders to develop effectively by accurately understanding areas to monitor and adapt learning skills (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Schraw & Dennison, 1994).

Second, controlling cognitive processes offers a heightened sense of awareness during learning and sensitivity to challenges. Leaders who enact metacognitive skills consider situations critically to facilitate sharpening their skills to learn, plan, monitor, and evaluate. For example, leaders can use their knowledge from monitoring to assist creating goals for situations on how to behave. Leaders who get into the habit of behavioral goal creation will increase their ability to intentional control future behavior. These skills accelerate a leader's potential learning from developmental programs and stretch experiences by having the necessary cognitive tools.

Third, reflecting on new information enables leaders to push boundaries on learning. Reflection has emerged as an advantageous tool in leader development (London, 2002), from reflecting on one's life story or narrative to make meaning and glean awareness of values, beliefs, and self (Avolio, 2005; Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Sparrowe, 2005) to integrating after-action reviews into action learning teams (DeRue, Nahrgang, Hollenbeck, & Workman, 2012). For example, active reflective experiences are ones in which a leader deliberates on the intent of a particular experience, their behavior, behavior of others, outcomes (intended and achieved), lessons of the experience, and actions to improve future development and performance (Baird, Holland, & Deacon, 1999). Reflection can be facilitated through intrapersonal journaling or interpersonally with an executive coach or with team members. Leaders with active reflection skills will better notice and learn insights from developmental opportunities and gain self-awareness (London, 2002). Leaders with strong metacognitive skills reflect on their thoughts over the course of everyday leadership challenges, intense stretch experiences, or formal leadership training and, therefore, possess a strong ability to develop.

In summation, metacognitive skills impact a leader's capacity to develop by increasing self-awareness, monitoring, and regulation of thoughts and emotions (Dinsmore, Alexander, & Loughlin, 2008; Ridley, Schutz, Glanz, & Weinstein, 1992). Increasing awareness helps leaders correctly evaluate their current skills and access developmental areas that are difficult to accept. With appropriate knowledge of their current skill set, leaders will have an easier time integrating new skills during leader developmental programs to improve those areas (Hannah & Avolio, 2010).

Leaders have many opportunities during everyday work to observe thinking patterns and learn about learning. However, more often than not, leaders get so focused on their action-oriented jobs that they overlook opportunities for reflection. It is difficult to learn from experiences if leaders are busy performing and clearing problem areas (Day, 2010). At the opposite extreme, reflection has to be brought to an end or else maladaptive rumination can inhibit leaders from progressing (Mor & Winquist, 2002). Such leaders risk spending excessive time wandering self-awareness paths of the mind, trapped in unnecessary analyzing. Leaders with strong metacognitive skills will know how to snap their focus into action mode and when to stop to monitor their thinking patterns to maximize leader development. Strong

metacognitive skills assist in the readiness to develop because leaders progress in developmental opportunities without falling into an overthinking trap.

Specifically, metacognitive skills can be developed through ongoing practice (Avolio & Hannah, 2008). Example practices for developing metacognitive skills include monitoring understanding, evaluating effectiveness of learning, and understanding cognitive strengths as well as weaknesses (Schraw & Dennison, 1994). For instance, meta-cognitive skills could be improved by asking oneself questions about the quality of developmental strategies, such as “How am I doing at developing my leadership?” or “Am I using this developmental strategy effectively?” As mentioned, leaders can also practice self-development techniques such as journaling and conversation techniques like debriefing.

**Mindfulness.** In their initial theorizing, Hannah and Avolio (2010) assert the importance of self-concept clarity for LDR. Self-concept clarity refers to “the extent to which self-beliefs are clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent, and stable” (Campbell et al., 1996, p. 141). We propose mindfulness as a new component of the ability to develop pillar of LDR, as it goes beyond general mental ability to achieve the necessary clarity and complexity in cognitive structures.

Mindfulness refers to a present-moment awareness with an observing, non-judging stance (e.g., Bishop et al., 2004; Mikulas, 2011; Reb, Narayanan, & Chaturvedi, 2014). Researchers have empirically linked mindfulness to several beneficial leader development outcomes. Leaders experience high stress in the world due to demanding hours, decision making, and managing many employees and work responsibilities. Handling stress is crucial for developmental of leadership skills (Campbell, Baltes, Martin, & Meddings, 2007). Research has found a positive association between mindfulness and greater physical and psychological well-being and stress reduction (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007; Chiesa & Serretti, 2010). Specifically, Roche, Haar, and Luthans (2014) found that mindfulness benefits leader well-being across three levels of leaders (i.e., junior managers, middle managers, and senior managers). At the dyadic level, mindfulness can improve self-regulation in behavior to order to navigate social relationships better, enhance well-being, and increase task performance (Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2011). In a longitudinal field experiment, Yeow and Martin (2013) found that self-regulation increases led to greater leader effectiveness as well as financial performance. In summary, mindfulness is a beneficial addition to the ability to develop pillar of LDR because it can improve leaders’ well-being, reduce stress, and facilitate self-regulation; all of these outcomes boost the chances for successful leader development.

There are three main dimensions to definitions of mindfulness, and each is central to the ability to develop leadership: (1) present-moment awareness, (2) non-judgmental acceptance of the present moment, and (3) sensitivity to context and perspective. First, to be aware of the present moment means to perceive, feel, and think of the experience of being in the moment. Similarly, metacognition is a higher order skill of being aware of awareness. Metacognition uses awareness for the specific goal of reflection. However, unlike metacognition, mindful awareness does not require any purposeful action, or goal, outside of being aware of the present (Brown

& Ryan, 2003). Mindful awareness is the act of witnessing or observing the present. This present-moment awareness facet helps leaders focus on the critical learning outcomes of their current experience.

Countless tasks, decisions, and stressors bombard leaders and linger in their mind throughout the day. Ordinary annoyances throughout the day could distract the leader away from focusing on developmental opportunities. A leader high in mindfulness would refocus towards leader developmental plans during high stress instead of forgetting about orientations towards developmental opportunities. For example, a leader walks into a meeting knowing that his/her developmental goal is to facilitate perspectives from unheard employees. In the heat of a debate in the meeting, he/she could be preoccupied with arguing for his/her position. However, a leader high in mindfulness refocuses to the present experience and refrains from distracting behaviors. He/she then brings his/her attention toward pulling ideas from the rest of the group. In essence, a mindful leader will be able to move attention quickly and fully back to focusing on their developmental goals. LDR increases when leaders can let go of irrelevant worries and adjust their attention to the awareness of the present moment. Present-moment awareness allows leaders to learn from situations instead of being distracted by emotional, ego-threatening, or trivial circumstances.

The second facet of mindfulness, nonjudgmental acceptance of the present moment, engages leaders to accept the present moment despite positive or negative attributes. The leader chooses to accept the present moment as a reality of the experience, instead of spending vital energy being frustrated that a negative event has occurred. Roche et al. (2014) suggest that mindfulness plays a role in viewing stressful situations without the rumination that disables leaders from focusing on the true issue at hand. Learning experiences can be extremely difficult to accept due to harsh feedback, failure, or cognitive demands. The acceptance facet of mindfulness provides the leader with the capacity to utilize harsh feedback toward constructive criticism or perceive failure as a tool for development. If a leader can accept the present experience nonjudgmentally, then the leader can use the experience for developmental purposes instead of becoming defensive or distracted away from learning.

Finally, mindfulness enables a leader to be sensitive to context and perspective and to absorb learning experiences fully. Situational awareness is essential for leader development because leadership effectiveness is contextual (e.g., Fiedler, 1964). For example, the same leadership behavior (e.g., task structuring) may succeed in one situation (e.g., ambiguous task) yet fail in another situation (e.g., highly intelligent group members). Through mindfulness, leaders will be able to gather greater contextual cues to aid in connecting learning experiences. By recognizing contextual patterns, the mindful leader will be better positioned to adapt his/her leadership behaviors to the situation. Whereas some leaders may overlook challenges as a self-defeating struggle, the mindful leader will see other cues embedded in the context providing opportunities to develop. Therefore, leaders high in mindfulness will fully absorb leader development opportunities.

One of the most straightforward ways to develop mindfulness is through a meditation practice. Mindfulness-based stress reduction programs start from a minimum of 8 weeks to improve affective processes and increase mindfulness (Chiesa & Serretti, 2010). However, this requires a great amount of time and financial resources. Short durations of

simple mindfulness meditation trainings may also be effective as positive benefits have resulted from as little as 4 days of 20-min mindfulness meditation sessions (Zeidan, Johnson, Diamond, David, & Goolkasian, 2010). This method is as simple as focusing on one's breath with eyes closed for 10–20 min, once a day (Wallace, 2006). Alternatively, mindfulness can be developed in everyday life outside of a formal practice. Leaders can practice an attitude of accepting experience without value judgment, regardless of good outcome or bad outcome (Brown & Ryan, 2003). With the nonstop daily workload of a leader, mindfulness can be practiced by merely taking a short break and then resuming work by focusing on one developmental goal at a time.

Mindfulness enables leaders to accept present experiences for what they are and from there take an active approach to reacting effectively. By accepting and spending energy to be aware of the totality of the present moment, rumination is reduced to allow for regulating of developmental focus in challenging, dynamic, and volatile situations (Weick & Quinn, 1999; Dane & Brummel, 2014). Therefore, we propose mindfulness as a new and impactful component of ability to develop leadership.

### ***6.2.2 Motivation to Develop as a Leader***

In addition to ability to develop, those high in LDR are also motivated to develop as a leader. Motivation to develop refers to “the desire to develop or improve leadership skills and attributes through effort” (Maurer & Lippstreu, 2005, p. 5). Leaders possessing a high-intensity motivation to develop seek out stretch experiences and overcome setbacks (Reichard, Walker, Putter, Middleton, & Johnson, 2016). Given the longitudinal nature of leader development, such high levels of effort and persistence are certainly required to stay the course.

According to Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory, motivation can vary not only in terms of level of intensity but also in type ranging from amotivation (i.e., no intent to act) to various types of extrinsic motivation (i.e., external to integrated) and to intrinsic motivation (i.e., acting due to inherent interest in activity). In fact, in one of the initial publications on LDR, Hannah and Avolio (2010) referred to a leader's interest as “an intrinsic motivational orientation accompanied by psychological arousal in relation to a particular topic” (p. 1182), with that topic of interest being leadership and leader development. However, oftentimes the activities required to develop leadership are not inherently interesting, so the various types of extrinsic motivation to develop are needed to deconstruct LDR.

Although all are external to the activity itself, the types of extrinsic motivation vary based on the degree of autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). With the lowest degree of autonomy, external regulation is the type of motivation traditionally associated with extrinsic motivation, where motivation is controlled through compliance to external rewards and punishments. Although some leaders may be motivated to lead or develop leadership as a result of the gains in power or rewards (Chan & Drasgow, 2001), this is unlikely to be sustainable over the long haul of leader development particularly given the complex nature of learning to lead (Day, 2010).

Instead, given the role of agency and ownership inherent to successful leader development (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Hannah & Avolio, 2010), it requires autonomously regulated motivation. Again, according to self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), toward the autonomously regulated end of the extrinsic motivation continuum are identified regulation (e.g., developing as a leader is personally significant and consciously valued) and integrated regulation (e.g., developing as a leader is congruent with who I am). When applied to LDR, we argue that the type of motivation needed is autonomously regulated motivation including identified, integrated, or intrinsic motivation to develop as a leader.

As with the ability to develop pillar, we deconstruct two components of motivation to develop. The first—learning goal orientation—has previously been argued as a key LDR dimension (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Culbertson & Jackson, 2016) and the second—leader development psychological capital—is an extension of the prior discussion of the role of leader developmental efficacy in LDR.

**Learning goal orientation.** A leader's approach to growth opportunities is derived from their implicit theory of ability and results in at least two distinct types of goal orientation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). First, performance goal orientation stems from the implicit theory of ability about leadership as fixed. Individuals with this mindset believe that leaders are “born” with the traits and qualities necessary for leadership. Leaders with these beliefs approach leader development opportunities with an aspiration to validate their ability (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; Dweck, 1986). This approach focuses leaders on either proving their expertise or avoiding failure, which has a negative impact on self-regulatory processes (Bouffard, Boisvert, Vezeau, & Larouche, 1995) and runs counter to motivation to develop leadership.

Alternatively, a learning goal orientation stems from the implicit belief that leadership is a developable, malleable skill. From this perspective, leaders are “made.” Leaders, who are high in learning goal orientation, view leadership challenges as opportunities for development, growth, and improvement (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). Leaders with this orientation are more likely to create self-focused goals and adapt working styles for demanding situations (Button, Mathieu, & Zajac, 1996; Farr, Hofmann, & Ringenbach, 1993).

The dominant type of goal orientation a leader endorses affects a wide range of leader processes that enhance LDR and leader development outcomes, namely feedback. Goal orientation anchors feedback behaviors for improvements (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). Feedback is vital to leader development because it provides unique emerging information contributing towards goal progress (Locke & Latham, 2002). If a leader pursues performance goals, feedback will be difficult to manage as results will determine proof of success or proof of failure. However, if a leader pursues learning goals, then feedback will be interpreted as an opportunity for improvement because the leader seeks challenge and development. Seeking proactive feedback means the leader actively facilitates their own developmental process. A learning goal orientation, thus, is meaningful for LDR given that feedback is a crucial element for leader development (London, 2002).

There are several ways that leaders and program administrators can cultivate learning goal orientations to boost LDR. Organizations should stimulate learning

goal orientation in their leadership developmental programs beginning with program messaging. Ensuring that these programs are spaces of learning, not maximizing performance, is a good start. On a more individual leader level, self-awareness of one's implicit assumptions about leadership and leader development is an effective starting point. Empirical research has established that approximately 30% of leader role occupancy is attributable to genetics (Arvey, Rotundo, Johnson, Zhang, & McGue, 2006; Arvey, Zhang, Avolio, & Krueger, 2007), leaving the vast majority of leader emergence and effectiveness open to development and environmental influences. Beyond understanding the research evidence, a more personal reflection on the origin and development of values, beliefs, and skills through the examination of one's narrative (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Sparrowe, 2005) or other leaders' life stories can aid in uncovering the developmental nature of leadership. Projecting one's personal narrative into the future through framing goals in terms of increasing knowledge and experiencing challenge can further facilitate a learning orientation (Seijts, Latham, Tasa, & Latham, 2004). Motivational interviewing, a method of exploring resistance (Miller & Rollnick, 2002), is a tangible tool coaches can use to facilitate autonomous functioning through self-awareness of behavior, values, and fundamental assumptions of change (Markland, Ryan, Tobin, & Rollnick, 2005). Finally, training leaders to pursue feedback with an open, challenge-seeking attitude can increase learning goal orientation (Payne, Youngcourt, & Beaubien, 2007). Leaders high in LDR will seek out feedback outside of leader development programs. Furthermore, with growth-oriented mindsets, leaders can use this sought-out feedback for integration into their development.

**Leader Development Psychological Capital.** Beyond human capital (e.g., explicit and tacit knowledge) and social capital (i.e., networks of relationships), positive psychological capital is a source of competitive advantage in organizations (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Positive psychological capital, or PsyCap, is referred to as a state-like, motivational propensity (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007) and, thus, PsyCap for leader development is proposed as a key component of the motivation to develop pillar of LDR (Pitichat, Reichard, Kea-Edwards, Middleton, & Norman, 2017).

As a domain-specific construct, PsyCap has been anchored to a variety of domains including cross-cultural interactions (Dollwet & Reichard, 2014), academics (Luthans, Luthans, & Avey, 2014), and—most frequently—the workplace (Luthans et al., 2007). Workplace PsyCap has demonstrated consistent positive relationships with desired outcomes including job satisfaction and performance (Avey, Reichard, Luthans, & Mhatre, 2011a, b). Given the context-specific nature of the PsyCap construct, we propose conceptualization of PsyCap to the context of leader development and define psychological capital for leader development, or LD PsyCap, as “(1) having confidence ([self-]efficacy) to take on and put the necessary effort to succeed at challenging *leader development* tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future *in terms of developing as a leader*; (3) persevering toward *leader development* goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience)

to attain success at *leader development*” (adapted from Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007, p. 3; italicized words added to reflect leader development domain).

As reflected in this definition, PsyCap is a higher order, core construct consisting of the four lower order constructs of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Luthans et al., 2007). As one of four components of LD PsyCap, leader developmental efficacy was discussed in the initial theorizing regarding LDR (i.e., Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Hannah & Avolio, 2010). Aligned with Bandura’s (1997) learning efficacy, leader developmental efficacy refers to “a domain-specific, state-like individual difference” that reflects a leader’s belief in his/her ability to develop leadership knowledge or skills (Reichard et al., 2016, p. 3). In a series of three studies, Reichard et al. (2016) found that leader developmental efficacy predicted intentions to engage in leader self-development activities (e.g., seeking stretch opportunities) beyond past leader development. Likewise, intentions to develop as a leader, in turn, predicted implementation of leader development activities a month later. Finally, leader developmental efficacy was associated with positive change in leader efficacy over the course of formal training. These results provide initial empirical support for the veracity of leader developmental efficacy being a significant component of the motivational pillar of LDR.

LD PsyCap goes beyond self-efficacy to include hope, optimism, and resilience for leader development. Despite a variety of conceptualizations of the construct “hope” (Reichard, Avey, Lopez, & Dollwet, 2013), the most dominant definition refers to hope as “a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (1) agency (goal-directed energy) and (2) pathways (planning to meet goals)” (Snyder et al., 1991, p. 287). Anchored to the domain of leader development, hope refers to the agency, perceived autonomy, and pathways a leader possesses regarding developmental goals. High levels of agency reflect the determination to identify and achieve leader development goals. When one strategy for leader development becomes blocked, high levels of pathways provide alternative plans to pursue.

Similar to the positive undertones of hope, optimism generally refers to the ability to attribute positive events to the present and the future, whereas negative events are categorized as temporary anomalies (Scheier & Carver, 1992). More generally, optimism is the expectation for positive future outcomes (Seligman, 1998). For example, we theorize that leaders high in LD optimism will attribute positive feedback as a product of behaviors or personal qualities and will anticipate more positive feedback in the future. Conversely, upon receiving negative feedback the leader will likely still view the future as positive and attribute the feedback as a temporary state and useful opportunity to develop. Taking a realistic optimism perspective can lead to many positive outcomes including persistence (Luthans et al., 2007). Those high in LD optimism will believe that leader development success is within their control.

The final component of LD PsyCap is resilience. Borrowing from Masten (2001; Masten & Reed, 2002), resilience is viewed as the capacity to respond favorably to both positive (e.g., increased expectations and responsibility) and negative (e.g., conflict, setbacks, and failures) events. Research supports the notion that resilient

individuals respond to these positive and negative events to not only reach prior levels of success and capabilities, but to also rise to higher levels than before (King, Newman, & Luthans, 2016). Similarly, posttraumatic growth describes the process of personal change that emerges from tragic moments that disrupt the sense of self and requires initiating new, intrinsically meaningful goals (Davis & Nolen-Hoeksma, 2009; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Applied to the domain of leader development, someone high in resilience would be able to respond to setbacks (e.g., negative interaction with a follower) to learn from them and continue striving towards leader development. Resilience is not only necessary when faced with setbacks but also with successes (e.g., promotion to a higher leadership position), which may bring additional pressure, higher expectations, and anxiety. Resilience allows the leader to bounce back from success or failure and continue on the leader development journey.

In summary, leader developmental efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience compose LD PsyCap, contribute to the motivation to develop pillar of LDR, and can be developed in preparation for or during a leader development program or experience (Luthans, Avey, Avolio, & Peterson, 2010). Specifically, efficacy can be developed through mastery experiences (e.g., successfully completing successively more challenging leader development attempts), vicarious learning (e.g., observing a similar other succeed at leader development), and social persuasion (e.g., positive, constructive, and instructional feedback from a respected other). Using effective goal-setting techniques such as stepping, stretch goals, re-goaling, and contingency planning facilitates hope. Optimism can be increased by reframing past events (e.g., examining one's narrative) and setting realistic future leader development goals. Finally, building assets (e.g., support factors such as developmental networks) and reducing risk factors (e.g., poor team dynamics) grow resilience.

### 6.3 Support for Leader Development

Beyond individual differences in ability and motivation to develop, the context in which developing leaders are embedded plays a powerful role in aiding or impeding leader development. Strong abilities and highly motivated individuals are more likely to succeed in their endeavor to develop as a leader *when* they are embedded in an environment supportive of that development (another perspective on the role of social support for an individual is discussed in detail later in this volume in Chapter 12). The third pillar of LDR is support for leader development, which was initially referred to as “organizational developmental readiness” (Hannah & Avolio, 2010, p. 1186). In this section, we deconstruct support for leader development into the traditionally discussed component of learning culture and a second newly proposed component of developmental networks.

**Learning culture.** A learning organization's culture emphasizes values of “learning, innovation, experimentation, flexibility, and initiative” (Yukl, 2009, p. 323). Orienting oneself to developing as a leader, rather than only performing, is



inherently risky because of the likelihood of failure when experimenting with new leadership approaches. An essential component of a learning culture is psychological safety, or a “shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking” (Edmondson, 1999, p. 354). Edmondson argued that psychological safety facilitates learning because it alleviates concern about reactions to leader development attempts that have the potential to result in embarrassment or threat. In a psychologically safe learning culture, others will not embarrass, reject, or punish a leader for attempting to develop. Two key facets of a learning culture are (1) available resources for leader development and (2) supervisor support for leader development.

First, a learning culture supportive of LDR is enabled by the availability of resources for leader development. Lacking adequate opportunities and resources stunts growth. In a learning organization, leaders have a “playground” in which to practice their leadership behaviors. They have time available to focus on development rather than being bogged down in a high-performance culture. Leaders in a learning culture have access to information and tools needed to help them grow, such as information on the latest evidence-based approaches to effective leadership (Reichard & Johnson, 2011). Whether a leader has access to resources and opportunities to lead may be contingent on their direct supervisor.

Supervisor support has a large impact in creating a safe learning culture. Supportive supervisors communicate the importance of ongoing development, encourage subordinates to participate in leader development opportunities, and provide time at work to support learning (Thompson & Reichard, 2016). Supervisors high in individualized consideration and inclusiveness foster psychological safety and provide needed support for leader development. Individualized consideration means the supervisor understands the target leader’s developmental needs and offers work tasks or other developmental opportunities to fulfill those needs (Reichard & Johnson, 2011). In fact, leaders who treat their followers with individualized consideration and other transformational leadership behaviors positively impact followers’ development (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002). Likewise, inclusiveness speaks to the supervisor’s availability and accessibility, as well as whether they invite input and model development (Edmondson, 1999). Supervisors facilitate psychological safety when they construe work as learning problems, acknowledge their fallibility, and model curiosity by asking lots of questions. Inclusiveness and psychological safety result in learning from failures (Hirak, Peng, Carmeli, & Schaubroeck, 2012). Taken together, a psychologically safe, learning culture composed of available resources and supervisor support for leader development facilitates LDR.

The development of a learning culture will not happen quickly and requires alignment between the organization’s values, systems, and people. According to Reichard and Johnson (2011), organizations can promote leader development by intentionally emphasizing development in organizational systems. Specifically, human resources processes relating to selection, training, and performance appraisal can facilitate a learning culture. For example, organizations communicate that

learning and development are expected when (a) providing training programs targeting developing leaders' metacognitive skills, goal-setting skills, and self-management skills and (b) implementing performance appraisal systems that financially reward achievement of developmental goals. Organizational systems aligned with leader development instill group norms of learning, responsibility, and openness. Most importantly, organizational systems should make it clear to developing leaders that the organization is taking intentional actions to create a learning culture.

**Developmental networks.** A main facet of the learning culture is supervisor support. Support from others is a positive resource that protects an individual during adverse events (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Social support is a highly valued resource for a leader approaching stretch experiences and developmental opportunities. However, it is not just the supervisor who can support a leader's development. Social support can come from various people like mentors, coworkers, and friends. Therefore, we offer developmental networks as a new component of the support pillar of LDR. Based on the mentoring literature, Higgins and Kram (2001) defined a developmental network as "a set of people that a protégé names as taking an active interest in and action to advance the protégé's career by providing developmental assistance" (p. 258). This perspective reconceptualizes mentoring as a network of people, referred to as "developers" (e.g., mentor, coach, peer, supervisor, spouse, or friend), that offer different types of career support, psychosocial support, and role modeling.

Three central concepts of the developmental network perspective have implications for LDR: (1) the developmental perspective itself, (2) the diversity of the network, and (3) the strength of the relationships that make up the network (Dobrow, Chandler, Murphy, & Kram, 2012). First, the premise of the network perspective is that multiple relationships in a leader's network will offer different value. Relying on a single developer limits the amount and type of knowledge available to the developing leader, which may result in groupthink or uninformed decision making. Additionally, if the lone developer changes jobs, moves, or otherwise becomes unavailable, the leader may be left without any guidance. For these reasons, a network of multiple developers who are actively interested in facilitating the leader's development is more desirable. As such, the developmental network perspective forges a more general understanding of who are the developers in a leader's life. By widening the array of developers to any individual, regardless of expertise, leaders can learn from a range of others from experienced supervisors to tech-savvy young employees.

However, the number of developmental relationships is not as critical as diversity in the types of relationships. Therefore, the second key concept of the developmental network perspective is its emphasis on diverse developers for a multitude of purposes for leaders. A variety of support areas allows the leader to gain distinct support tailored for a variety of situations. For example, a leader may consult a senior mentor for a different reason than the leader would consult a peer. Having multiple developers gives leaders a variety of options for support

from diverse levels of expertise. Having different perspectives for support gives the leader an advantage in being prepared for development. Leaders with expansive, diverse developmental networks gain a competitive edge in LDR by having many different areas of support and guidance. Seibert, Sargent, Kraimer, and Kiazad (2016) suggest that having a developmental network mediates the relationship between challenging developmental experiences and leader effectiveness. The larger the playing field for finding support, the more readily leaders can bounce back from failures with support and find creative guidance in times of challenge.

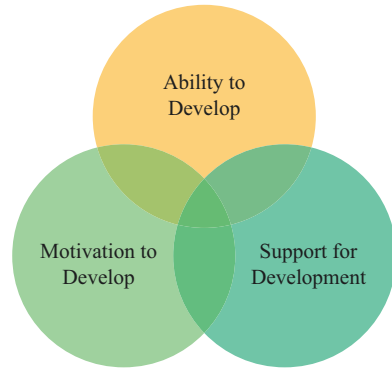
Lastly, this perspective describes different strengths of bonds between leaders and those in their developmental networks. Having both weak and strong ties is beneficial for a leader's development. Weak ties allow opportunities for leaders to practice novel leadership techniques without worrying about ruining their reputation, whereas strong ties allow for individualized feedback from a trusting relationship (Higgins & Kram, 2001). For example, strong ties help leaders gain personalized feedback since the strong tie developer has a closer relationship and thus has a deeper knowledge of strengths and weaknesses. On the other hand, weak ties help leaders receive honest feedback about behavior without threatening the relationship. Also, because of the multiple exposures to diverse people, weak ties help the leader connect dots more creatively between ideas.

Both leaders and organizations can facilitate developmental networks to foster LDR. Leaders can take an active interest in forming their developmental networks with developers who have key attributes to increase their leader development. Ghosh, Haynes, and Kram (2013) suggest that leaders forming a developmental network should have three additional features for their network. First, individuals higher in the company hierarchy are included in the network to offer insight based on previous challenges. Second, developers should harmonize to have shared goals, knowledge, and respect as to not have conflicting demands on the leader (Gittell, 2002). Lastly, developers should have trusting relationships with the leaders to help leaders be receptive to support (Carmeli, Ben-Hador, Waldman, & Rupp, 2009). Finally, organizations can strengthen leaders' developmental networks through formal mentoring and coaching programs and by allowing informal interactions among leaders and those identified as developers.

## 6.4 Reconstructing Leader Developmental Readiness

Now that we have deconstructed LDR into its individual parts, we turn to reconstructing it by theorizing interactions among the three pillars (see Fig. 6.2). The suggestion that LDR components may interact was first given by Hannah and Avolio (2010), who implied that such interactions will drive our understanding of LDR as a higher order construct. In this section, we provide a sampling of the possible interactions among component parts to illustrate how they work together

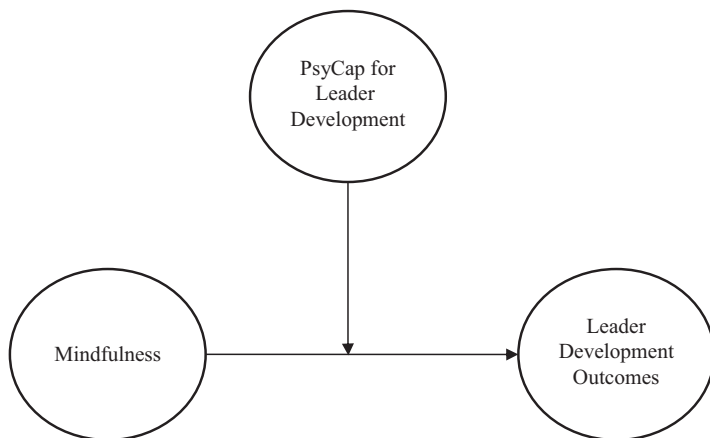
**Fig. 6.2** Reconstruction: interactions among leader developmental readiness components



to maximize leader development outcomes and, thus, elaborate and develop new theory. Each of the theorized interactions described reflects an agenda for future empirical research.

#### **6.4.1** *Ability to Develop and Motivation to Develop*

To begin, we argue that the pillars of ability to develop and motivation to develop will interact to yield LDR and, thus, improve leader development outcomes. As an example, mindfulness as an ability to develop and PsyCap for leader development as a form of motivation to develop are expected to interact to maximize LDR and leader development outcomes (see Fig. 6.3). With an increased ability to refocus into the present experiences with an accepting attitude (i.e., mindfulness), a leader may be able to better exercise PsyCap for leader development. For example, imagine a leader is given a stretch experience of an upcoming business proposal on a short deadline. This developmental opportunity will be worthwhile if he/she can stay focused and utilize mindfulness to be aware of these stressful experiences, accept the stress nonjudgmentally, and then reallocate attention toward the developmental opportunity. The leader then has the opportunity to flex positive psychological capital skills, like examining multiple pathways to achieve a desired outcome (i.e., hope). Accepting the present stressful experience and being aware of one's own strengths under stress also enhance self-efficacy. By refocusing attention on what is critical within the present experience, leaders can conserve energy for only the process of development. This enables the leader to bounce back (resilience) from small failures that would normally stunt developmental progress. Lastly, with the attention on the developmental opportunity, personal strengths, and internal processing, the leader could utilize greater optimistic tools to push motivations further. This provides

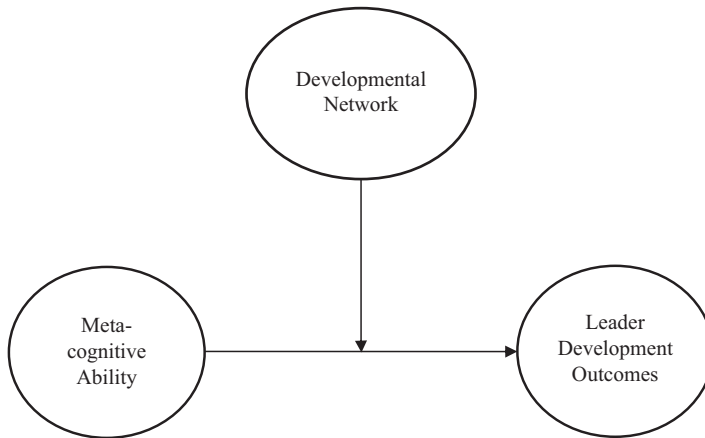


**Fig. 6.3** Interaction between ability to develop (mindfulness) and motivation to develop (PsyCap for LD)

but one example of the multiplicative effects of ability to develop and motivation to develop on overall LDR and leader development outcomes that should be empirically examined in future research.

#### **6.4.2 Ability to Develop and Support for Development**

Next, the combination of ability to develop and support for development is reconstructed. A strong support system will enable leaders to fully utilize their LDR abilities. A strong support for development will help those leaders high in ability to develop to fully reach their potential. As an example, strong metacognitive ability will interact with developmental network support to yield positive leader development outcomes (see Fig. 6.4). Leaders high in metacognitive ability will be better prepared to engage in developmental conversations with coaches, mentors, and peers. This is because strong metacognitive ability allows for deeper reflective conversations. If a leader has weak metacognitive ability, but high developmental network support, then a bulk of time will be devoted towards teaching the leader how to reflectively think. It will save time and financial resources for organizations if leaders already possess strong metacognitive ability when entering developmental conversations with their supportive network. On the other hand, if a leader has strong metacognitive ability but low developmental network support, then leaders can become stuck in their own mind without externalizing their developmental goals within the organization. These leaders would lack the potential feedback from a supportive ally that could aid in boosting LDR. If leaders possess both strong metacognitive ability and high developmental network support, then they can access

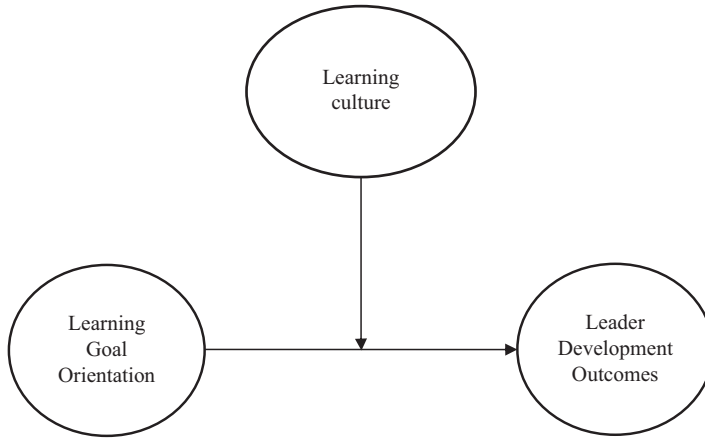


**Fig. 6.4** Interaction between ability to develop and support for development

proactive reflective conversations from the diverse network of supporters and thus maximize LDR and leader development outcomes. Beyond metacognitive ability and developmental networks, we expect other components of ability to develop and support for development to interact to facilitate overall LDR and encourage future researchers to test these interactions.

### **6.4.3 Motivation to Develop and Support for Development**

The pillars of motivation to develop and support for development build upon each other to boost overall LDR. To demonstrate, a psychologically safe learning culture amplifies a leader's learning goal orientation to maximize LDR and, thus, leader development outcomes (see Fig. 6.5). Highly critical cutthroat performance cultures are likely to yield performance goal orientations and squash learning goal orientations. If a leader's manager primarily utilizes transactional forms of exchange as part of a performance culture, the leader could get too focused on outcomes, not the process of development. This can lead to focusing on success as a validation of ability, not as a challenge to develop future skills. On the other hand, if an organizational culture emphasizes challenge instead of rewards, then the leader will be more likely to frame stretch experiences as learning opportunities. In a learning culture, peers, managers, and mentors can be more intentional with instituting a learning goal orientation with a leader. Learning cultures create environments for leaders to feel psychologically safe to explore interpersonal risk taking. Leaders will be more likely to engage in fostering a learning goal orientation if the environment not only promoted it in their culture but even rewarded it. This interaction among learning culture and learning goal orientation is only one of several examples of how



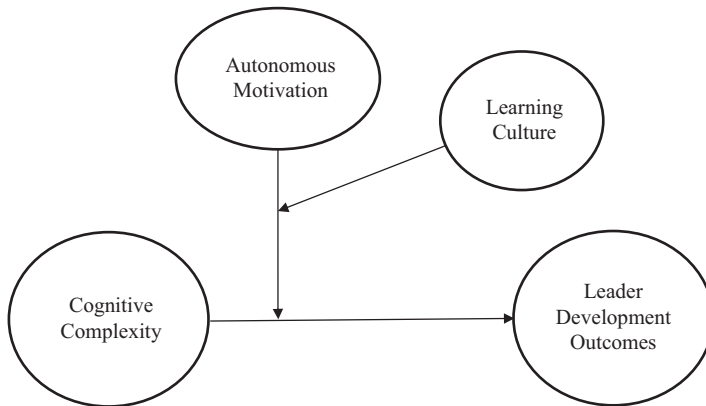
**Fig. 6.5** Interaction between motivation to develop and support for development

the motivation to develop and the support for development pillars are expected to interact to influence overall LDR. Future research should examine these predicted interactions.

#### ***6.4.4 Ability to Develop, Motivation to Develop, and Support for Development***

LDR and leader development outcomes are maximized when all three LDR pillars are strong. To demonstrate this, cognitive complexity (ability to develop), autonomous motivation (motivation to develop), and learning culture (support for development) can all interact for a unifying LDR and optimal leader development outcomes (see Fig. 6.6). Cognitive complexity can be an instrumental tool for evaluating and absorbing novel information for productive work when an individual has the autonomous motivation to not only value his/her development but also feel a sense of identity as a developing leader. Autonomous motivation creates proactive stimulation for cognitive complexity to be utilized within an organization emphasizing learning. Lastly, leaders will have the preparation required and the ingredients available for growth when a culture that accentuates learning is coupled with cognitive complexity and autonomous motivation. Leaders whose supervisors support them with resources for growth will be more empowered to exercise autonomy. The three pillars of LDR thus interact to maximize leader development outcomes.

To facilitate optimal LDR, organizations must seek to both strengthen and balance the three LDR pillars. First, more attention must be spent on resources to cultivate each pillar of LDR. This involves suggested techniques like integrating motivational interviewing into managerial coaching or learning goal-setting tech-



**Fig. 6.6** Interaction between ability to develop, motivation to develop, and support for development

niques to enhance LD PsyCap. Second, organizations can monitor and balance the LDR pillars in order to materialize the complementary benefits. Routinely collecting data on the progress across the three LDR pillars (how well are they developing ability, promoting proactive motivation, and providing the structures for support) can provide a useful feedback system for organizations. When the three LDR pillars are strong, organizations can expect positive leader development throughout the organization.

## 6.5 Conclusion

Leader developmental readiness is one of the few theories of leader development that provides a framework for future empirical research. LDR is defined as having three pillars, ability to develop, motivation to develop, and support for development, and thus provides a framework for conceptualizing components within each pillar. The constructs composing each of these three pillars are not fixed, but should be viewed as flexible within the LDR framework. In other words, in addition to the original authors' initial proposal regarding components within each pillar (e.g., Hannah & Avolio, 2010), additional components should be theorized and empirically tested. In this deconstruction we reviewed various components of LDR, such as metacognitive ability, learning goal orientation, and learning culture, which each has a long and rich research history and was initially associated with LDR. Likewise, we elaborated on extant theory to argue for new components of LDR, including mindfulness, psychological capital for leader development, and developmental networks. In this way, the LDR pillars provide a flexible overarching framework for future theory development, elaboration of further component parts, and discussion of the interactions among those parts.



Finally, through reconstruction of its interacting component parts, LDR is conceptualized as a higher order construct that predicts leader development outcomes. We provide a sampling of interactions among the three LDR pillars to demonstrate LDR reconstruction and the understanding that one pillar should not be considered in isolation. As noted above, the various interactions between the LDR components described serve as examples ripe for future research. In addition, future research can examine whether one of the three pillars is most crucial for leader development; if particular component interactions do, in fact, maximize overall LDR and ultimately leader development success; and whether there are certain threshold levels of various components necessary for LDR to facilitate development. Our understanding of LDR as a framework for leader development has only just begun, yet future applied research has the potential to transform the practice of leader development.

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**Part II**  
**Considering Behavior in Leader**  
**Development**

# Chapter 7

## Followership Development: A Behavioral Approach

Melissa K. Carsten

Leadership and followership are fluid roles, and ones that we all play at various times in our careers (Baker, Sites-Doe, Mathis, & Rosenback, 2014; Sy & McCoy, 2014). Regardless of one's formal leadership position in the organization, individuals will be called upon to lead and follow in various situations (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Yet, the predominant approach in leadership development is to develop leadership skills and behaviors with little attention paid to followership. Indeed, there is a thorough literature base on developing leader skills, behaviors, identities, and self-awareness (see Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014 for a review). While these approaches to leadership development have merit, and deserve continued attention, there is an important element missing in these approaches. Leaders also need to understand followership and the important role that followers play in the leadership process (Shamir, 2007; Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). Moreover, followers need to understand how to engage with leaders in an effective way. Since most individuals serve in a follower role before serving as a leader, more attention should be paid to understanding what effective followership is and how it can be cultivated in modern organizations.

Perhaps one reason why followership has been an overlooked element in leadership development is the notion that "employees inherently know how to follow" (Agho, 2009). This notion, however, makes several erroneous assumptions. First, it assumes that there is only one definition of followership that is universally endorsed by all employees. Recent developments in the followership literature challenge this assumption with the finding that individuals vary in their implicit beliefs about who followers are (Sy, 2010), and what the follower role entails (Carsten, Uhl-Bien, West, Patera, & McGregor, 2010). Second, this statement assumes that all organizations require the same style of followership, and that context does not influence our

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understanding of important followership behavior. This assumption is also problematic when you look at evolving research on differing reactions to employee empowerment and initiative in the workplace (Campbell, 2000). Like leadership, followership is multidimensional in nature and can take many different forms and affect many different outcomes. Although still in its infancy, the growing literature on followership offers new perspectives from which to view the follower role and followership behavior, and suggests that leadership outcomes vary as a result of the style of followership employees endorse, and how they practice followership while interacting with leaders.

As organizations evolve to expect more from their followers, there is a need to define what we mean by *followership development*, and explore ways of incorporating followership into leadership development programs. Hopton (2014) defines followership development as a systematic process designed to broaden understandings of followership, and build effective followership behaviors that contribute to leadership and organizational outcomes. Thus, advancing a model of followership development involves important strides toward (1) understanding misconceptions of followership and why it carries a negative connotation; (2) understanding the important role that followers play in the leadership process, and how followers contribute to leadership and organizational outcomes; and (3) examining the followership styles and behaviors that are most conducive to success in a particular environment. Since every organization maintains different values and goals, each will require different forms of followership to support successful leadership.

This chapter addresses the importance of followership development for organizations, and identifies several phases of the development process. This chapter begins with a thorough definition of followership, and a review of two prominent theoretical perspectives on followership behavior (i.e., constructionist and role theory of followership; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Next, I review recent empirical evidence regarding the need to develop followership in organizations. Finally, I provide a general outline for followership development, as well as important followership competencies identified in the extant literature. In doing so, this chapter offers both researchers and practitioners a model to use in advancing followership development in organizations.

## 7.1 Defining Followership

Although leadership research has evolved over the past 100 years, research on followership is relatively new. Followership is defined as the nature and impact of followers and following in the leadership process (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Followership considers the skills, behaviors, and influence that individuals use while interacting with “higher-ups” in an effort to advance the mission of the organization. Research on followership attempts to understand how followers perceive and enact their role, the characteristics and skills they bring to their role, and the ways that followers can affect leadership and organizational outcomes. In their review of followership theory, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) outline two different perspectives through which followership can



be conceptualized and studied. The first is the constructionist approach to followership and the second is the role-based approach.

The constructionist approach to followership examines the way in which individuals adopt followership behaviors while working with others. It examines followership as separate and distinct from a subordinate role. In essence, this approach assumes that anyone can adopt a follower identity, and engage in followership behaviors, regardless of role or position. According to DeRue and Ashford (2010), individuals may adopt a followership identity because their counterpart (i.e., the leader) holds more expertise, knowledge, or ability than they do. In this situation, the follower is not succumbing to subordination due to the nature of their prescribed role, but rather choosing to be a follower because there is a colleague who is more capable of leading that particular task. In subsequent tasks, this same follower may adopt a leader identity if they feel that they have greater abilities, and others are willing to follow their lead. This approach is helpful in understanding followership as it naturally emerges, outside of formal organizational positions, and how followers can transition between follower and leader behaviors depending on the task and the identity they adopt.

An alternative approach, and one that has received more attention in the literature, is the role-based approach to followership (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Selznick, 1957). The role-based approach seeks to understand the characteristics, behaviors, and effectiveness of individuals as they enact followership from a subordinate role (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). It examines the role expectations and role behaviors that subordinates (i.e., followers) bring to their interactions with managers (i.e., leaders), and the outcomes of these interactions (Yukl, 1989). This approach evolves from the traditional way of studying leadership (i.e., examining characteristics and behaviors of managers who practice leadership; Bedeian & Hunt, 2006). Given that the majority of organizational employees (including managers) serve in a subordinate role, this approach helps us better understand how subordinates enact followership while engaging with their leaders. Although there are a variety of ways in which an individual may enact followership from a subordinate role, research and theory on followership seem to coalesce around two common behavioral approaches to followership: passive forms of followership and active forms of followership (Carsten et al., 2010; Chaleff, 2003; Kelley, 1992).

### ***7.1.1 Passive and Deferent Followership***

Passive forms of followership align with traditional notions of followers as passive recipients of a leader's influence (Courpasson & Dany, 2003), and powerless to affect positive outcomes or change (Heckscher, 1994; Ravlin & Thomas, 2005). Indeed, many existing leadership theories define followers in this way (see Uhl-Bien et al., 2014 for a review). For example, charismatic leadership defines followers as individuals who passively wait for influence and inspiration (Conger & Kanungo, 1987), and behavioral theories of leadership define followers as needing direction and support from leaders (Stogdill, 1948). Thus, the passive form of followership involves behaviors that are deferent, silent, and obedient in nature. Passive followers

have been referred to as “sheep” (Kelley, 1992) and “benign” observers (Collinson, 2006) because they offer little to the leadership process in terms of engagement. According to Carsten et al. (2010), followers who adopt this behavior style do so because they believe that the follower role involves deferring to leaders who are superior in their knowledge, experience, and decision-making ability. Specifically, passive followers may believe that their leaders have legitimate authority, and that their increased level of power makes them more fit to make autonomous decisions (Tyler, 1997). As a result, such followers may find themselves deferring and obeying, sometimes blindly, because they feel they have nothing to offer.

A study conducted by Carsten et al. (2010) suggests that followers who ascribe to a passive role definition are more likely to withhold their ideas and opinions, remain obedient even when they disagree with a directive, and are less likely to take initiative and solve problems on their own. For example, one respondent in their study stated that followership “takes a person who is really willing to listen and follow,” while another said that their job primarily involved “following through and carrying out orders ... making sure things get done the leader’s way” (p. 550).

While all forms of followership involve some form of deference (Uhl-Bien & Pillai, 2007), passive followers seem to be the most deferent and obedient. This form of followership may be appreciated by some leaders and appropriate in some contexts. For example, a highly authoritarian leader would be pleased with a follower who is more passive (Carsten, Uhl-Bien, & Griggs, 2016), and a leader managing a crisis situation would likely need followers who are willing to listen and follow orders (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). In other situations, however, this style of followership may not be appropriate. For example, a leader who is working with a group of followers to generate new ideas, drive innovation and change, or identify problems and novel solutions may have difficulty obtaining input from a passive follower. Indeed, research demonstrates that passive followers are less likely to speak up with ideas, suggestions, or challenge the status quo in constructive ways (Carsten, Uhl-Bien, & Harms, 2014; Milliken, Morrison, & Hewlin, 2003; Morand, 1996). Although some organizational contexts may be more appropriate for these followers, their passivity may present difficulties when it comes to developing these followers into leaders.

### ***7.1.2 Active and Engaged Followership***

A second major dimension of followership is more active and engaged in nature. Active followership involves taking initiative to understand the direction and goals of the work unit, partnering with leaders to make decisions and solve problems, and even constructively challenging the leader when appropriate (Carsten et al., 2010; Chaleff, 2003; Kelley, 1992). These active followers have been referred to as “exemplary followers” (Kelley, 1992) or “activists” (Kellerman, 2008) because they contribute to the leadership process, and influence positive results for their leaders and organizations. These individuals are not deterred by power differentials or the

fact that their leader may have greater authority (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013). Instead, they are empowered by their own self-confidence and the belief that it takes both leaders and followers working in concert to make the organization successful.

In their study on follower role constructions, Carsten et al. (2010) found that followers who ascribe to a role definition that is active and engaged in nature are more likely to solve problems proactively (i.e., before being directed to do so by their leader), speak up with ideas and opinions, and seek ways of advancing the organization's mission. The followers in their study stated that the followership role was "all about being proactive ... doing some of the detailed thinking that your leader may not do" (p. 551). Another respondent stated "I have a real drive to be that proactive person ... I would love nothing more than to propel [my company] through my own personal qualities and personal drive" (p. 555).

Emerging research on followership suggests that leaders appreciate followers who are proactive and engaged in the leadership process (Carsten, Uhl-Bien, & Jayawickrema, 2013). Specifically, research suggests that followers who believe their role involves partnering with leaders engage in more voice behavior. In turn, leaders reported that they were more motivated to work with these followers, felt greater support from these followers, and reported that these followers contributed more effectively toward goal achievement than followers who believed their role involved passive deference. Additional research suggests that active and engaged followers may help to thwart unethical behavior (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013) and resolve conflict in constructive ways (Carsten & Lapierre, 2016). Hopton (2014) also notes that organizations that embrace and encourage this active form of followership have an advantage when it comes to utilizing human capital and developing employees. For example, followers often have more information about customer needs, changes among competitor products or services, and deficiencies within the organization. Active followers would tackle these problems in a proactive and creative manner, working diligently to bring problems to the leader's attention and present ideas for solving them. Passive followers, on the other hand, may perceive that leaders are responsible for identifying and solving problems, and remain silent and inactive in the wake of organizational challenges. Taken together, this research supports an alternative definition of followers as active participants in the leadership process, and individuals who can help both leaders and organizations thrive.

These two forms of followership are commonly found in the literature (Carsten et al., 2010; Chaleff, 2003; Howell & Mendez, 2008; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 1992), and provide a foundation to understand variations in followership behavior. Organizations that encourage the right style of followership to meet their goals and objectives may more effectively utilize their human capital. Conversely, organizations that endorse a form of followership that is counter to organizational objectives (i.e., passive followership in a highly creative or competitive environment) may experience greater challenges and setbacks. Thus, organizations that are able to understand the type of followership needed, and develop the right capabilities among their followers, may be more equipped to thrive in their environment.

## 7.2 Why Should We Develop Followership?

Many organizations put a premium on leadership development as a means of cultivating the skills and abilities required to advance the organization. However, few of these programs put emphasis on the topic of followership, and many leave followers out of the leadership equation altogether. Yet, if we expect leadership to drive organizational performance and competitiveness into the future, there is a need to begin emphasizing the important role that followers play in the leadership process. According to McCallum (2013, p. 1), “where followership is a failure, not much gets done ... followership problems manifest themselves in a poor work ethic, bad morale, distraction from goals, unsatisfied customers, lost opportunities, high costs, product quality issues, and weak competitiveness.” Thus, there is a need to understand both why followership development is important to achieving leadership and organizational goals and how followership development can be accomplished. In the section below, I describe why developing followership among both followers and leaders is important for organizations.

### 7.2.1 *Developing Followership Among Followers*

Developing followership among subordinates is important for a number of reasons: (1) it will enable them to understand their beliefs about the follower role, and how those beliefs translate into behavior, and (2) it will help them understand how to enact their followership style in an appropriate way with managers. According to Ashford and Tsui (1991), self-awareness and understanding are important to assessing one’s behavior in context, and can aid in self-monitoring to ensure that behavior is having the desired effects. Unless one fully understands their own behavior, and the effects that it has on others, there is little room for development and improvement.

Yet, due to our lack of attention toward followership, it is likely that employees do not understand what drives them to act in passive or active ways. Even when followers do understand their predominant behavior style, they may not understand whether this style “fits” with the leadership style utilized by their manager. Carsten et al. (2016) suggest that mismatched styles of leadership and followership could result in greater stress, frustration, and burnout for both parties. For example, a lack of “fit” between a leader and follower style may manifest in a leader being very authoritarian and a follower being very active. Indeed, qualitative results by Carsten and colleagues revealed several instances where followers had to suppress their tendencies to engage and be active because their leader did not appreciate such behavior (Carsten et al., 2010, p. 555):

“I’m a rather poor subordinate because I have this real drive to be that proactive person. Yet, my boss has issues with strong personalities, or feels insecurities in regard to his position. So I play the role.”

“I like to be proactive. And sometimes in a subordinate position, that’s not the role you need to play. I think to be a more successful subordinate, I need to learn what my role is, and just do my role and don’t do anything more unless I’m asked to do more. And that’s something that I continue to struggle with.”

The quotes above highlight the frustration felt by subordinates who demonstrated a followership style (i.e., active) that did not “fit” the style of their leader (i.e., authoritarian). Engaging in followership development could provide perspective and understanding to these individuals, and perhaps relieve some of their frustration. For example, a program focused on self-assessment, reflection, and awareness may help followers understand their behavioral style. It may also generate understanding of the dynamics that exist between their followership style and their leader style, and how to manage congruence (or lack thereof) between these styles. Such a development program could yield positive outcomes for the relationships between leaders and followers, and the capacity to partner with others who view leadership and followership in various ways. Providing knowledge, development, and resources for followers to enact their role in responsible ways, and ways that are appropriate for their environment, may produce more productive outcomes for the organization.

### ***7.2.2 Developing Followership Among Leaders***

For leaders, followership development may serve different purposes. There are two important reasons why followership should be developed among leaders. First, as mentioned previously, many leaders also serve in follower roles in organizations. Although they may not think about themselves as “followers,” serving in a subordinate role and working with superiors to accomplish mutual goals involves some level of followership. Second, leaders can benefit from understanding their own followers, and learning about different followership styles and behaviors.

Much of the extant leadership literature assumes that the leadership role is static and that because leaders (i.e., managers) hold a hierarchical role of authority in organizations they need to only focus on being a leader (Heckscher, 1994). This “leader-centric” approach has driven our thinking about who leaders are, what they do, and what makes them effective (Meindl, 1995; Shamir, 2007). In most organizations, however, individuals serve in both leader and follower roles (Baker et al., 2014; Sy & McCoy, 2014), and must switch between these roles in a fluid manner. For example, a manager would need to draw upon their leadership skills while giving support and direction to a group of subordinates, and then draw upon followership skills while engaging with superiors in a planning or strategy meeting. Similar to subordinates, managers need to understand the dominant leadership styles of their superiors, be able to read the situation and know when and how to contribute as followers, and be cognizant of how their superiors will react to unsolicited suggestions or challenges. As a manager, understanding followership is extremely important to not only maintaining good relations with their superiors, but also the ability to contribute in meaningful ways.

Managers may also benefit from understanding their subordinate's followership styles, and being able to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the people they lead. For example, managers who understand the contributions that followers make to the leadership process and the different ways in which followers engage with leaders will be better equipped to facilitate important processes around decision making and joint problem solving. They may begin to understand which styles their own followers adopt, and anticipate different behaviors from different followers. For example, a manager who understands that passive followers may be uncomfortable speaking up and voicing ideas may be better able to anticipate follower behavior, and engage the particular follower in ways that do not incite frustration or anxiety. Such efforts made by managers may help thwart problems associated with "mismatched" leader-follower styles, and ensure a more collaborative working relationship. On the other hand, understanding the behaviors of active and engaged followers may allow a manager to harness this engagement in productive ways and set expectations so followers understand when and how to contribute.

Taken together, there are many advantages to developing followership among both leaders and followers. For followers, the focus is on self-awareness and understanding whether their natural tendencies to engage in active or passive followership "fit" with their leader's style or the organizational context. For the leader, it can help them understand their own followership style when interacting with superiors, but also assist in anticipating their own followers' behavior. Cultivating a culture that understands and develops followership may enhance the leadership process overall, and ensure that leaders and followers are equipped to collaborate in effective ways.

### **7.3 How Do We Develop Followership?**

Given that there are so few programs centered on followership development, there are several challenges that must be addressed before developing and implementing such a program. First, both organizations and potential participants need to be socialized to view followership in a positive way. Given the often negative connotation associated with the word "follower" it may be difficult to convince stakeholders that engaging in a development program to become a "good follower" is worth their time and energy. Redefining what this means, and challenging people to consider the importance of followership, is one way to accomplish this. Second, it is important that we begin to educate organizations and participants on what followership is and the different styles of followership that exist. Given that many business schools have limited curriculum on followership, and few books exist on the topic, there is a good chance that employees lack a working definition of this concept. As a final step, organizations can begin to build followership competencies that align with the mission and strategy of the organization. These general phases of followership development are outlined below.

### 7.3.1 *Socialization Phase: Focus on Meaning*

The term “follower” has historically had a negative connotation with the broad understanding of the term being that those who cannot lead follow (Carsten et al., 2014; Hopton, Barling, & Turner, 2013). According to Carsten et al. (2014, p. 4), this negative connotation “has been amplified by troubling examples of blind, unthinking followers engaging in disturbing behaviors because they were told to do so by their leaders (i.e., Nazi Germany, The Peoples Temple, etc.)” In the organizational literature, leadership theories have traditionally treated followers in a similar way. Employees who have done any reading on leadership would quickly see that the most prominent leadership models identify leaders as the most capable, expert, and effective of all employees (Carlyle, 1888). Followers, on the other hand, are often relegated to those who lack initiative, knowledge, insight, and creativity (Meindl, 1995). These models of leadership, however, originated in the industrial era and may no longer be relevant to modern organizations (Lawler & Galbraith, 1994). In support of this claim, Bennis (2000, p. 72) writes: “A shrinking world in which technological and political complexity increase at an accelerating rate offers fewer and fewer arenas in which individual action and top- down leadership suffices.”

Thus, if organizations are to successfully develop the type of followership that will advance their competitive advantage in the new technological era, it is important that they first begin to break down the negative connotation surrounding the word “followership” (Hopton, 2014). Followership, as a concept, is neither positive nor negative. It is neutral and describes the process of working with a leader to achieve important outcomes. The way that followership is practiced can be positive or negative, however. The goal of a followership development program should be rooted in understanding what followership means to the individual, how their perception of followership has evolved over time, and what followership means within a specific company or context.

If we accept that all employees must engage in the followership at one point or another, then the question is not whether one *is* a follower, but *what kind* of followership (i.e., active or passive) one engages in. Through the process of redefining what followership is, we can begin to dismantle the negative connotation associated with the term, and socialize employees to see followership in a different way. This socialization is important as a foundation for development, and necessary to engage employees in understanding the followership style that is right for them.

### 7.3.2 *Education Phase: Focus on Models*

Although theory and research on followership is still in its infancy, there are several models that can be used in designing curriculum for a followership development program. Two of these models speak specifically to identifying why followers behave the way they do while interacting with leaders. The first is a model of followership role orientation advanced by Carsten, Uhl-Bien and Huang (2017), and

describes the beliefs that individuals hold regarding the followership role. The second is a model by Robert Kelley (1992) on followership behavioral styles which allows followers to understand their behavioral tendencies while interacting with leaders. These two models complement one another and can be used in tandem to advance knowledge and promote a plan of improvement.

### 7.3.2.1 Followership Role Orientation

The role orientation literature explains how an individual defines and perceives their role including the types of behaviors that are appropriate to their role and how they should interact with others in an effort to achieve important goals (Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997). Role orientation can be applied to more general and enduring roles such as leader or follower (Parker, 2007), or more narrow and short-term roles such as team liaison. In all cases, however, role orientation involves “a set of beliefs ... shaped by the environment, as well as by personality and individual differences” (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006: 407). Building from this work, Carsten and colleagues define followership role orientation as individual beliefs about the behaviors that are appropriate in the follower role and how a follower should interact or partner with leaders in an effort to meet stated objectives.

Although there are potentially many different types of followership orientations, Carsten et al. (2014, 2017) define three followership orientations that may be held by individuals. The first is a “passive” role orientation and involves the belief that followers are not as skilled or capable as leaders and thus should refrain from engaging in the leadership process (Carsten et al., 2010; de Vries & Van Gelder, 2005). These individuals believe that leaders, not followers, are responsible for the outcomes of a work unit, and that followers have little to add to the leadership process. The second is a “coproduction” orientation wherein individuals believe that the follower role is best enacted by engaging with leaders to solve problems, make decisions, identify change opportunities, and challenge the leader’s assumptions when they believe that it is necessary (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013). These individuals do not see the followership role as inferior, but believe that the leadership process is enhanced and strengthened when followers partner with leaders in collaborative ways (Collinson, 2006). The third followership orientation is the “anti-authoritarian” orientation wherein individuals believe that the role of the follower is to protect themselves from a leader’s subjugation (cf. Bennett, 1988). These individuals see leaders as adversaries and manipulators, and believe that the best way to respond is to “not follow” (Gregory, 1955; Weitman, 1962).

Followership role orientations are important because the foundations for our followership beliefs develop early in life (Kuhn & Laird, 2011), continue to evolve as we are exposed to different contexts (Parker et al., 1997), and influence behavior in implicit ways (Carsten et al., 2014). As such, employees may not be readily aware of their role orientations, or see how their beliefs about power and authority impact their style of followership. Building self-awareness in this area is one way to help followers understand their own behavior and natural tendencies to enact followership.



Carsten et al. (2017) developed a scale to measure each of the three role orientations described above, and these scales may be useful in a followership development program. For example, having participants self-report on their role orientations could provide feedback regarding which beliefs they ascribe to. In addition, having participants ruminate on some of their earliest followership experiences could help them better understand how these beliefs developed and changed over time. This assessment could be useful in building self-awareness of one's beliefs, as well as understanding how implicit beliefs about followership impact behavior in the follower role.

### 7.3.2.2 Followership Behavioral Styles

Several models of followership behavior have been advanced in an effort to identify the multiple different forms that followership can take (Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 1992; Chaleff, 2003). One of the most highly cited is a model advanced by Robert Kelley (1992). Kelley's model defines different followership styles as existing on two underlying dimensions. The first is "independent critical thinking" and involves the extent to which individuals think for themselves, give constructive criticism, and are innovative and creative in their thinking. The second dimension, "active engagement," involves individuals taking initiative, assuming ownership, and participating actively in the leadership process. Along these two axes, individuals will score high or low, ultimately landing on one of five followership styles (i.e., passive, conformists, alienated, pragmatists, or exemplary). According to Kelley (1992), identifying one's followership style serves two purposes. First, it allows the employee to understand their behavioral tendencies while interacting with leaders. Does the employee often find themselves blindly accepting what the leader says, deferring decision making or problem solving, or thinking about whether a certain action would disrupt power structures in the organization? These behaviors may be better understood, and anticipated, in the context of Kelley's model. Second, knowing one's followership style, and the positive or negative behaviors associated with that style, can help employees develop an action plan for improvement. Thus, applying this model serves both descriptive and prescriptive purposes.

A followership development program could utilize Kelley's (1992) model, as well as the assessment scale, to provide feedback to participants on their followership style. The assessment could be completed either by the participant himself/herself, or in a 360-degree fashion. In either case, the assessment will provide information on how the participant scores on the two dimensions (i.e., active/passive and independent-critical/dependent-non-critical thinking), as well as the particular style they use while interacting with leaders. This assessment could be used as a starting point for discussions regarding (1) how their style impacts others, (2) how leaders react to their style, (3) and how to use a more appropriate style to fit their leader's style or the organizational context.

### **7.3.3 *Building Followership Competencies: Focus on Behavior in Context***

Organizations that seek to develop followership must first engage in a process of identifying what followership means in their particular context. For some organizations, such as military or para-military organizations, followership would need to be defined by the ability to carry out orders as well as step into a leadership role when the time arises (Latour & Rast, 2004). For others, such as high-tech organizations, followership may be synonymous with innovation and challenging the status quo. In essence, each organization must define what followership competencies it values, and understand the types of followership behaviors that promote productivity and competitiveness.

Although followership competencies may vary from one organization to the next, research on followership behaviors points to several competencies that are considered important across contexts (Agho, 2009; Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013; Chaleff, 2003; Kelley, 1992). For example, Kelley (1992) identifies critical independent thinking as a competency that all followers should possess, and Carsten et al. (2010) highlight the importance of taking initiative and ownership. Thus, Table 7.1 and the following sections describe commonly cited followership competencies, and how followers can use these competencies to support the leadership agenda.

#### **7.3.3.1 Independence**

Contrary to traditional definitions of blind unthinking followers, today's organizations often require employees who can think and work independently. In the followership role, independence involves working without the need of constant direction and involvement of the leader. It is the opposite of dependence, which is defined as the follower's inability to complete challenging tasks, solve problems, or function within the work environment without consulting with their leader (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003). Followers who are able to work independently relieve the leader of increased time demands by not always needing to be monitored. Several researchers have referred to this as "dependability" as it allows the leader to depend on the follower for fulfillment of important tasks (Smith, 1997). Although the amount of independence a follower is able to demonstrate will depend on many things including the experience of the leader and follower, and the organizational context, having the capability to perform without the constant direction and monitoring of the leader is an important competency to have.

#### **7.3.3.2 Critical Thinking and Action**

As a core dimension of Kelley's (1992) followership model, critical thinking is a competency that has received a lot of attention in the followership literature (Chaleff, 2003; Smith, 1997). Critical thinking and action are defined as the follower

**Table 7.1** Followership competencies and outcomes

Followership competency	Sample quote	Expected leadership and organizational outcomes
Independence	“I basically let my director know that there are things I can make decisions on, but things that also need to be his decision .... We agreed that he has enough trust in me that I will make the right calls for the right reasons” (p. 551)	Follower independence relieves leader of time demands, and can independently and proactively solve problems
Critical thinking and action	“But the other important thing of an effective follower is when to say no. when to bring other valid information to the table that says, you know what? Let’s talk about what you’re trying to achieve rather than the solution you are asking me to implement” (p. 551)	Helps leaders assess problems and opportunities to a greater extent, and can help thwart problematic directives
Taking initiative	“I have this real drive to be that proactive person. I would love nothing more than to propel [my company] through my own personal qualities and personal drive” (p. 555)	Followers are able to act swiftly and take advantage of opportunities or solve problems
Taking ownership	“We took ownership over our different sections and we did whatever necessary to make it work” (p. 552)	Followers who take ownership are likely to invest greater time and energy in advancing the leadership and organizational agenda
Mission conscious	“Good followers try to see the big picture and see what’s gonna be best for the organization” (p. 552)	Followers who are thinking about advancing the mission will work to ensure that their efforts align with what is best for the company
Cooperation/collaboration	“A good follower is ... willing to work with other people. You’re willing to hear other people’s opinions, you are willing to work on a consensus basis rather than having your way”	Followers who work cooperatively have greater influence on the leadership process

*Note:* Quotes taken from qualitative research by Carsten et al. (2010)

independently evaluating and analyzing the leader's agenda, objectives, and decisions, and voicing their opinions when they disagree or have counterevidence. According to Cambell (2000), this behavior requires that followers have a deep understanding of the organization's mission, as well as a relevant knowledge base and level of expertise that would allow them to critically analyze outcomes. Chaleff (2003) suggests that challenging a leader, even in a constructive manner, requires a high level of courage from followers. Indeed, followers who voice their opinions or challenge leaders may suffer negative consequences in the form of soured relationships, or leader retaliation. However, the potential benefits of such a behavior are numerous if followers are able to understand the right time and place to voice such concerns. For example, followers who engage in critical thinking and action have the ability to thwart bad decisions, unethical actions, and harmful leader behaviors, or potentially save the organization lost time and resources (Carsten & Uhl-Bien, 2013). Thus, in developing this competency, it is important that followers understand the inherent risks in such behavior, and have the social acumen to understand the right time, place, and way to voice critical concerns.

### **7.3.3.3 Taking Initiative**

Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng, and Tag (1997) define personal initiative as “an individual's taking an active and self-starting approach to work and going beyond what is formally required in their job” (p. 140). For followers, this means getting involved in the leadership process, participating in decision making and problem solving, and proactively sharing information that may enhance unit performance. Research suggests that initiative taking has a positive impact on performance (Thompson, 2005); however a number of scholars warn that such a behavior should be practiced within specific boundaries (Campbell, 2000). As such, organizations should take time to clearly define what these boundaries are. For example, are employees encouraged to take initiative to solve broader organizational issues, or only issues that are directly related to their work and work space? Furthermore, it is recommended that organizations promote initiative taking that clearly aligns with the goals and values of the company. Followers who are able to work within these boundaries are more likely to advance the goals of the leader and work unit, and make positive contributions to the leadership process.

### **7.3.3.4 Taking Ownership**

Due to their subordinate role, followers are typically thought to lack responsibility and accountability for leadership outcomes. However, followers who take ownership of their leader's agenda and work objectives are likely to put their full energy into making the leader and the organization successful. In the workplace, psychological ownership occurs when employees feel emotionally and mentally tied to work processes and outcomes, so much so that they will devote extra energy into making them a success (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2001). For followers, taking ownership means feeling as

though leadership outcomes are an extension of their self, and their partnership with the leader (cf. Belk, 1988). When followers take ownership over leadership outcomes, they perceive that they play an important role in those outcomes (i.e., they have ownership over them), and may invest greater time, energy, and effort. Followers who lack a sense of ownership would likely see that the leader is ultimately responsible for meeting goals and objectives, and as a result invest less energy.

### **7.3.3.5 Mission Conscious**

We rarely think of followers as major players in mission development or enhancement; however, research suggests that those followers who are aware of and sensitive to the organization's mission will behave in ways that advance it (Carsten et al., 2010). As followers work with leaders to improve work outcomes, it is important that they stay mindful of the organization's purpose and values. According to Groscurth (2014), employees are most effective when "they view their contribution to the organization more broadly—they are more likely to stay, take proactive steps to create a safe environment, have higher productivity, and connect with customers to benefit the organization." Followers who are mission conscious are also more likely to think about their directives from leaders, and question whether their actions are in the best interest of the company.

### **7.3.3.6 Cooperation/Collaboration**

Across numerous studies on followership, cooperation and collaboration are two of the most important competencies identified (Agho, 2009; Carsten et al., 2010). As work environments become increasingly participative, so does the need for cooperation across differing perspectives and priorities (Scott, Bishop, & Chen, 2003). Cooperation involves working together in a collaborative way to achieve mutually beneficial goals. It involves a level of respect and consideration of the other party's needs and priorities. For followers, maintaining a helpful and respectful attitude is essential toward achieving high levels of participation with the leader. For example, leaders who perceive a follower is not cooperative, or in the worst-case combative will be less likely to engage the follower in important leadership processes such as goal setting and decision making. For followers to have influence in the leadership process, and use their knowledge and skills in a productive way, they must first understand the importance of cooperation.

## **7.4 Conclusion**

Today's organizations have advanced beyond the era of leaders' unilateral influence and followers remaining silent and deferent. Yet, our models of leadership development still focus almost exclusively on developing leaders to the detriment of followers.

In today's organizations, leadership is thought of as a two-way influence process where followership serves as "an accompaniment to leadership" (Hollander, 1993, p. 31). Thus, if organizations seek to maximize the outcomes of this process, it becomes imperative that we focus on followership development.

Researchers and practitioners alike can make strides in this direction by advancing different models of development that draw upon burgeoning research in this area. In addition, research on existing programs that emphasize followership may be helpful in understanding the effects that such development may have. For example, are leaders better able to anticipate follower behavior, and utilize follower strengths after learning about followership styles? Are organizations better able to capitalize on follower contributions and engagement in reaching their goals? And what are the barriers that exist to developing effective followership in organizations? Having proper evidence for the utility of such programs is important for organizations and participants, and will assist in the development and maintenance of any followership development project.

What is clear, however, is that organizations are changing, and our definitions of leadership and followership must change simultaneously. The inclusion of followership development models into existing programs promises to aid leaders, followers, and organizations in making the correct transitions to compete in their markets. Indeed, followership development holds opportunities for making leaders better followers, and followers better leaders.

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# Chapter 8

## Conflict Management in Leader Development: The Roles of Control, Trust, and Fairness

Chris P. Long

In the twenty-first century, leaders must engage a wide range of challenges that emanate from sets of increasingly complex and rapidly changing factors within and outside of their organizations. In confronting these challenges, leaders can no longer rely on traditional levers of authority. Instead, they must develop their capacities to encourage, influence, and intrinsically motivate their employees to commit to and cooperate with them in the achievement of organizational goals. As this “new reality” has evolved over the past several decades, leader development initiatives have become an evermore important part of how organizations equip their leaders with the sensitivities and competences needed to empower employees to achieve a wide array of performance objectives (Day, 2001; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014).

This chapter contributes to leader development research and practice by directly examining a key and fundamental leader competence: the capacity to effectively address conflicts with their employees. The leader-employee conflicts described in this chapter emerge when employees see (i.e., or anticipate that they will see) their leaders failing to effectively address their performance and interpersonal needs or anticipate that they will fail to do so. When employees see their leaders failing to address their performance needs, they view them as making decisions that compromise their capacity to achieve desired instrumental (e.g., compensation, promotions) and relational (e.g., status, personal recognition) objectives. Leader-employee conflicts may also manifest when employees see their leaders failing to adequately address their interpersonal needs by not acknowledging, understanding, or showing a willingness to protect their personal interests and values (Baird & Kram, 1983; Perrow, 1986). Because conflicts can significantly compromise their legitimacy and authority, it is incumbent on leaders to develop the skills and knowledge to

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effectively deal with both real and potential leader-employee conflicts that occur within their sphere of influence (Long, 2010).

To understand how these challenges can be engaged by authorities, this chapter presents a theory describing how leaders can effectively address leader-employee conflicts by integrating and balancing the controls they apply with their attempts to promote organizational trust and fairness. It builds on over a quarter century of research that demonstrates how leaders can motivate high levels of employee cooperation and commitment when they apply controls in ways that their employees view as trustworthy and fair. This theory specifically shows how leaders who balance their efforts to apply controls, build trust, and promote fairness are able to address a range of employee concerns that emerge from leader-employee conflicts. By presenting a multifaceted approach to addressing these issues, the framework presented in this chapter can be used to train leaders on how to direct their employees in ways that they will view as credible, equitable, and worthy of their willing participation, cooperation, and commitment.

The discussion of these ideas proceeds as follows. After outlining relatively limited perspectives on conflict management presented by existing control, trust, and fairness research, some definitions and descriptions of control, trust-building, and fairness-promotion activities as well as the roles they play in conflict management are provided. After outlining a series of propositions describing how particular control, trust-building, and fairness-promotion activities can reduce specific leader-employee conflicts, I outline how this theory can be used to enhance leader development efforts.

## 8.1 Theory

Scholars have identified three forms of conflicts that can develop between leaders and their employees: goal, task, and personal conflicts (Eisenhardt, 1989; Jehn, 1994, 1995; Jermier, 1998; Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995). *Goal conflicts* describe disagreements between leaders and employees over desired outcomes. *Task conflicts* refer to disagreements between leaders and employees regarding how organizational work is performed, how resources and responsibilities are allocated, and how policies are developed and implemented (Janssen, Van de Vliert, & Veenstra, 1999). *Personal conflicts* encompass “socio-emotional disagreements not directly related to the task” (Jehn, 1995, p. 258) that can arise from identity- or value-based incompatibilities between leaders and their employees that foster high levels of mutual animosity.

Research has shown that because leader-employee conflicts are persistent and influential factors in organizations, leaders devote significant amounts of their time and attention to actively managing these conflicts or preventing these disagreements from increasing in scope or intensity (Bies, 1989; Tjssvold, 1989; Williamson, 1975). Leaders expend this time and energy because leader-employee conflicts may decrease their employees’ willingness to cooperate with them in achieving performance

objectives (Dornbusch & Scott, 1975; Zelditch & Walker, 1984). While an unwillingness to cooperate alone is a problem, leaders actively address these conflicts because if they do not they may also motivate their employees to be insubordinate and “opportunistically” misrepresent their abilities (i.e., information asymmetry) or work efforts (i.e., moral hazard) in ways that can severely compromise organizational functioning (Levinthal, 1988; Williamson, 1975).

### 8.1.1 *Organizational Controls*

Building from assumptions that employees are self-interested, opportunistic, and motivated primarily by the promise of financial rewards (Ghoshal & Moran, 1996), traditional management theorists have argued that leader-employee conflicts can largely be ameliorated through the use of organizational controls. The act of exerting *controls* in an organization has been defined broadly as the collection of processes by which leaders “direct attention, motivate, and encourage organizational members to act in desired ways to meet an organization’s objectives” (Long, Burton, & Cardinal, 2002, p. 198) and has been identified as one of the four primary functions of management [the others being organizing, planning, and coordinating] (Fayol, 1919; Merchant, 1985). Studies have investigated how leaders implement various types of *control mechanisms* to provide employees with information about performance standards, resources necessary to pursue those standards, and rewards or sanctions based on how closely employees’ contributions align with those standards (Eisenhardt, 1989; Ouchi, 1977, 1979; Snell, 1992).

Theorists commonly distinguish forms of control by the element of the production process to which leaders target their application (Cardinal, Sitkin, & Long, 2004, 2010; Long et al., 2002; Merchant, 1985; Ouchi, 1977, 1979; Snell, 1992). For example, *output controls* in the forms of incentives, targets, and goals are generally applied after work is completed to ensure that employees attain desired result-based standards (Ouchi, 1977, 1979). *Process controls* (rules, norms, SOPs) are applied as individuals perform work tasks to ensure that employees use prescribed production methods. Alternatively, *input controls* such as selection mechanisms, socialization methods, and training programs are applied at the beginning of work processes to ready human and material resources for their roles in production efforts (Arvey, 1979; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1980).

Controls may be applied formally or informally. While most control theorists have tended to focus on how leaders apply formal (i.e., written) controls to employees in the forms of contracts, monetary incentives, direct surveillance, and monitoring systems, controls can also be applied informally as unwritten but commonly understood norms, values, beliefs, and routines that direct employee actions (Ouchi, 1977, 1980; Eisenhardt, 1989; Snell, 1992). Wilkins and Ouchi (1983) point out that informal controls are important for directing employee work activities because leaders who implement them motivate employees to develop common perspectives using “shared frameworks, language, and referents.” Leaders who use

informal controls motivate employees to work in ways that are consistent with commonly understood values, routines, and activity-based norms (475).

Control theorists suggest that by employing control mechanisms such as incentives and elaborated monitoring systems they can motivate employees to pursue organizational objectives while, at the same time, limiting the development of leader-employee conflicts (Barney & Hesterly, 1996; Donaldson, 1990; Williamson, 1975). For example, Eisenhardt (1989), Levinthal (1988), and Ouchi (1980) each focus on the mitigation of goal conflicts to argue that leaders can apply organizational controls in ways that motivate employees to accomplish desired objectives and restrict their capacities to misrepresent their abilities (i.e., moral hazards) and work efforts (i.e., information asymmetries).

It is important to note, however, that effectively applying controls requires leaders to maintain a delicate balance. While controls are necessary for organizational functioning, leaders who rely too much on them can signal that they distrust their employees and are actively seeking to constrain their personal autonomy (Enzle & Anderson, 1993; Sitkin & Bies, 1993). When this happens, the threats to their self-determination that employees feel may comprise their perceptions of their leader's legitimacy, reduce their willingness to commit themselves to pursuing organizational goals, and actually increase the forms of leader-employee conflicts that their supervisors are attempting to ameliorate (Blau & Scott, 1962; Enzle & Anderson, 1993; Kim & Mauborgne, 1993; Ghoshal & Moran, 1996). Both Ghoshal and Moran (1996) and Sitkin and Bies (1993) caution that a cycle of using increasingly restrictive controls to motivate employees and diffuse conflicts can result in the development of "pathological spiraling relationships" where "surveillants come to distrust their targets (i.e., employees) as a result of their own surveillance and targets, in fact, become unmotivated and untrustworthy" (Enzle & Anderson, 1993, p. 263).

### ***8.1.2 Legitimacy and Authority***

Thus, while scholars continue to focus a substantial amount of their attention on how leaders can use controls to diffuse leader-employee conflicts, "important questions have been raised about this set of ideas" (Barney & Hesterly, 1996, p. 128) and the efficacy of controls alone for managing these disagreements. For example, Ghoshal and Moran (1996) express concerns that the focus scholars have placed on control-focused theories often ignores things that leaders do to foster positive relationships with their employees. In leadership research, transformational leadership theory shows leaders how they can move away from a reliance on more transactional, contingent, and control-based ways of leading to enact more empowering and motivating leadership behaviors (Bass, 1985).

Leader-employee conflicts play a critical role in the life of leaders because they directly impact how they develop, maintain, and exercise their authority (Long, 2010). This is important to recognize because a leader's authority comprises the central mechanism that they use to direct, influence, and motivate their employees to coop-

erate with them in doing work (Barnard, 1938; Pfeffer, 1981; Weber, 1918). While governing structures and policies can augment some facets of leader authority, a more fundamental and arguably more effective way for leaders to build and maintain their authority is to think and act in ways that their employees view as legitimate or “desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995, p. 574; see also Barnard, 1938; Dornbusch & Scott, 1975; Tyler & Lind, 1992).

When employees perceive that their leaders are acting legitimately, they will tend to endorse their choices, more willingly comply with their directives, and be more motivated to cooperate with them in doing work (Long, 2010). This is because employees in these situations believe that their leaders are acting appropriately and in ways that are instrumental to realizing their personal interests. On the other hand, the presence of leader-employee conflicts is potentially problematic for leaders because these disagreements signal ways that employees are questioning the legitimacy of their decisions and actions, challenging their authority, and, as a result, may be less motivated to both comply with their directives and cooperate with them in pursuing organizational objectives (Pfeffer, 1981; Zelditch & Walker, 1984).

These observations have led scholars to focus significantly greater attention on the benefits that leaders can achieve when they apply controls in ways that generate employee perceptions that they are trustworthy and fair. Over more than the past quarter century, researchers have repeatedly shown that when leaders promote organizational trust and fairness, they enhance the quality of their employees’ contributions and their capacity to achieve organizational objectives. Leaders who promote organizational trust and fairness may also increase levels of voluntary employee compliance with their directives, thereby reducing the time and effort necessary to measure and monitor their employees (Frank, 1988; Jones, 1995; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Moreover, by using trust and fairness to increase commitment to organizational goals, leaders are able to encourage their employees to participate in problem-solving and decision-making activities that can generate efficiencies and competitive advantages for their organizations (Barney & Hansen, 1994).

In order to evaluate the roles that leaders’ efforts to promote organizational trust and fairness play in resolving leader-employee conflicts, the discussion below describes the concepts of *trust building* and *fairness promotion*. These concepts identify categories of actions that are distinct from each other and from leaders’ applications of organizational controls in their composition, and in the explicit outcomes that leaders hope to achieve through their implementation (Long, Sitkin, & Cardinal, 2014).

### 8.1.3 *Trust-Building Activities*

Trust is defined as “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998, p. 395). When undertaking trust-building

activities, leaders focus on developing aspects of their relationships with individual employees by increasing their confidence that they will act reliably in their best interests.

Consistent with the work of Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995), it has been shown that leaders are able to foster employee trust in them by demonstrating their own *ability, benevolence, and integrity*. When demonstrating their ability, leaders actively display their capacity to manage the tasks employees perform and by enhancing employee confidence that their leaders “know what they are doing” in generally managing them and directing their task activities (Mayer et al., 1995; Sitkin & Roth, 1993). In *demonstrating their ability*, leaders may, for example, detail information about their task experience by actively communicating their extensive knowledge of organizational procedures or by displaying a developed capacity to understand and perform production tasks. In *demonstrating their benevolence* leaders work to convince employees that they share their values and are focused on attending to their individual needs. Leaders do this by taking an active interest in their employees’ personal welfare, by accommodating their employees’ personal interests when they take actions or make decisions, and by advocating for their employees’ interests with higher authorities. Through *demonstrating their integrity*, leaders make sure that they are actively displaying their reliability by fulfilling promises and commitments they make to their employees, by linking their words and actions, and by acting in ways that communicate their predictability and consistency (Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998).

Leaders’ trust-building activities include a range of formal and informal actions that leaders undertake to promote situationally relevant forms of employee trust. For example, in highly formalized environments, leaders may try to build and maintain their employees’ willingness to reliably complete organizational tasks by redesigning formal organizational policies and institutional training mechanisms (Sitkin, 1995; Sitkin & Roth, 1993). Alternatively, in contexts where strong relationships matter, leaders may deploy elaborated but informal downward influence tactics and build trust by creating interpersonal connections with employees to engage them in joint problem-solving activities (Rousseau et al., 1998; Sheppard & Sherman, 1998).

#### **8.1.4 Fairness-Promotion Activities**

Research also supports the importance of justice in organizational activities (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Scholars suggest that when employees perceive their leaders as acting fairly, they are more likely to voluntarily comply with their directives (Lind & Tyler, 1988), view leaders as legitimate authorities (Tyler & Lind, 1992), exhibit extra-role behaviors, less frequently engage in illegal or violent activities in the workplace (Greenberg, 1990), and more willingly embrace organizational goals (Lind, Kanfer, & Earley, 1990). Leaders use *fairness-promotion activities* to increase employees’ perceptions that they are being treated fairly in terms of the rewards they acquire, the procedures they enact, the decision-making processes they engage, and the interpersonal treatment they receive. Leaders do this

by promoting equity, consistency of treatment, voice, and civility across the groups of multiple employees that they manage.

The notion of fairness promotion described here builds from over four decades of research that has outlined three primary forms of fairness that impact organizational functioning. *Distributive fairness* exists when employees perceive that organizational rewards and responsibilities are distributed consistently with fair allocation procedures (Adams, 1965; Deutsch, 1975). *Procedural fairness* exists when organizational processes and norms either provide employees some control over their leaders' decisions and decision processes or permit employees to attain high group standing (Leventhal, Karuza, & Fry, 1980; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975, 1978; Tyler & Lind, 1992). *Interactional fairness* exists when decision makers exhibit sensitivity and respect for employees through their actions and words (Bies & Moag, 1986).

When undertaking fairness-promotion activities, leaders make explicit attempts to equitably distribute rewards and responsibilities (Adams, 1965; Deutsch, 1975), provide control over decision processes (Leventhal et al., 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975), and/or promote high levels of dignity and respect across multiple employees that they manage (Bies & Moag, 1986). In undertaking fairness promotion, leaders focus specifically on assuring individuals in the groups they manage that the treatment they receive is appropriate (i.e., fair or just) in absolute terms and equitable when compared to treatment received by their referents (e.g., peers or coworkers).

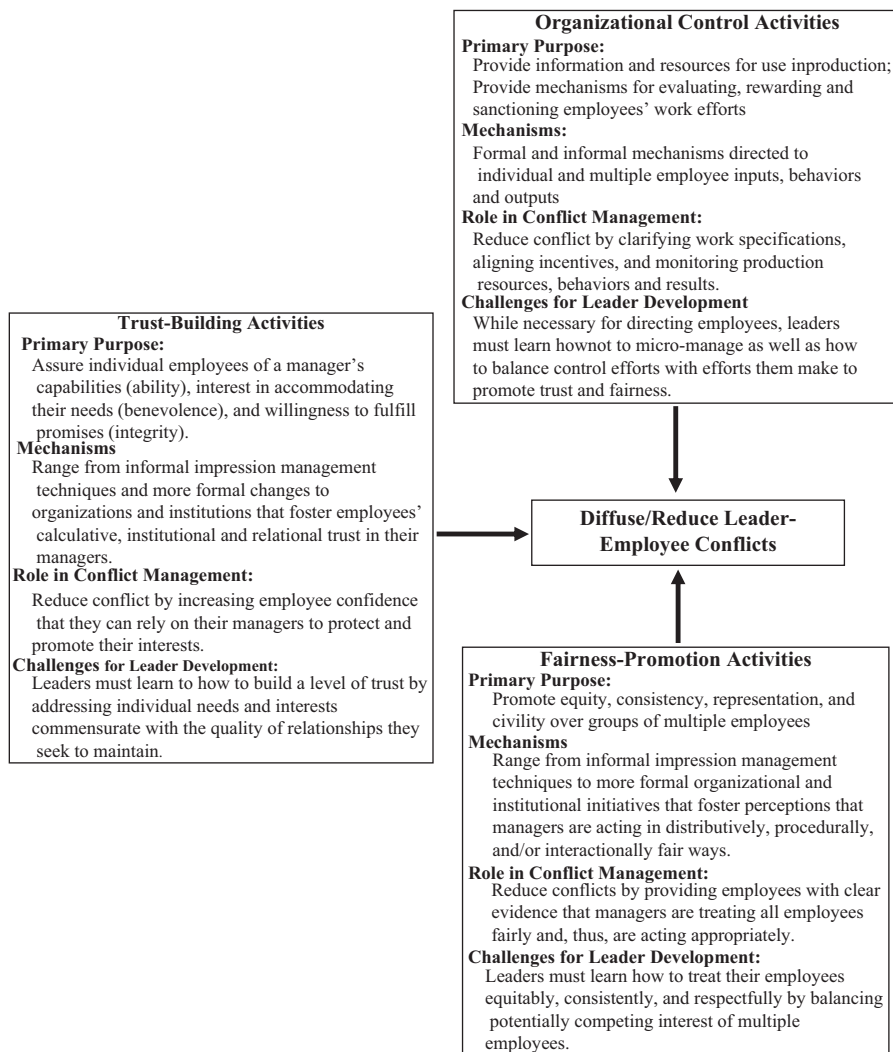
Similar to both control and trust-building activities, leaders may use a wide range of formal and informal mechanisms to build positive perceptions of organizational fairness. For example, in an organization where a "pat on the back" is highly valued, leaders attempting to simultaneously promote distributive fairness and interactional fairness may openly but equitably provide employees with words of encouragement and appreciation. Under different circumstances, leaders hoping to build perceptions that they are procedurally fair may focus on designing formal dispute resolution procedures that encourage employee voice by inviting their participation in decision making across a range of organizational concerns (Bendersky, 2003).

Figure 8.1 summarizes this discussion by outlining the core attributes of leaders' control applications, their trust-building activities, and their fairness-promotion initiatives as well as the roles that each of these activities play in managing leader-employee conflicts.

## 8.2 Addressing Multiple Concerns with Multiple Responses

While organizational control, trust-building, and fairness-promotion activities represent distinct categories of leader actions, an essential part of the argument put forth in this chapter is that the efforts leaders make to apply controls, build trust, and promote fairness constitute complementary mechanisms for managing leader-employee conflicts. The conception of complementarity used here aligns with Bendersky's (2003, p. 644) description of "the interplay among the components (i.e., activities) which enables each type of component to influence individuals'





**Fig. 8.1** Descriptions of the roles that organizational control, trust-building, and fairness-promotion activities play in conflict management

attitudes and behaviors more significantly than it could without reinforcement from the others.”

This perspective is supported with research on power-use strategies that highlights the general importance of multiple activities in fostering employee control and cooperation in resolving leader-employee conflicts (Boyle & Lawler, 1991; Lawler, Ford, & Large, 1999). According to this research, leaders who unilaterally initiate efforts to forge positive leader-employee relationships by engaging in trust-building and fairness-promotion activities decrease the severity of the conflicts they

experience with lower powered exchange partners (i.e., employees) by rendering them less willing to undertake retaliatory behaviors and exit from negotiations (Molm, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1991).

Because complementarities between organizational control, trust-building, and fairness-promotion activities exist, leaders can jointly deploy these activities to diffuse the leader-employee conflicts they encounter. For example, when leaders apply organizational controls while also demonstrating that they are trustworthy, employees will tend to believe that their leaders are acting reliably and with integrity, are generally competently leading them, or are addressing their personal needs and interests through the efforts they make to assert their authority (Ghoshal & Moran, 1996; Sitkin & Stickel, 1996). On the other hand, if leaders apply controls while also working to promote fairness, they can foster perceptions among their employees that they are fairly allocating responsibilities and rewards (Deutsch, 1975), that they are providing employees sufficient voice over decision-making processes (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975), and that they respect their employees (Bies & Moag, 1986).

These combined actions are important and research has increasingly shown how leaders who effectively integrate their efforts to promote control, trust, and fairness produce complementary effects on employee perceptions, attitudes, and work behaviors. For example, Long, Bendersky, and Morrill (2011) describe how employees will exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction when they observe their leaders applying organizational controls in ways that they view as fair. This happens because employees in these situations are more confident that their leaders are giving them a reasonable and credible chance to achieve important instrumental and relational objectives. In addition, research on relationships between control, trust, and performance within organizations describes how when leaders apply controls in ways their employees perceive as trustworthy, those employees are more willing to comply with their directives, cooperate with them in performing tasks, and commit to the goals their leaders are asking them to achieve (Mayer et al., 1995; Sitkin & Roth, 1993; Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999).

### 8.3 Different Conflicts, Different Activities

The ideas below build from this discussion to develop the argument that particular control, trust-building, and fairness-promotion activities are not equally effective for addressing any form of conflict (Sitkin & Roth, 1993). Instead, because goal, task, and personal conflicts each provide employees with specific motivations to disregard the directions of their leaders and behave opportunistically, leaders seeking to effectively address these disagreements must couple their applications of certain types of organizational controls with specific forms of trust-building and fairness-promotion activities.

Control theorists present evidence consistent with this perspective. They show that when leaders direct employees in ways that align with their task demands, they

can reduce potential conflicts and mitigate perceived value incongruencies between themselves and their employees. Sitkin and Roth (1993), for example, show how formal process control mechanisms can be used to manage leader-employee conflicts in highly institutionalized environments while Cardinal et al. (2004) describe how leaders in highly social, clan environments can most effectively reduce interpersonal conflicts between themselves and their employees by implementing informal input controls.

The ideas presented here are also consistent with researchers who suggest that leaders' efforts to build trust and promote fairness are most effective when they address situational contingencies. For example, Wicks, Berman, and Jones' (1999) theory of "Optimal Trust" suggests that because "trust is good-but a conditional good" (Wicks et al., 1999, p. 99), leaders can most effectively build deeper, more trusting relationships with their employees when they redress important sets of situational contingencies through their trust-building activities. For example, when leaders build forms of trust that are consistent with the goals they seek to achieve and the relational constraints they face, they demonstrate to their employees that they understand their concerns while they are working to motivate them to achieve desirable organizational outcomes. This perspective also aligns with the work of fairness researchers who contend that leaders who promote forms of fairness that effectively redress specific employee grievances are able to ameliorate employees' feelings of resentment and deprivation and establish an environment where their employees are motivated to pursue desirable organizational outcomes (Lerner, 1977; Leventhal et al., 1980).

Figure 8.2 builds from this general discussion to outline how leaders can effectively address leader-employee goal, task, and personal conflicts by combining applications of controls with specific and related forms of trust-building and fairness-promotion initiatives. These ideas are presented to provide developing leaders with a road map that can help them understand where they need to focus their efforts to deal with a range of leader-employee conflicts they encounter. Over the next section, these relationships are described in more detail and outlined in Propositions 4.1–4.3.

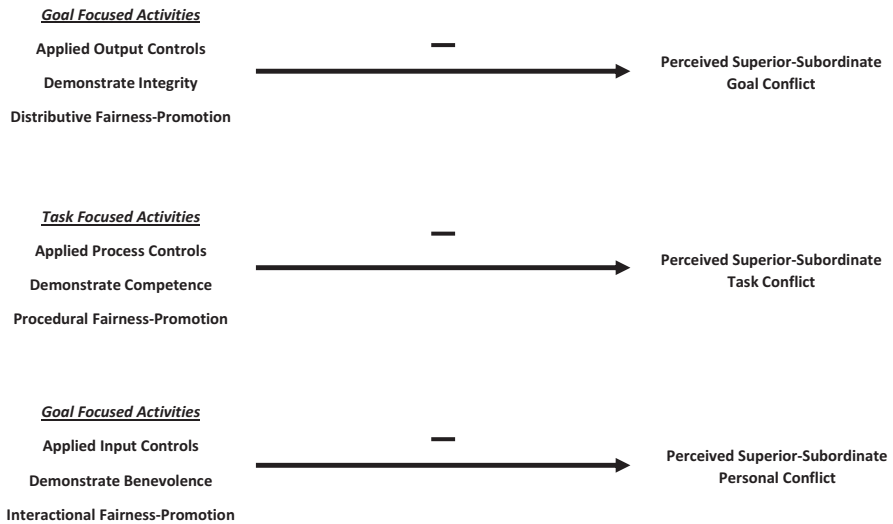
By shedding light on particularly important combinations of multiple, complementary activities, the propositions outlined below can be used to encourage leaders to economize their efforts in duffusing various forms of leader-employee disagreements.

## 8.4 Propositions

### 8.4.1 *Addressing Goal Conflicts*

Disagreements between leaders and employees over goals constitute arguably the most fundamental form of conflict that a leader can encounter. For example, within a sales organization goal conflicts can manifest in something as simple as conflicting aspirations about what sales figures employees should strive to achieve to more

**Relationships between Leader-Employee Conflicts and Organizational Controls, Trust-Building, and Fairness-Promotion Activities**



**Fig. 8.2** Relationships between leader-employee conflicts and organizational controls, trust-building, and fairness-promotion initiatives

complex differences of opinion about what types of customers sales representatives should target. The key issue in these cases is that employees are not effectively being directed and motivated to attain the goals that their leaders want them to achieve. Of particular concern to leaders in these situations is that employees have reasons to misrepresent both their abilities (i.e., information asymmetry) and work efforts (i.e., moral hazard) (Eisenhardt, 1989; Levinthal, 1988) in order to create the conditions where they can pursue the outcomes they desire to produce.

Research by Ouchi (1979, 1980) and other control theorists (e.g., Eisenhardt, 1989; Levinthal, 1988) builds from the principles of agency theory to argue that in response to goal conflicts, leaders should direct their employees by applying output controls. Using output controls, leaders can directly deal with “goal incongruencies” by implementing clearer and unambiguous results-based standards that definitively explicate the goals that their employees are required to pursue. Because “probably the best vehicle for increasing the level of perceived identification is the creation of joint products and goals” (Shapiro, Sheppard, & Cheraskin, 1992, p. 372), leaders may use output controls to more actively encourage their employees to pursue organizational goals. By doing this, leaders allow for “some employee discretion yet provide both the incentive and responsibility for results that benefit the employing firm” (Snell, 1992, p. 296). By clarifying desired end-state contributions, leaders are able to motivate their employees by both shifting production risks to them while, at the same time, providing them clearer pictures of the rewards and other incentives

they may receive for their production achievements (Eisenhardt, 1989; Kirsch, 1996; Ouchi, 1977, 1979).

When leaders face employees who disagree with them about desired outcomes, the efforts they make to demonstrate their integrity can help them to diffuse these goal conflicts. In demonstrating their integrity, leaders may, for example, make personal efforts to ensure that their employees are rewarded for their achieved performance with increases in salaries, bonuses, and promotions or publicly embrace institutional mechanisms that constrain their ability to exploit employees (Sitkin, 1995). Through these actions, leaders provide verifiable “proof source(s)” (Doney, Cannon, & Mullen, 1998) that both assure their employees that they will protect their interests while communicating to them that there are clear benefits for adhering to the organizational standards they have set (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998; Sitkin & Bies, 1993; Tyler & Lind, 1992). As this provides employees with confidence that they can further their instrumental interests by pursuing the goals that their leaders have directed them to achieve, employees will be more likely to conclude that the goal conflicts through which they enact their general distrust of their leaders are unfounded, unnecessary, and counterproductive.

In environments where employees are directed to complete goals, leaders are also well advised to examine their allocation decisions and procedures. Both Leventhal (1976) and Lerner (1977) suggest that when leaders choose to implement fair allocation mechanisms and equitable reward distributions, they establish an environment beneficial to the pursuit of organizational goals. Because employees in these situations feel fairly rewarded for achieving the results leaders are asking of them, they are less apt to exhibit feelings of resentment and deprivation. In addition, by “strongly reinforce(ing) those individuals whose contributions are most useful and beneficial to the group product, while at the same time deliver(ing) a lower degree of reinforcement to poor performers” (Chen & Church, 1993, p. 30), leaders who foster distributive fairness are able to create a sense of coherence where employees see their leaders enforcing acceptable performance evaluation norms that demonstrate clear benefits to cooperating with them in pursuing organizational objectives (Greenberg, 1987).

**Proposition 4.1:** *Leaders can diffuse goal conflicts between themselves and their employees by applying output controls, demonstrating their integrity, and promoting distributive fairness.*

### 8.4.2 Addressing Task Conflicts

Task conflicts refer “to disagreements about the work to be done including issues such as the allocation of resources, the application of procedures, and the development and implementation of policies” (Janssen et al., 1999, p. 122). Task conflicts are important for leaders to recognize because they provide evidence that employees

disagree with them about how work should be performed and prefer production methods that differ from those that leaders are specifying. As a result, these employees may misrepresent their abilities or production efforts so that they can perform jobs using the work processes that they prefer (Arrow, 1974; Eisenhardt, 1989; Jehn, 1995, 1997; Sitkin & Roth, 1993).

Leaders may be able to partially alleviate leader-employee task conflicts by directing employees using process controls (Sitkin & Roth, 1993). In order to improve intra-organizational coordination, leaders can utilize their knowledge about how employees should perform tasks to detail their process-based specifications. For example, leaders can attempt to clarify work norms to ensure that employees are properly instructed in job-related tasks. In addition, leaders may create procedural manuals or elaborated work routines that outline task performance procedures. They may supplement these efforts with information systems to gather performance data that can help them closely monitor their employees' work efforts and ensure that they are implementing procedures in ways consistent with process specifications (Snell, 1992).

Through demonstrations of their ability, leaders can further diffuse task conflicts by providing their employees with evidence that their best chance of achieving their personal and professional goals lies with their acceptance of management's explicit instructions. Using demonstrations of their competence, leaders can show employees how the procedural directives they are implementing enable them to efficiently and effectively complete their organizational tasks (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 400). By displaying their experience using prescribed task completion procedures, leaders enhance employees' confidence that the methods they have outlined are both legitimate and appropriate (Sitkin, 1995; Sitkin & Bies, 1993). Moreover, by demonstrating the benefits of performing work tasks in the ways they describe, leaders can use their detailed knowledge of organizational operations to bolster their own legitimacy as leaders and the legitimacy of the procedures they are seeking to implement.

In environments where leader-employee task conflicts exist, leaders are also well advised to pay special attention to the fairness of the decision-making procedures they employ. This is because task conflicts stimulate their employees to critically evaluate their leaders' decisions. In this context, the six components of procedural fairness (i.e., consistency, bias suppression, accuracy, correctability, representation, ethicality) initially identified by Leventhal (1976; see also Colquitt, 2001) comprise critical mechanisms that leaders can employ to increase perceptions that work processes are being fairly administered. For example, by implementing procedural directives in ways that are consistent, accurate, and free of bias, leaders are able to demonstrate that they are directing their work using clear, predictable, and objective means. In addition, by providing employees with ways to correct and voice their opposition to the elements of the procedures they see as faulty, leaders are able to incorporate employees into their decision-making processes while encouraging employee compliance through mechanisms that promote decision control (Leventhal, 1980; Sheppard & Lewicki, 1987).

**Proposition 4.2:** *Leaders can diffuse task conflicts between themselves and their employees by applying process controls, demonstrating their competence, and promoting procedural fairness.*

### 8.4.3 Addressing Personal Conflicts

Leader-employee personal conflicts are identified by the presence of “tension, animosity, and annoyance” (Jehn, 1995, p. 258) that communicate to leaders that employees dislike them and may compromise the successful completion of organizational tasks. Research suggests that employees who maintain personal conflicts with their leaders exhibit a reduced willingness to process new information, to accept new ideas, and to cooperate by increasing the likelihood that employees will make hostile attributions about their leaders’ intentions and behaviors (Baron, 1991, 1997; Eisenhardt & Bourgeois, 1988; Jehn, 1995). To address personal conflicts, leaders should focus their control mechanisms as well as their trust-building and fairness-promotion activities towards helping their employees strongly identify with them and with their organization because individuals who perceive themselves to be part of “the same group tend to behave in a more trustworthy manner toward each other” (Shapiro et al., 1992, p. 371).

While personal conflicts provide leaders with strong evidence that their values are incongruent with those that their employees hold, they may be able to partially alleviate these conflicts by exerting informal, more “subtle forms of control such as humor, kidding, and hinting” (Jaworski, 1988, p. 27) or by using stories, rituals, and legends to communicate norms of social interaction through their organization’s culture. Building from Mayo’s (1945) observations, Ouchi (1979) points out that these less obtrusive, informal control mechanisms create “few problems of alienation” and can be quite effective in leading employees to desire “that which serves the organization” (65). To discourage opportunism for employees who express personal conflicts towards their supervisors, leaders may use input control mechanisms to refocus and align their employees’ preferences with organizational values and motivate employees to more closely identify with the firm. Snell (1992) suggests that these initiatives may help to “prevent performance problems” (297) by encouraging employees to understand, accept, and embrace organizational goals and values.

Demonstrations of their benevolence can also assist leaders in diffusing leader-employee personal conflicts. By expressing a genuine care and concern for the welfare of their employees, leaders communicate that they believe in their employees and want to deepen their interpersonal connections with them (McAllister, 1995, p. 26). Showing that they will take their employees’ interests into account through their words and actions helps leaders forge stronger value congruencies between themselves and their employees as they actively instill their employees with “a greater level of faith” (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 400) in themselves and their intentions as a leader (Shapiro et al., 1992).

Personal conflicts often develop as a result of what individuals say to one another (Jehn, 1997). Because of this, leaders focused on diffusing personal conflicts should become much more careful about the general quality of their personal interactions with their employees. Bies and Moag (1986) introduced the concept of interactional fairness to describe the effects of interpersonal treatment on perceived fairness in relationships. In attempting to diffuse personal conflicts, leaders should focus on increasing the quality of their personal interactions with their employees through efforts to display respect (i.e., politeness) and propriety (i.e., the use of context-appropriate language) towards their employees (Colquitt, 2001). This builds directly from evidence in the business communication and impression management literatures that describes how leaders can improve the impressions of themselves they impart to employees through healthy, interpersonal interactions. By more aggressively policing both the potential offensiveness of what they say and the ability (or inability) of their words to promote relationship building, leaders can deepen the interpersonal connections they forge in ways that can ameliorate personal animosities between themselves and their employees (Bies & Moag, 1986).

**Proposition 4.3:** *Leaders can diffuse personal conflicts between themselves and their employees by applying input controls, demonstrating their benevolence, and promoting interactional fairness.*

## 8.5 Discussion

This chapter describes a framework that outlines how leaders can efficiently and effectively address leader-employee conflicts (goal, task, personal) by applying certain controls (output, process, input), building trust in particular ways (demonstrate integrity, ability, and benevolence), and actively promoting specific forms of fairness (distributive, procedural, interactional). By appropriately attending to key aspects of leader-employee relationships, it is argued that leaders may achieve greater levels of employee commitment and cooperation with their directives, increase their capacities to efficiently and effectively manage organizational tasks, and enhance their efforts to achieve organizational goals (Baron, 1991, 1997; Eisenhardt & Bourgeois, 1988; Jehn, 1995; Yukl, Falbe, & Youn, 1993; Yukl et al., 1995).

### 8.5.1 *Enacting These Perspectives Through Leader Development Initiatives*

These concepts and the relationships between them described in this chapter broaden traditional perspectives of leader attention and action as they refine and extend current theory, practice, and pedagogy on how to develop effective leaders (Popper, 2005). In arguing that leaders should integrate their organizational controls



with trust-building and fairness-promotion initiatives, this chapter outlines three categories of activities that differ in the primary purpose they serve for leaders, as well as the conflict management objectives that leaders can accomplish through their implementation. Moreover, by describing how leaders can address multiple forms of leader-employee conflicts, this chapter places the decisions leaders make about directing their employees within a broader strategic and relational context than is commonly addressed in control, trust, or fairness theories because these perspectives typically focus only on the implementation of one type of activity at a time (Eisenhardt, 1989; Ghoshal & Moran, 1996; Levinthal, 1988).

However, important questions remain regarding how we can use this set of ideas to focus leader development initiatives in ways that can provide leaders with the tools and skills that they need to maintain positive and effective relationships with their employees. Over the next section, we begin to engage this set of issues by considering several relevant concerns that should be addressed in leader development initiatives. This discussion highlights how the ideas contained in this chapter can be deployed in ways that effectively challenge current assumptions undergirding leadership education and training and suggest some ways that leadership development initiatives can incorporate the perspectives presented here.

As we explore implementation issues, it is important to communicate that the ideas contained in this chapter can be imparted to leaders through the wide variety of training platforms, programs, and techniques. Because pedagogical approaches vary a great deal, those focused on leader development should work to foster an understanding of these perspectives through multiple delivery mechanisms such as formal training programs, practice-based development activities, and even self-help-focused platforms. Utilizing multi-focused learning systems that can deliver and reinforce content through a variety of means may be the most effective way to impact how leaders manage conflicts to help them transform these potentially dangerous and corrosive situations into opportunities to foster high levels of employee commitment and cooperation.

### **8.5.2 *Adopting an Integrative View of Conflict***

As Propositions 4.1–4.3 outline specific strategies for resolving goal, task, and personal conflicts with employees, those who seek to use this information in leader development initiatives should focus, first, on developing leaders' capacities to appropriately assess the conflicts they are engaging. Proper diagnosis of relational dynamics is essential for leaders to accurately evaluate the state of their interpersonal relationships and use that information to determine what types of controls, trust-building, and fairness-promotion initiatives they should emphasize.

Existing conflict management research suggests that different types of conflicts elicit distinctly different reactions from individuals who encounter them. Thus, educating leaders on the composition of various forms of conflicts may be an essential component of helping them think critically and logically about how to manage these

disagreements. For example, Jehn (1995) found in a comprehensive study of multiple conflicts that task conflicts can lead individuals to “critically assess information related to their job” in ways that may reduce “thoughtless agreement and complacency” and promote a “critical evaluation of problems and decision options” (275). In that same study, Jehn (1995) also found that personal disagreements between individuals in groups can cause “distress and animosity” that lead individuals “to redesign their work area or job in the group so that they no longer would have to interact with the others involved in the conflict (276).” This suggests that leaders who take conflicts too personally may fail to effectively engage these aspects of their relationships and less frequently initiate appropriate and helpful remedial actions (Bendersky, 2003; Lowenstein, Thompson, & Gentner, 1999; Thompson, Gentner, & Lowenstein, 2000).

While conflicts may often be viewed as situations to avoid, leader development initiatives should help leaders accept and embrace the opportunities that conflicts present them to improve the relationships they maintain with their employees. In addition to providing leaders with tools to accurately diagnose and objectively assess the full range of leader-employee conflicts that they may encounter, leader development initiatives could help leaders foster an integrative perspective on leader-employee conflicts. For example, by helping leaders accurately diagnose conflicts and choose actions that can help them efficiently and effectively address these disagreements, leaders may begin to use these disagreements to better understand their employees’ concerns. Then using specific control, trust-building, and fairness-promotion initiatives they can effectively address these concerns in ways they communicate to their employees that they share their interests and seek to foster a collaborative, cooperative set of working relationships.

### ***8.5.3 Embracing One’s Dependence and Relative Power***

A potential key to altering leaders’ perspectives on these issues may be to help leaders understand and embrace their dependencies and vulnerabilities. On this point, “power-approach theory” (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003) which explains how individuals’ perceptions of their power influence the ways they interpret, process, and address conflicts can be particularly valuable. Over more than the past decade, researchers (e.g., Galinsky, Magee, Inesi, & Gruenfeld, 2006) have built from this theory to demonstrate how individuals who perceive themselves to be powerful make self-serving attributions, engage in lower amounts of perspective taking, are more aggressive, and concentrate their decision making on how they may use others to achieve their personal objectives (Keltner et al., 2003). This theory also shows how individuals who perceive themselves to be less powerful are more sensitive to social cues, and focus their decision making on how they can work towards the ends of other more powerful individuals around them (Galinsky et al., 2006).

In situations where leaders face conflicts, issues of power are particularly salient because, under these conditions, employees are actively challenging their leader's authority and, thus, motivating their leaders to identify ways that they can achieve their desired objectives (Zelditch & Walker, 1984). If leaders in these situations embrace the notion that they are dependent on their employees, they will be more likely to acknowledge that each of their employees "makes a decision to grant authority to the person above him or her" (Perrow, 1986, p. 71). According to power-approach theory, leaders who do this will then be more focused on trying to understand how they can generate positive employee perceptions of them and their actions, on trying to accommodate those employees' needs, and on balancing and integrating their efforts to apply controls, build trust, and promote fairness to achieve the ends that their employees desire (Keltner et al., 2003).

### ***8.5.4 Understanding the Limits of Organizational Controls***

It is important to note how the ideas presented here refine and extend current perspectives describing how leaders can use controls to address leader-employee conflicts through close monitoring, aligning incentives, and rewarding good behavior. Building on assumptions that employees exhibit conflicts with leaders primarily because they are self-interested and opportunistic, these transaction-focused perspectives emphasize how leaders can use primarily formal (i.e., written) controls to contain and diffuse the negative aspects of conflicts by focusing employees' attention on pursuing their personal interests through the achievement of clearly defined sets of organizational objectives (Barney & Hesterly, 1996; Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999).

In arguing that leaders should use multiple activities to address leader-employee conflicts, the ideas presented here engage a broader set of issues describing how leaders' efforts to direct and control their employees also encompass the efforts they make to build trust and promote fairness (Cardinal, 2001; Long et al., 2002). By describing the importance of trust building and fairness promotion in this process, this chapter highlights ways that leaders can compensate for some of the strains precipitated by their efforts to implement controls that negatively impact their relationships with employees and the willingness of those employees to pursue organizational goals (Greenberg, 1987; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992).

Those focused on leader development can use the perspectives presented here to educate leaders about the relational benefits and potential costs associated with implementing various forms of controls. A key component of this will be to also coach and mentor leaders about how to effectively balance and integrate the efforts they make to implement controls, build trust, and promote fairness. A way to motivate leaders to embrace these ideas is to demonstrate how they can more efficiently and effectively direct the work of their employees, reduce exchange costs, and enhance their legitimacy and authority by balancing their attention across multiple, complementary activities (Bendersky, 2003; Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998). In assessing how to do this, organizational architects might draw from the work of scholars

such as Cardinal et al. (2004) who outline leader motivations for promoting various forms of controls. They may also develop perspectives such as those presented by Whitener et al. (1998) or Long and Sitkin (2006) who outline potentially important collections of individual, relational, and organizational factors that incite leaders to act in trustworthy ways or Chen and Church (1993) who describe factors that motivate leaders to promote fairness (Long, 2016a; Long, 2016b; Scott, Colquitt, and Paddock, 2009).

### ***8.5.5 Control, Trust, and Fairness***

In highlighting important relationships between control and trust, this chapter outlines the particular forms of trust and fairness that leaders should develop in order to build positive and effective leader-employee relationships. Architects of development initiatives should be aware that leaders who work to create an environment where employees trust them and believe they act fairly often make what they often perceive as difficult, strategic choices (Leventhal et al., 1980; Wicks et al., 1999). This is because these activities, at least initially, appear costlier and riskier than more traditional mechanisms for leading employees (Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999; Wicks et al., 1999). These programs may appear costly because they may require leaders to expend time and resources fulfilling obligations to employees, ensuring that they consistently apply organizational policies, equitably distribute organizational opportunities and compensation, and fully address important employee concerns. They may appear risky because they require leaders to cede discretion and decision-making authority to lower echelon employees who exhibit different and often conflicting, interests, needs, and preferences (Spreitzer & Mishra, 1999).

All this strongly suggests that leaders should be trained in how to determine what quality of relationships they desire and to take actions to produce the types of relationships they seek (Shapiro et al., 1992). While leaders should be cautioned against micro-managing their employees, they should also be coached on how to avoid either over- or under-investing in trust or fairness. This is because leaders who over-invest in trust and fairness may waste valuable resources creating an overly collegial climate. On the other hand, leaders who under-invest in trust may neglect opportunities to build cooperative relationships that promote organizational commitment and substantially reduce agency and transaction costs (Bromiley & Cummings, 1995).

While this chapter suggests that trust-building activities comprise a distinct category of leader actions that are complementary to organizational controls, leaders should be coached and mentored on how to identify ways to link how they build trust and apply controls. For example, a sales leader can couple the implementation of a formal incentive program with demonstrations of their integrity to increase employee perceptions that they are focused on promoting their financial interests. In other cases, leaders should apply certain types of controls in order to build specific types of trust. Sitkin (1995), for example, explains how applications of formal process control mechanisms can be utilized to increase employee trust in authorities by

enhancing perceptions of their integrity and competence in ways that decrease employees' relational risk and uncertainty perceptions.

Similarly, leaders should be mindful of how organizational structures, policies, and cultures can impact the decisions they make to promote fairness (Folger, Konovsky, & Cropanzano, 1992). For example, developing leaders should be coached in how they may apply controls to foster specific types of fairness. As formal process control mechanisms require leaders to codify employees' responsibilities, they may naturally encourage leaders to promote procedural fairness by requiring them to manage consistently and in bias-free ways. Alternatively, to promote distributive fairness in ways that enforce output controls, leaders can be trained on how to develop incentive plans that explicitly outline the rewards their employees can achieve for satisfying, specific sales targets.

For this reason and because they must often contend with various complexities in managing groups of individual employees, leaders should be directed in how to efficiently generate the levels of trust and fairness they seek to promote (Meindl, 1989). Building from established research that closely correlates employee perceptions of trust and fairness, leaders should be aware of potential synergies that exist between employees' perceptions of how fairly they are treated and how trustworthy they believe their leaders are (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Knowing this may, for example, motivate leaders to take explicit steps to promote distributive and procedural fairness in the hopes of enhancing employees' perceptions of their integrity or ability. Alternatively, leaders may want to focus on building deeper levels of relational trust with employees in order to increase perceptions that they treat their employees in interactionally fair ways.

As they do this, leaders should also be trained in how to align their efforts to promote trust and fairness with elements of the particular organizational contexts within which they reside. While the trust-building and fairness-promotion activities described in this chapter can be executed in various ways from informal impression management techniques to more formal structural or procedural changes, the specific types of activities that leaders deploy will depend on the culture and norms of the particular organization of which they are a part. For example, although it seems obvious that leaders would demonstrate their benevolence by using informal impression management and socialization techniques, leaders in bureaucratic organizations may find it more effective to demonstrate their benevolence using more formal mechanisms. Similar questions exist for each category of trust-building and fairness-promotion activity and leaders should be encouraged to think carefully about how they can use formal and informal mechanisms to generate the levels of trust and fairness that they are seeking to generate.

In fostering trust and fairness, leaders should bristle against their natural tendencies to foster qualitatively different relationships with only certain members of their units (Bauer & Green, 1996; Scandura, Graen, & Novak, 1986; Schriesheim, Neider, & Scandura, 1998). Because these dynamics can often compromise employee trust, leaders should be encouraged to adhere strictly to fairness principles when managing groups of their employees. The ideas outlined in this chapter display how when leaders direct their employees' work activities While also treating them equitably,

consistently, and respectfully, they are able to effectively ameliorate the more toxic elements that may emerge with in their relationships with employees that enable them to effectively foster robust forms of trust to generate high levels of employee commitment, cooperation, and empowerment.

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# Chapter 9

## Operationalizing Creativity: Developing Ethical Leaders Who Thrive in Complex Environments

Harry H. Jones IV

*“The sad truth of the matter is that most evil is done by people who never made up their minds to be or do either evil or good.”*

(Arendt, 1981)

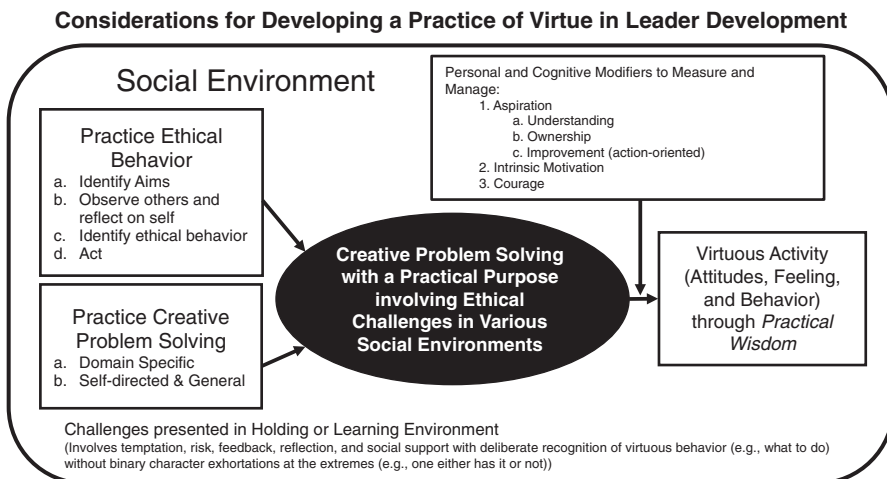
### 9.1 Virtue as Skill: Thinking Differently About Developing Ethical Leaders

In an effort to add to the conversation around developing better leaders, this essay explores the relationship between ethics and creativity. Neither of these fields is new, though the history of research in creativity is much shorter than the long tradition of theorizing in ethics. Yet, these two fields are rarely considered together. It is not the aim to articulate in a broad and comprehensive way the relationship between creativity and ethics. Rather, they are considered in light of two very specific views within each tradition, and how, taken together, they might enhance leader development efforts. There are, of course, a variety of theoretical approaches both to ethics and to creativity. I will focus on a view of both virtue ethics and creativity in which *skill* plays a prominent role. Beyond that, I aim to draw upon empirical research that suggests we ought to be far more sensitive to the complex situations in which moral agents may find themselves. Figure 9.1 presents an overview of the main topics that are discussed. This is a key point because this volume is based on an underlying assumption that leader development is focused on growing moral agents.

It is not my intent here to argue in depth for a particular view of the nature of skill in leaders or followers. Rather, I will adopt the empiricist view of skill as contrasted with an intellectualist view. The standard for what counts as a skill, under the intellectualist view, is very high, requiring that the expert have both the ability to perform tasks and to explain them within the framework of a field-relevant theory

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**Fig. 9.1** Considerations addressed within the chapter for developing virtue and creativity as skills

(Stichter, 2007). Experts, therefore, must understand their subject in addition to being able to perform well (Stichter, 2007, p. 188). The empiricist view does not lower the bar insofar as the display of expert skill. However, under the empiricist view, there is no need for the expert to be able to explain in any deep, theoretical way why he or she does what he or she does. Mastery of skills, for the empiricist, comes largely through experience, rather than through adherence to universal principles (Stichter, 2007, p. 189). The emphasis on experience is not meant to discount the value of theory and the intellectual component of skill development. The expert will be able to say *something* about why he or she makes the decisions he or she makes. At some stages of development, he or she might be able to articulate why he or she is making the move he or she makes when exercising the skill. Consequently, this is precisely why the development of skills is an important topic for consideration in the realm of leader development. Here, too, we assume that leader development is about creating experts who can act as leaders. Whether leaders can explain why they act as they do in the realm of virtue and creativity is less important for this presentation and a topic for another time.

Requiring that an expert be able to explain his or her decisions in a theoretical way makes it difficult to account for performances in certain areas. A clear example is evident in medicine where an experienced surgeon, one who will surely be sensitive to a complex set of environmental factors during any given operation, might anticipate trouble based on any number of factors processed too quickly to articulate. It does not mean that the surgeon could not say *anything at all* about the decision, only that such an explanation need not be explicitly theoretical. The emphasis here is on the performance. One can be an expert by performing in an expert way

and be unable to explain in a theoretical way his or her expert decisions. But one cannot be an expert with respect to skills, even with the best theoretical explanations, without being able to perform in an expert way. In short, behaving in an expert manner is a necessary condition—while expert explanations are not—for possessing and demonstrating skill or expertise.

Taken together, because leaders are moral agents, we can embrace the empiricist view of skill as appropriate for virtue-as-skill. This has substantial implications for both the way one learns to be good and the way one teaches (and leads) others to do so. With that in mind, let us say what we mean by “virtue.” Philosopher Robert Adams maintains that virtues are dispositions “[...] to act in certain ways or from certain motives, views, or commitments” (Adams, 2006, p. 161). Developing virtues, then, involves feelings and attitudes about doing the right thing as much as actually doing right.

The purpose here is to press a view of virtue that sees the notion of skill as key to understanding how virtues work and how they might be developed (Annas, 2011). Julia Annas is a leading voice in contemporary virtue ethics. She is careful to speak of the “skill analogy” when developing her account of virtue (Annas, 2011). I will speak of virtue as itself a skill. As a skill, virtue must be cultivated and practiced. Though imitation, practice, and routine are key to skill development, Annas is careful not to reduce skill development to mere routine. She notes that though one develops virtue through habituation, the result is not routine; rather, it is the kind of mastery one finds in expert musicians or athletes (Annas, 2011). Here one should see an immediate difference between, say, flossing one’s teeth and performing Bach’s Chaconne. The former is a habit in the ordinary sense; the latter is the product of “habituation.” Habituation here for Annas means developing those habits associated with gaining mastery in the domain. Yet an expert performance is more than simply the exercise of relevant habits. An expert performance in the musical domain is an example of “intelligently engaged practical mastery” (Annas, 2011, p. 14).

Learning by doing is more than simple skill development. This is where a strict behavioral focus must merge with a cognitive approach within developing leaders. Simply, loyalty will not *make* one a virtuous person. One’s aims and intent must also be good (Adams, 2006). One crucial requirement for developing virtue is aspiration (Annas, 2011). This implies that, similar to the way an Olympic sprinter aspires to be faster and deliberately works toward that aim, one must aspire to become more honest, more courageous, and the like, and to deliberately work toward that aim, intent, or purpose. Assuming this is correct, then aspiration is at least one feature that separates would-be virtuous agents from those who are not developing virtue in any meaningful way. Additionally, this means that aspiration is directly linked to a cognitive choice or autonomy on the part of the developing leader. Aspiration is the exercise of one’s autonomy to pursue a certain aim. In the context of developing ethical and creative leaders, aspiration serves a critical function, and I will address it separately in one of the sections to follow. First, let us examine creativity as skill, where skill is the important theoretical link between virtue and creativity.

## 9.2 Creativity as Skill: A Key to the Development of Practical Wisdom

Creativity, as a concept, has a closer relationship to virtue than we ordinarily imagine. Creativity researcher Keith Sawyer considers creativity to be like moral agency in that it is a uniquely human trait (Sawyer, 2012). It is reasonable to think, as philosopher Christine Swanton claims, that creativity is a component of all the virtues (Swanton, 2003), and it is worth considering whether creativity is itself a virtue (Kieran, 2014). There are many interesting questions one might explore with respect to creativity, but my interest in creativity here is how it might serve in the development of moral leaders. First, it is important to define “creativity.”

Philosopher of creativity Berys Gaut adds a helpful spin on the common definition that “creativity is the capacity to produce things that are original and valuable” in an attempt to further clarify what ought to count as “creative” (Gaut, 2003, p. 150). Gaut argues that this is insufficient, as it would permit instances of the creation of things that are both original and valuable by a process that is clearly not creative. He offers the following example: one might be covered with paint in a darkroom, flailing about for hours, thereby *accidentally* producing something valuable and original. Yet, surely this ought not count as creative. Conversely, if the method of production is purely “mechanical” it would be wrong to consider the act creative. This is to say that *how* the original and valuable product is made matters (Gaut, 2003, p. 150). To account for this, Gaut adds that in order to count as creative, valuable, and original products must be produced with *flair* (Gaut, 2010, p. 1041). Flair is not given a robust definition, but is clearly intended to be that thing that a person brings to the process such that the *how* of producing is neither by chance nor mechanized. It is reasonable to wonder what this has to do with virtue development. A number of such links are worth noting.

First, if Swanton (2005) is correct that creativity is a part of all virtues, then creativity has a central role to play in the development and exercise of virtue. Second, if Amabile (1996) is right to claim that creativity is sensitive to social environments, then thinking about creativity could helpfully illuminate aspects of our thinking about virtue. Third, if Gaut is right to suggest that creativity is inherently risky, then developing one’s creativity would appear to have a moral component—namely that one would be simultaneously developing one kind of courage and a capacity for risk taking (Gaut, 2009). If Gaut (2009) is further correct that creativity is best thought of as a skill, then it fits nicely with the conception of virtue advocated here. Finally, enhancing one’s capacity for creative problem solving seems that it would yield multiple benefits including finding creative solutions to difficult ethical problems *and* developing capacities for other goods such as empathy and the ability to look at problems from multiple perspectives. On balance, I suggest that developing creativity skills in a way that is overtly linked to development in virtue could better serve the aim of developing moral leaders who are exceptionally creative as well as provide leaders with tools for better ethical decision making. I will not pursue each of these connections. Instead I will focus on the ideas that (1) both creativity and virtue

are intelligent skills, where aspiration is an essential feature of developing such a skill, and (2) exercising these skills well requires practical wisdom. Snow characterizes practical wisdom as the ability to “discern the morally salient features of situations” and to respond appropriately (Snow, 2009, p. 83). This will feature prominently in the application of both virtue and creativity.

The claim that creativity is a skill does not imply that everyone could learn it equally well (Gaut, 2009, p. 96). As with any intelligent skill, there are a variety of factors, ranging from natural abilities to having the best teachers, that could influence how well one might learn it. It is, however, generally learnable *and* teachable. The same is true of virtue. To the extent that virtue and character share similar features as intelligent skills, they could be developed in similar ways. Amabile (1996) argues that intrinsic motivation is invaluable for creativity. Amabile’s work demonstrates the importance of intrinsic motivation for creativity. Those who are (primarily though not necessarily exclusively) intrinsically motivated in the pursuit of a creative endeavor are more likely to produce creative results (Amabile, 1996). This is very much related to Annas’ emphasis on aspiration, which I take to be tied up with one’s coming to value the virtues for their intrinsic, rather than instrumental, worth. If Amabile is right, then aspiration (on account of recognizing the intrinsic worth of creativity) should be a prominent feature in the development of individual creativity. The extent to which it is true that persons do not aspire to be more creative or more virtuous, one should expect efforts at both creativity and character education to be largely ineffective. Furthermore, it is difficult to see how one might develop practical wisdom apart from aspiration. Practical wisdom is not the sort of thing that one acquires accidentally. Limiting oneself to the imitation of teachers will not produce practical wisdom and will block one from going beyond one’s teachers. Creativity and virtue must work together in the development of practical wisdom.

Swanton suggests that creativity is integral to practical wisdom. I want to argue that exercising creativity well requires practical wisdom the same way that exercising loyalty, for example, does. Swanton wonders whether creativity itself is an intrinsic good. It seems to me that it is not. Terrorists around the globe have exemplified tremendously lethal levels of creativity in recent years. How might we account for this? Though Swanton does not answer this specific example, her solution to the broader problem is to distinguish creativity from “virtuous creativity” (Swanton, 2003, p. 171). The clever person is creative. In the spirit of Swanton’s language, one might say that the clever person possesses “vicious creativity.” The difference between the two turns on the presence or absence of virtue. Creativity bounded by virtue yields *wise* creativity, which is creativity that is “also responsible, temperate, cooperative, and so forth” (Swanton, 2003, p. 171). Put this way, it seems that creativity shares this tension and potential for misapplication with other virtues such as loyalty, courage, and the like. Some of the greatest evil of the twentieth century was perpetrated by militaries with fiercely *loyal* soldiers. Similarly, it seems reasonable to attribute courage to at least some persons who would blow themselves up in service to their cause. We might argue that loyalty and courage aimed at evil ends are sufficiently lacking and ought not count as virtue. I think this

is right, but this may be merely to distinguish loyalty from virtuous loyalty the way Swanton distinguishes creativity from virtuous creativity. Either way, this should serve as a reminder that the action itself is not all that counts when accounting for virtues. Aims matter a great deal. Creativity in service to bad aims is creativity gone wrong. Loyalty in service to evil ends is loyalty gone wrong. Both bear a real similarity to their virtuous counterparts, but neither ought to count as virtuous on account of their respective aims.

In the context of our individual and organizational pursuits of virtue, we *must* emphasize that doing the right action is not all that matters. It probably is not even what matters most. We must aim for *virtuous* creativity, *virtuous* courage, and *virtuous* loyalty, and this depends upon practical wisdom. I do not mean to suggest we muddle our ordinary usage of virtue-terms by adding the qualifier *virtuous* when we mean the virtuous actions performed in service to good aims. Yet, we should be clear that not just any instance of loyalty or courage ought to count as virtuous. Of note, the ability to deliberate about practical matters is not equal to practical wisdom and is not necessarily a moral skill. As mentioned previously, one might possess what Aristotle calls “cleverness—the ability to reason well, though not virtuously” (Snow, 2009, p. 83). This is precisely why I argue that developing a capacity for creative problem solving *in the context of character development* is a worthy aim.

Exercising virtues in situations that are not familiar is a form of creative problem solving, though it probably more closely resembles an activity like improvisational jazz. Improvisational jazz involves a kind of creative problem solving, but when done by professional jazz musicians, it happens in a way that is transparent to the untrained observer. By definition, no two improvisational jazz performances are identical. But this should not be taken to imply that there are no rules or that there is no way to be *wrong*. Quite the opposite. A jazz ensemble who performs the same tune over and over is working off a standard melody, called “the head,” which is often captured in a single piece of sheet music. It might take 35–40 s to play through the melody once, but performances of a single piece could last five times that long. Most of what gets played is *not* written down anywhere. There are hundreds of decisions being made throughout the performance. Leadership within the ensemble changes hand almost effortlessly and in an unscheduled way as one musician hands off the lead to another. The reason the members of the ensemble are able to do this is precisely because they have practiced for thousands of hours, mastering the skills appropriate for the field. Though it might not work with the same speed, and it might not appear as effortless, it seems to me that developing the ability to exercise the virtues in new situations is not terribly different from the way a great jazz musician develops the ability to play something new every performance for an entire career. Improvisational jazz seems to be in line with the skill-like nature of virtue for which I have been arguing.

Creative problem solving, done well and in service to morally feature rich problems, is simply the slow exercise of practical wisdom. Reacting virtuously in real time in various situations is analogous to the way jazz musicians just seem to know what to play when improvising during a performance. One way to conceive of expert creative



problem solving is as a slowed-down version of improvisation. Creative problem solving is practical wisdom in slow motion. Beyond that, this creativity is inherently risky when applied within the domain of creative problem-solving. For Gaut, the exercise of creativity demonstrates a certain kind of morally significant freedom insofar as the creative person is able to rise above her circumstances and look for a better way (Gaut, 2009). This fits nicely with Annas's concern that imitation may only lead to imitators in right action, rather than virtuous persons who develop practical wisdom such that they might criticize their teachers where appropriate.

Creativity for Gaut and virtue for Annas, when practiced well, give us the ability to reflect critically on our situations and to determine whether there is a better way. In doing this critical reflection, particularly in the context of an institution, one will almost certainly be required in due course to resist institutional norms in ways that are uncomfortable or unpopular and might even work counter to one's advancement in the organization. This is risky, and taking prudent risks of this sort requires courage. Gaut argues that creativity involves just this kind of risk on account of it necessarily involving a kind of non-routinized activity and, therefore, lacks the kind of reliability that routines provide. Because of this, Gaut claims that creative acts are "inherently risky" (Gaut, 2009, p. 102). To return to the jazz metaphor, this picks out the difference between the uncreative musician who simply plays the notes on the page, exactly as written, and the improvisational master who takes the notes on the page as the baseline and develops it into something much more.

I have looked at creativity alongside virtue and argued that (1) both creativity and virtue are intelligent skills and (2) exercising these skills well requires practical wisdom. The larger aim is to articulate the relevance of the points to growing leaders within organizations. Having noted that the social context is a very important consideration for both moral education and creativity, I will now look at some challenges to virtue ethics creativity with the social context in mind.

### **9.3 The Importance of Aspiration and Intrinsic Motivation for Both Virtue and Creativity**

Aspiration is something that one cannot have thoughtlessly, involuntarily, or even casually. Aspiration is where the general recognition of a need to learn is translated into specific aims. Any serious athlete is likely to have specific aspirations appropriate to his or her sport (e.g., run the race 10 s faster, jump 2 in. higher, and the like). Identification of the goal is very important, but without aspiration, progress is unlikely. Similarly, if leaders consider courage to be a virtue worth developing, but they lack the aspiration to pursue it, substantial growth in courage is unlikely. This implies that even for an organization where there is a deliberate and programmatic effort to develop the character of its members, if individuals do not aspire to virtue, in a specific and intrinsically motivated way, then even the most thoughtful programmatic efforts (to the extent to which they operate independently of aspiration) will be largely ineffective.

While critical, as a cognitive process it is difficult to say what aspiration to virtue, in a meaningfully specific way, would look like for each individual. Consider these two aspirations: the first is for a college sprinter, and the second is for a college student who is a developing leader.

1. I aspire to run the 400 m in 45 s, 2 s faster than my personal best, by the end of the season.
2. I aspire to be 50% more virtuous by the end of the calendar year.

The former is exactly what one would expect from any serious athlete. Simply substitute the appropriate goal to the particular sport. In contrast, the latter sounds hopelessly vague. What, then, would aspiration to virtue generally, or even a particular virtue, look like? If it is really a critical component, we ought to be able to say something more specific than that we aspire to a particular virtue. Even if we consider a single virtue, like courage for example, how would we specify such an aspiration? Most citizens of First World nations do not have regular opportunities to exercise physical courage in their everyday lives. I suppose one might arrange such opportunities, such as skydiving for the first time for one who has a fear of heights. The topic of developing courage in growing leaders is addressed in detail elsewhere in this publication. However, even if we further limit courage to something like “moral courage,” we still face the same problem. Perhaps it is more likely that one would have the opportunity to exercise moral courage in the course of one’s daily life. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that these opportunities would look the same for any given set of people. It seems difficult, at best, to formulate aspirations to particular virtues in actionable ways. This does not undermine the value or the necessity of aspiration. It merely reminds us that becoming virtuous will be more difficult, despite similarities, than becoming physically stronger or faster. Even the best aspirations would not guarantee success.

This is not a cause for despair but rather a call to vigilance with respect to developing leaders. An underdefined aspiration will be better than no aspiration at all. Annas worries that without the aspirational component of virtue development, one might learn virtue to some degree merely through a mindless process of imitation. So, for example, children raised in an exceptionally moral household might develop various virtues through simple imitation of their parents. This is good and necessary when children are young, but an adult who never advances beyond imitation would not be an adult in possession of virtue. Rather, at best this person would simply be an adult with a childlike possession of the virtues. Without the aspiration to virtue, development does not continue beyond mimicry and therefore does not produce virtue. Adults with this sort of virtue might often “do the right thing,” but they will not develop as autonomous agents with the maturity and courage to criticize their teachers (Annas, 2011, p. 22). With respect to practical wisdom, they will either fail or get lucky when faced with new and difficult situations.

It should be clear, then, that aspiration is essential for education in virtue. Without it, one cannot grow beyond the level of imitator. Imitators are not unskilled, but they cannot be experts either. Any moral education program that fails to address *that* will have a limited effect at best. In Annas’s view, aspiration has three basic components:

understanding, ownership, and improvement (Annas, 2011). The learner must understand what is to be imitated in the teacher. The learner must also be able to perform the skill himself or herself. This is what I am calling ownership. Finally, the learner must not merely imitate the teacher up to the level of matching performance. Rather, the learner aims to improve to a level of skill that exceeds that of his or her teacher (Annas, 2011, pp. 17–18). The third component is where the action is, so to speak. The first two components are necessary but not sufficient for either virtue or creativity. It is the practical wisdom that allows one to see a *better* way (or, in complex situations, a *good* way at all) that distinguishes the artist from the technically skilled imitator. To say the master is an artist is not to oppose the emphasis on skill. Recall the focus on the empiricist view of skill which allows for expert performance without a requirement that the expert provide deep theoretical explanations of decisions. The artist makes a certain stroke because it is better than another. The poet chooses a particular word because it makes for a better poem. So to the leader with practical wisdom makes a judgment, not because it is precisely the judgment the teacher would have made, because it is best, on balance, at that moment given the totality of circumstances. The master-as-skilled-artist model assumes expert skill, but the exercise of those skills is performed in such a way as to transcend mere imitation of the teacher.

Annas presumes that learning virtue *necessarily* happens in a social context with all of its related trappings and influence. She worries, however, whether the nature of virtue education, with its heavy emphasis on imitation, will produce the kind of persons who are willing and able to criticize the very context (including the institutions, teachers, and leaders) in which they learned. This concern emphasizes that learning virtue is an inescapably social affair. It further serves as a warning to be on guard that our moral education does not produce *mere* conformists. To be sure, no one possesses perfect virtue or any of the virtues perfectly.

An important caveat to consider in this presentation is the frailty of virtue (Adams, 2006). Virtue is subject to degradation by a variety of factors. Yet, Adams claims that even “frail and fragmentary” virtues still count as virtues (Adams, 2006, p. 12). Here it is not necessary to say how frail or how fragmentary one’s character may be and still count as virtue. More importantly, the emphasis is on the relevance of the idea of virtue-as-skill and the frail nature of character, especially in a social context. For the development of any given skill (including those that define a leader), there will be a range of performance from beginner to expert. Yet even when one obtains the level of expert, that achievement is no guarantee of future expert performances. If character really is far more fragile than we are apt to admit, this ought to push us in the following three ways. One, we ought to be more nuanced when accounting for misconduct, rather than assuming that a singular instance of bad behavior is the “proof” that a person lacks character. Two, it ought to make us far more vigilant in the continuous development and maintenance of our own character—understanding that any number of factors could conspire in such a way as to result in our own moral failing. Three, we ought to be very careful when elevating moral exemplars to a place that is impossible for any flawed human to attain.

Hagiographic accounts of past leaders in various contexts often overlook serious moral failings and imply an impossibly high standard for moral leadership. A more balanced assessment of past leaders, acknowledging the good and the bad, would go a long way toward tempering both our tendency to ascribe too much praise to some and too much condemnation to others. None of us has “arrived,” morally speaking. Our character development is not a discrete event that takes place over a set period of time; rather, it is a persistent activity of the moral life. That is to say, we should be developing our moral muscles through training similar to the way an athlete trains for game day but with no expectation that there will be a *final* performance. In a very real sense, every day is game day. More pointedly, future leaders perhaps start as young followers (see Chap. 7) of a moral agent and are constantly practicing their virtue-as-skill. This also means that occasionally there will be failures, which one hopes fall within a socially acceptable range in that specific environment.

## 9.4 Challenges to Virtue and Creativity

Empirical research from social psychology during the past several decades has given rise to an ethical view called situationism (e.g., see Ross and Nesbitt, 1991; Doris, 2002). Among philosophers, the most prominent situationist voice for more than a decade has been John Doris (2002). The situationist critique is worth consideration even if only to remind those concerned with character that our behavior really is sensitive to situational factors. Taking seriously the role that situations play in ethical decision making fits nicely with the social psychological approach to creativity (Amabile, 1996) discussed previously, and it is here we find one of the key theoretical links between ethics and creativity. Before turning to creativity, I will briefly consider the challenge situationism poses to character-based ethics.

The conception of character that Doris opposes is one that considers good character to be “*steady, dependable, steadfast, unwavering, unflinching*” in contrast to character that is “*weak, fickle, disloyal, faithless, irresolute*” (Doris, 2002, p. 1). The conventional way of speaking about character implies that “the person of good character will do well, even under substantial pressure to moral failure, while the person of bad character is someone on whom it would be foolish to rely” (Doris, 2002, p. 1). For any given moral decision, under the conventional view, character is the primary determinant. Drawing on research in experimental social psychology, Doris denies this. In fact, the reality, he claims, is quite the opposite. He thinks our behavior is quite sensitive to a variety of external factors (Doris, 2002). While drawing on the available empirical data allows us to craft a more accurate psychological picture of persons, it seems hasty to conclude that there is no such thing as character. Several contemporary scholars have defended virtue ethics against these sorts of claims (see Annas, Arpaly, Doris, Solomon, 2005).

One reason for advocates of virtue ethics *not* to be too alarmed by the empirical evidence is that it is almost solely focused on behavior. There is *no* serious view of virtue ethics that reduces to behavior. Behavior is, of course, a substantive concern.

But so are reasons, emotions, and motivations. Adams notes, “Claims about virtue [...] are [...] about the ethical significance of *what lies behind our actions*” (2006, p. 9). Even if one is highly sympathetic to the empirical research, it hardly lays waste to a substantive virtue ethic. This point should not be overlooked. Again, no substantial view of character is concerned *merely* with right action. To the extent that an organization or institution aims merely to get its members to behave in certain ways, they are not doing character development but something else. Where character development efforts are focused *merely* on individual internal traits, such efforts will be limited by a failure to attend to the impact that external (i.e., situational) factors have on ethical behavior. Where one favors a strong view of character, taking into account findings from the empirical research will, I argue, provide one with a more psychologically realistic view overall. Rather than taking the empirical findings as telling against virtue ethics, I suggest that they actually provide support when considered in context.

So one need not abandon a virtue ethical approach in order to acknowledge that social context matters (Adams, 2006, p. 160). Even Annas, who strongly resists situationism, does not take the empirical research to be substantially at odds with virtue ethics. She clarifies, “[...] Virtue ethics has never, over two thousand years, told us to develop characters that will determine our behavior in ways that ignore or are insensitive to the situations in which we deliberate and decide” (Annas, 2005, p. 638). In one place, Doris urges that beyond obligations with regard to specific actions, we may have a “[...] ‘cognitive duty’ to attend, in our deliberations, to the determinative features of situations” (Doris, 2002, p. 148). He makes this comment in the context of telling a story of possible sexual infidelity between coworkers:

Imagine that a colleague with whom you have had a long flirtation invites you for dinner, offering enticement of interesting food and elegant wine, with the excuse that you are temporarily orphaned while your spouse is out of town (Doris, 2002, p. 147).

For our purposes, assume that the invitee aspires to fidelity. Those not attentive to situational factors may think there is no reason for alarm. If one is convinced of the strength of one’s character, this would provide a reason to think that one is prepared to do the right thing under any circumstances. If character is a guarantee of good behavior, the person of character can enter this situation with confidence. On the other hand, if one acknowledges that situations do, in fact, influence outcomes, then one would avoid this sort of liaison on account of not being able, confidently, to predict one’s “behavior in a problematic situation” (Doris, 2002, p. 147). This lack of confidence is not due to a lack of character. Quite the opposite, it is a result of the exercise of practical reason which reminds you that despite a strong commitment to fidelity, it is reasonable to doubt one’s “[...] ability to act in conformity with this value once the candles are lit and the wine begins to flow” (p. 147). This is straightforwardly wise and does not tell against virtue. Along these lines, Annas argues that it just is the person who foresees the danger and avoids it who is the example of virtue here. The virtuous person is “intelligent in practical matters, flexible and innovative when required” (Annas, 2005, p. 638). Regarding any cognitive duty we might have to attend to the features of the (determinative) situation, Annas

says, “[...] the virtue ethicist can cheer all the way; this is what the virtue ethics tradition has always emphasized” (2005, p. 638).

While both the empirical research and the situationist position are interesting, I do not take them to tell against the *existence* of character *simpliciter* or even, more precisely in the case of Doris, the existence of “global traits” of character. The situationist view does remind us that we ought to be sensitive to situational factors, but, as Annas points out, this is not a novel addition to virtue ethics. Nevertheless, advocates of virtue ethics would do well to give serious attention to the empirical literature. This exhortation fits nicely with the idea of virtue as skill. Serious athletes are extremely cognizant of their environments. They work very hard to arrange their environments in such a way as to facilitate the highest quality training and, subsequently, the best performances. Thinking about character training in this way could yield fruitful results. Before exploring those, it is important to turn attention to another skill that has promise for character development—namely, creativity.

I have argued for creativity as a skill and noted that Amabile’s (1996) social psychological approach to creativity accounts for the influence of situational factors on one’s creativity. But Amabile does not think that *only* situational factors influence creativity. Specifically, Amabile states that intrinsic motivation plays a substantial role. Her analysis of creativity shares similar features to virtue as discussed here. When it comes to good and bad behavior, the possession of virtues matters *as well as* a variety of situational (external) factors. But there is more to the story when it comes to external factors, creativity, and ethical decision making.

Some scholars have suggested recently that there is a “dark side” to creativity (Gino and Ariely, 2012). If a creative person might employ creativity to good ends to a greater degree than a non-creative person, then a creative person might equally employ creativity to bad ends to a greater degree than the non-creative person. Gino and Ariely (2012) specifically focus on dishonesty and creativity. In their own summary of the research, they suggest that creative people are more likely to be dishonest (Gino and Ariely, 2012). This is concerning. Organizations which focus on developing leaders usually mean to develop *ethical* leaders. More and more, organizations are placing a premium on creative leaders as well (often in the form of creative problem solving). It is often implicit that such organizations want leaders who are creative *and* ethical. If Gino and Ariely are right, developing leaders who are both creative and ethical will be more challenging than it might seem.

Relative to virtue and creativity as skills, effort is also an important consideration. Miller (2014) examines the empirical literature on cheating, and his research provides evidence of a potential moderating role of effort. His survey focuses on cheating in general rather than cheating in relation to creativity, but the literature suggests that cheating is widespread in a variety of contexts. He notes that even though incidents of cheating are less frequent than lying on account of the relative effort required to cheat, “[...] most human beings today are in fact disposed to regularly cheat when the relevant opportunities arise” (Miller, 2014, p. 61). Following Gino and Ariely’s conclusion, one could expect that more creative leaders are more likely to behave unethically (at least with respect to dishonesty), and thus cheat more as discussed by Miller (2014). However, it is noteworthy that one reason cited

for the relative infrequency of cheating is that it requires “[...] more planning, effort, and time [...]” In other words, Miller suggests that people cheat less, not because they are more virtuous with respect to cheating, but because cheating is relatively more difficult to carry out than lying. This suggests that the ease or difficulty of a behavior will influence whether or not people engage in such behavior. In an organization where dishonesty is relatively easy, one should expect to get more dishonesty. Where dishonesty is difficult (i.e., it takes more work), one should expect to see fewer instances. The situation often contributes significantly to the difficulty or ease with which one might exercise virtue or creativity. That said, Gino and Ariely’s findings, while attentive to situational factors, seem to focus more on the fact that one is creative as an indicator of the likelihood that one will be dishonest in a given situation.

It seems somewhat intuitive that one who has a vivid imagination and is able to see problems from many different angles might also be adept at coming up with ingenious justifications for dishonesty. It also makes sense that when given the choice between “easy” and “hard” unethical behavior, one will likely go with that which is easier. Yet, it would be a false choice to suggest that organizations might have ethical leaders *or* creative leaders but cannot have both. On the contrary, empirical evidence for a negative correlation between creativity and dishonesty notwithstanding, I will argue that we might employ creativity in service to *better* ethical decision making. There is some empirical evidence for this as well (Bierly, Kolodinsky, & Charette, 2009).

Organizations from a variety of sectors recognize the need for leaders to be comfortable with ambiguity, take responsible but genuine risks, and creatively solve problems within substantial constraints. This requires, in conventional language, a person of *strong character*. Organizations which want creative and ethical leaders should not assume that honesty and creativity will go together easily. They should consider that creativity (and loyalty, for example) can be exercised in service to bad ends. Attention both to character development *and* situational factors will be more effective than over-reliance on either alone. More specifically, to the extent that it is possible to design environments (i.e., including one’s workplace policies, organizational structure), efforts to do so in such a way as to make the desired behaviors easier and the undesirable behaviors more difficult have promise. In other words, organizations ought to try to make the right thing easier to do and the wrong thing more difficult. I will now give attention to what this might mean for leader development.

## 9.5 Developing Creative and Ethical Leaders

I have argued for an understanding of both virtue and creativity as skills. The presumption has been that organizations aim to develop leaders who are creative but who are first and foremost virtuous—one might call them creative leaders of character. To develop one’s character is to cultivate the virtues. Under the

virtue-as-skills view, one does this in a manner similar to the way one develops other intelligent skills, namely, through aspiration and practice guided by practical wisdom. That said, character is fragile (Adams, 2006). Insofar as character and creativity share the feature of being a skill subject to situational factors, it seems reasonable to think that creativity is fragile as well. Just as character is no *guarantee* that one will always do what is right, creativity is no guarantee that one will be maximally creative at all times. Each is subject to a variety of external factors. This has implications for how one might develop leaders to be both deeply ethical and creative.

The character development efforts with which I am familiar are almost solely focused on the individual and, more specifically, individual behavior. These efforts focus almost entirely on individual behavior and do not sufficiently address, for example, motivation or the role of emotion (i.e., feeling a certain way about an action) in ethical decision making. They do not sufficiently address how leaders during the growth process self-reflectively understand their own moral education. Leaders are, like ordinary adult persons, responsible for their moral education. If they do not take ownership of their own moral development, it is unlikely they will grow in character. Without the aspiration to virtue and the intrinsic motivation discussed earlier, progress is not likely. I take the Arendt quote in the opening of this essay to point to one important role of aspiration—namely, that in aspiring to become virtuous, people are “mak[ing] up their minds” to be good. Consider this in the context of moral education.

Assume, for the moment, that typical character education efforts are one directional and cerebral. That is to say, they aim to convey information, make arguments, and otherwise convince recipients to “do the right thing” for a variety of instrumental reasons, not the least of which is the avoidance of punishment. To the extent this is correct, we may safely assume that the recipients of such efforts did not opt in specifically for moral education. In other words, they are either young enough that their participation is non-voluntary or they have opted in to something else (e.g., a university, a military, or a commercial organization) that includes moral education. In either case, participants may find themselves the recipients of moral education aims which they tacitly accept, but to which they do not necessarily aspire. Where this is the case, efforts at character development will be less effective than they might otherwise. Recipients of such efforts are required to participate in classes, receive information, and avoid doing “the wrong thing.” However, they are not required, in any meaningful sense, to pursue their own character development in the way they are required to pursue other ends (e.g., excellence in technical skills relevant to their specific role). Furthermore, in order to be successful on the moral front, participants typically need only to *refrain from certain behaviors*. No one is *required* to be virtuous. Rather, they are merely required to refrain from being vicious (i.e., refrain from lying, cheating, stealing, and so forth). Any number of reasons, other than one’s intrinsic motivation to cultivate the virtues, might account for one’s commitment to *not* lying, cheating, and stealing.

Additionally, character in various organizations, at least with respect to some virtues, is narrowly conceived of in domain-specific categories. For example, cour-



age in the military is typically conceived of in terms of physical, battlefield courage with very little emphasis on non-physical manifestations of courage (see a further discussion of courage in Chap. 5). Courage, at least in this context, is a domain-specific virtue. One might be courageous on the battlefield and cowardly in a professional setting where one is required to speak the uncomfortable truth to a superior. This should not be surprising when thinking about the way skills work. Consider a runner who is quite fast when running a foot race on flat pavement. Should that runner attempt to run a race of the same distance on a course filled with obstacles, hills, mud, and frigid water, he or she will not be as fast on account of the change in environment. We might think he or she has the trait “runs fast on flat ground” but not the trait “runs fast on uneven terrain with obstacles.” But this is easily corrected by recognizing the difference in domains and working to develop the skill of being fast in off-road races. There is no reason such a runner could not develop the trait “runs fast off road.” But we do not typically think about virtues in this way. We tend, rather, to attribute something singular and global when we say someone is courageous. This is overly simplistic and misleading, and, I think, can be helped by pressing the virtue-as-skill analogy.

Becoming virtuous is not merely about doing right action, and so character education ought to aim at developing the whole person. Picking up on the skill analogy, it is clear that becoming virtuous requires practice, often articulated in terms of habituation. By habituation here, I mean to refer to the intelligent and deliberate practice of an activity such that it becomes reflexive, the way an Olympic swimmer might execute a kick turn. This idea is not new and goes back at least to Aristotle. For Aristotle, practice is not merely an activity that helps us get better at doing right. Of practice, Burnyeat points out that it “has cognitive powers, in that it is the way we learn what is noble or just” (1980, p. 73). It is, if you will, a mode of learning, an activity that facilitates knowledge. And though individual behavior is what we can see and judge, it is not the only thing important in moral education. It is also not the *only* aim of habit formation. Philosopher Rachana Kamtekar explains that learning virtue involves, among other things, developing the appropriate emotional state associated with virtue (2004, p.481). That is, one must learn “to take the appropriate pleasure” in doing the virtuous thing (2004, p. 481). Of note here is the way Kamtekar ties practice to feeling. We see here more clearly the interconnectedness of habituation (practice), understanding (knowing *that*), activities (doing), and emotional states (feeling).

So while it is good to be concerned with right action, it is certainly not sufficient for moral development to be concerned *only* with right action or even to know what the right action would be in any given situation. One needs to feel the right way about the action *and* to see the intrinsic worth of the relevant virtue. If becoming virtuous requires more than merely to do the virtuous thing, then a system that only rewards the avoidance of wrong action will not be developing virtue in individuals so much as training individuals to avoid vice. Let us look more closely at the system or environment itself with respect to growth in virtue.

No organization is purely good or evil, and those who wish to do honest and substantive moral education would do well to try to see themselves as clearly as

possible in this regard. I suspect that pretending one's organization or institution (especially those with noble aims) is without sin breeds distrust as it belies an unrealistic grasp of the institutions' character. Clearly, we seek to correct some evils, but we cannot avoid the complicity that comes with simply being a committed member of the institution itself (Adams, 2006).

The situationist view of ethics articulated earlier is relevant here. It is worth seriously considering what role that situational factors might play in any given scenario. Consistent with the focus of this volume, I will focus on those who spend most of their professional life inside an organization. There are numerous items that might count as environmental factors, but what I have in mind here is the set of policies, administrative systems, cultural norms, and so forth ordinarily associated with an organization. These environmental factors are largely artificial (i.e., created), sometimes deliberate, and not typically crafted with a view to character development and moral decision making. Insofar as it is true that situations influence ethical decisions, it is both good news and bad news. Where one observes phenomena such as dishonesty in large bureaucracies, I argue that it is an institutional problem and cannot be solved by the efforts of individuals within the institution, except those at the very highest levels of leadership. It is common to think of doing the right thing as something which is difficult, at least insofar as doing the right thing "when it counts," so to speak. That may be true, but if institutions truly want their members to be persons of character, one way—in the spirit of training—is to make the right easier to do wherever possible.

I do not think this works against the aim of developing leaders who act according to virtue in extremis. It directly supports such an aim. The professional athlete does not train with poor equipment, inadequate facilities, a poor diet, and the like in order to learn to perform under nonideal conditions. Quite the contrary, athletes train with every aid at their disposal, habituating the right moves so that when all the support structure is gone, those moves will have become the moves that the agent knows *and feels* to be right. Thinking carefully about the environment in which one operates and designing it to support character development are critical to a thoroughgoing character development program. Yet, this is not meant to downplay at all the ownership the individual must take over his or her own character development.

We should be able to see better here the role of aspiration in developing virtue-as-skill. When considering serious athletes, no one questions whether or not the athlete aspires to be better than he or she is presently. Aspiration is a necessary component for achieving truly great athletic performance. It is at least highly unlikely that one could be, accidentally, a world-class performer. Yet, when discussing character development, the very idea of aspiration seems either to be presumed or judged irrelevant. If virtue is a kind of skill, as argued here, we should expect that it might be developed in a way similar to athletic or musical skill. A person who is brought up in a good environment with exemplary role models will be in a position similar to that of a person who has natural athletic or musical gifts. Each will have skills that resemble those of experts, but they will not themselves be experts apart from aspiration and effort.

With respect to character development efforts, a second point made clear in the athletic context is that athletes are not motivated by punishments and prohibition. Probably no one ever won a gold medal by focusing on a long list of “do not” items. Do not false start. Avoid running off course. Do not run slowly. Instead, athletes are surrounded by positive exhortations. Be fast. Be strong. Be focused. Be rested. Aim at winning. Aim to be the best, and the like. This seems to contrast with the way many organizations approach character development. Many organizations conceive of ethics within their organizations as clear lists of prohibitions—don’t lie, cheat, or steal. Subsequently, the institutions develop a culture where members tend to focus on *not* lying, for example, rather than *being* truthful. If one can avoid lying, which is not identical to being truthful, one can successfully navigate the system, evade punishment, and move up within the organization.

For Gaut, creativity is a skill (2009). Through Amabile, the exercise of creativity is subject to environmental factors (1996). As such, creativity shares many features with the conception of virtue I have set forth. The athletic image is helpful for communicating the development of virtue, but the image has some very clear limits. One significant contrast between sports and virtue is that it is hard to measure progress with respect to virtue. A stopwatch can measure progress in the 100 meter sprint, and run times make it fairly easy to compare one runner to another. There is no such device for virtue. I do not deny that virtue can be meaningfully assessed, only that it is not obvious how one might reliably do so. Creativity is similar to virtue in this regard; it is difficult to measure and even more difficult to compare persons to one another. Though I am not prepared to argue that creativity is itself a virtue, I think developing creativity in the context of developing virtue could help us both grasp more clearly what we are supposed to be doing (e.g., aspiring to X, practicing, and so forth) *and* simultaneously give us better tools for addressing difficult ethical problems (i.e., enhancing our ability to exercise practical wisdom).

There are at least two ways creativity is helpfully related to virtue and leader development. The first has to do with the mutually reinforcing nature of virtue and creativity on account of their similarity as skills that require practical wisdom to exercise in expert ways. The second is that creative problem solving, a subset of creativity, could help us better address difficult ethical problems. I discussed the idea of creativity as skill above. From here, the focus will be on creative-problem solving and creativity skills as they pertain to moral education and leader development.

As previously noted, Swanton claims that creativity is connected to all the virtues (2005, p. 161). This seems exactly right. Practical wisdom just is the mature ability to bring the appropriate virtues to bear in any given context. *That* is something one cannot simply copy by observation. It takes creativity to see how a virtue (or a cluster of virtues) might apply in unfamiliar and complex situations. This seems to align with the claim by Sawyer that “Creativity is part of what makes us human” (2012, p. 4). This suggests that creativity is a uniquely human skill, and virtue seems evermore so. If this is right, then perhaps virtue and creativity might go together in ways not previously considered. One might even argue that creativity itself is a virtue (Kieran, 2014). This seems plausible but would require separate treatment elsewhere.

Though there are many good reasons to develop creativity in persons, the assumption here is that most organizations are primarily interested in creativity in the context of problem solving. The creative problem solver embraces a mindset that, when given a challenge under substantial constraints, tends to believe that there is a way to meet the challenge. That might turn out to be false, but the creative problem solver sees problems as opportunities. As such, hard problems are just greater opportunities. The creative mind does not ask for either a blank slate (i.e., no constraints) or a blank check (i.e., unlimited resources). Rather, the creative mind welcomes certain kinds of constraints. By constraints here, I mean things such as budget, space, materials, and so forth. These sorts of constraints can push creativity. Other kinds of constraints such as negative pressure or impossible timelines would more likely work against creativity. Generally speaking, constraints drive creative solutions. The greater the constraints—up to a point—the greater the level of creativity one must exercise in service to the problem.

Furthermore, many organizations are calling for creative problem solving in all environments, whether those of extreme complexity or mundane, “everyday” problems. Problems which range from “establish security in Eastern Afghanistan” (in a military context) to “simplify the administrative process for employee leave” (in a business context) might be addressed by a similar process. With Weston, I will focus on creative problem solving “not because it is the only or even the most essential thing in ethics, but because *it has a special promise*” (2007, p. 7). For any given problem, creativity expands the set of possible solutions (Weston, 2007). Often this comes about through a process of reframing—considering alternative ways to frame the problem itself. This is especially helpful for problems which seem to only have undesirable solutions, problems where we feel stuck. Problem reframing is one of the more powerful concepts Weston offers as a way to unlock new possible solutions. Rather than solving the problem directly, consider that a good goal is simply to make progress (Weston, 2007, p. 35). The basic idea of reframing is taking the problem as presented, considering whether or not the problem as presented is really the problem, and considering the problem from within a different set of boundaries, a new frame. Weston illustrates the power of reframing with the real-life story of department store owner Emmanuel Evans. “The store had an attached, sit-down cafeteria. Segregation-era laws forbade the seating of black people in such an eating establishment” (2007, p. 36). Not willing to treat any of his customers with prejudice, Evans decided to take the indirect approach and change the situation for his white customers. To address his problem, he simply removed all the tables so there was no seating for anyone. The result? “No law was broken, but a powerful statement was made. His cafeteria became the first desegregated eating place in town” (p. 37).

Despite empirical evidence which suggests the contrary (Gino and Ariely, 2012), creativity and virtue can and should go together in a co-operative way. One problem-solving method that seems well suited here is human-centered design. Human-centered design, or design thinking (see Liedtka, 2013), is one approach to creative problem solving that has several relevant upshots for the purposes of developing leaders who are creative and virtuous. First, as a human-centered approach, empathy is a central feature. For design thinking, empathy is a front-end skill that is

necessary for the conduct of ethnographic research—an early step of the design process. Second, as a method of divergent problem solving, the power of design thinking is, to some extent, a function of the imaginative capacity of those exercising the process. Werhane (1999) writes that imagination, particularly *moral imagination*, “enables us to become aware of the moral demands of particular events and the conceptual schemes or mental models operating in specific contexts.” Beyond that, it “accounts for our ability to reframe our experiences in different terms [...] and [...] helps in developing fresh interpretations of particular scenarios and creating new perspectives” (Werhane, 1999, p. 107). Design thinking is only one of many creative problem-solving methods, and there are dozens of individual techniques one might learn in an effort to enhance one’s own creativity (see Sawyer, 2013). The design process forces one to get more attuned to the situational factors, as well as, and especially, the human factors, that must be considered when addressing ill-structured, human problems. This emphasis on attention to situational factors, and especially the way they influence moral decisions, would greatly enhance character development efforts. Furthermore, developing creativity skills in the context of character development would better achieve the aim of developing creative leaders who self-reflectively view their creativity as limited by ethical concerns. Though additional ethical constraints would undoubtedly make some problems more difficult to solve, mastery of a divergent problem-solving process, such as human-centered design, would give leaders tools with which to make progress on even the most challenging problems. In other words, teaching creativity through design thinking with an overt emphasis on virtue development could produce more virtuous leaders who are also exceptionally creative.

## 9.6 Conclusion

Organizations concerned with developing leaders of character who are also exceptionally creative will benefit from considering virtue and creativity as skills that can be trained. To do this well, individuals must aspire to grow both in virtue and creativity, be intrinsically motivated to do so, and develop a sensitivity to the wide variety of situational factors that influence ethical decision making. They must aim to cultivate practical wisdom as they seek to apply the virtues creatively in complex and ethically ambiguous contexts. Virtue will delimit the ethical boundaries of creative problem solving. Creativity will expand the possible ways the virtues may be exercised with respect to a particular situation. In the context of an organization’s character-focused leader development program, teaching creativity both in parallel to and embedded within character development efforts would yield, on balance, leaders who both make better ethical decisions and are better equipped to make progress on even the most difficult ethical problems.

**Disclaimer** The views expressed here are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy position of the United States Military Academy, the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the US Government.

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# Chapter 10

## Developing a Logic-of-Inquiry-for-Action Through a Developmental Framework for Making Epistemic Cognition Visible

Melinda Z. Kalainoff and Matthew G. Clark

### 10.1 Background to the Current State of Affairs

Today, the United States Military Academy at West Point (USMA or simply “the Academy”) is in the process of redefining the leadership processes that we want in our graduates and future leaders of the United States Army. “Leadership” at West Point is not a predefined entity but rather has been acknowledged as a dynamic process that our graduates can take into a complex, diverse, and challenging world. This goal shifts the paradigm at West Point from the current model of *leadership based in a history of designated line authority* to a model for *building capacity for leading* as a dynamic and developing individual-collective process. This approach attempts to be responsive to the problems being addressed rather than solely a process centered on the actions of only the designated leader. The roots of this change are grounded in the fact that today leaders are often faced with unknown, ill-defined problems where there may not be a predefined technical solution and where the solution to the problem may require multiple perspectives and sources of expertise.

The changing contexts are captured in the following example. Today’s complex and ill-defined situations are generally referred to as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (often written just as VUCA in military contexts). Consequently, they may require temporarily handing over in-the-moment, decision-making, and leadership actions for particular reasons at particular points in time to accomplish the task at hand, while the official leader still maintains responsibility. Requirements for this new way of thinking, an epistemic process, are understood by exploring the

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actions and decisions of, in our case, military leaders, who are conducting their mission in the field. In one such case, which was recalled from the personal experiences of one of the authors of this chapter, a team of two Army analysts, one officer/analyst for designing studies that test equipment capabilities and a non-commissioned officer/analyst for military intelligence, who were deployed to Afghanistan to study new equipment capabilities on the ground as these were used in combat. The officer was “in charge” due to her position (higher rank) with respect to the non-commissioned officer. The officer described her experience of what leading and leadership looked like in this context as follows (Fig. 10.1):

The example above makes visible a set of conditions under which it was necessary to shift leadership roles required to complete the assigned tasks. In an environ-

“Leadership took many forms during our deployment. I was the leader by virtue of rank, responsibility and authority. I served as the point of contact and decision-maker when interacting with higher headquarters. I interpreted the directed missions and developed our team’s data collection strategy across our area of responsibility, deciding which equipment we would assess and where and when. I was also responsible for interpreting our collected data, translating it to operational capabilities for decision-makers and crafting reports that influenced major acquisition purchases. However, I didn’t make the decisions in all situations. We had different task-related expertise. For example, I had a working knowledge of all the MRAP (Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected) vehicles since I had been on the test team for most of the MRAP variants. Therefore, I led the assessment of MRAPs in our assigned region of Afghanistan.

However, when we assessed the effectiveness of specific instrumentation on aircraft for collecting military intelligence, I had to step back from taking the lead in gathering information because I didn’t have the expertise or security clearance to know the details of what to ask. Rather, I provided guidance to the non-commissioned officer, who had the appropriate security clearance and background knowledge. Part of my leadership approach for these types of problems involved when to hand over key decisions in information gathering based on my assessment of both his and my knowledge, each of our interpersonal skills in interviewing others, his discipline-specific knowledge of military intelligence processes, and the type of information we needed to accomplish our mission. Effectively for leader competencies, I had to know how my subordinate would act to process the important information we required for our mission. Then, I had to trust that he was the most capable individual for this task and, subsequently, empower him to take action. In this case, he conducted the interview at the higher security levels based on his discipline-based competence where I couldn’t be present. The differences in what we knew and how it was processed relative to the mission were made visible when we negotiated the wording of the official report where I was responsible for the content but did not have all the information.

Where I was trying to be as detailed as possible to address the operational effectiveness of the intelligence equipment on the aircraft, he was at the same time addressing the requirements in ways that would keep the document “unclassified.” In hindsight, our negotiation of the wording in the document in the context of differential military rank, expertise, and knowledge was quite remarkable. At this moment, decision-making was not in accordance with line authority. Rather it was the collective construction of particular elements that I could not have done without him leading the interviews at that moment. We made a great team.”

**Fig. 10.1** Field example of leading as a dynamic process



ment where contexts change and are often unknown, building these types of repertoires for action as dynamic rather than following a fixed set of rules is foundational to building capacity for leading. The challenge at the Academy in shifting to this new paradigm is to provide opportunities for building these “repertoires of action” not only for content, but also for collaborative problem solving in ill-defined contexts that may require multiple sources of information in the moment in order to make informed decisions for actions necessary to complete a mission or to resolve a problem situation (e.g., technical, human, and/or physical).

In order to meet this challenge, we need a common framework for building capacity (repertoires) for leading. The shift in this epistemic paradigm for leadership, while designed to develop the capacity of both known leaders and developing leaders, is itself a developing process for decision making and action in emerging contexts. The challenge is how not only to shift the paradigm but also to develop a grounded approach to developing this new paradigm for rethinking what constitutes leadership in emerging contexts. As the proposed framework in this chapter demonstrates, such a shift in paradigms involves an approach that is responsive to the dynamic nature of leading both in the field and in the instructional contexts of West Point’s curriculum. Likewise, we believe that the approach for building this framework will have utility in other structured learning and training environments, including colleges, universities, trade schools, and the like. Specifically, this framework also provides a dynamic and transformative approach that may inform ongoing calls for re-envisioning and reframing doctoral education (Cumming, 2010).

## ***10.1.1 A Brief Review of Literature***

### **10.1.1.1 Perspectives on Leadership**

Fundamental to the proposed framework presented in this chapter is a recognition that current theories and methodologies of leading, leadership, as well as developing ways of leading are diverse (see the introductory chapter and Table 10.1 of this chapter). As shown in Table 10.1 and discussed in Chap. 1, there is not one theory nor a hybrid of several theories that will fully explain all possible leader and leadership actions, and processes for building capacity (particularly the cognitive complexity) for leading in ill-defined situations and contexts. This diversity and gap, therefore, pose challenges for developing a comprehensive understanding from the ground up of what “leading” looks like, given that many prior leadership models take a reductionist approach by addressing “self” exclusively by defining in an a priori manner what constitutes leadership by individuals, even if considered in the context of leader-follower dyads as in the leader member exchange theory. Such models generally ignore the complex individual-collective relationships and transformations that are necessary for on-the-ground leadership in ill-defined or emerging contexts.

**Table 10.1** Select leadership theories

Leadership theory or approach	Relevant references	Key concepts
Trait and “Great Man” Theory	Stogdill (1948), Mann (1959), Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991), Lord, Devader, and Alliger (1986), Zaccaro, Kemp, and Bader (2004) and Zaccaro (2007)	Almost entirely focused on the leader, these theories emphasize the natural or innate traits that people possess and the presence of traits in leaders versus non-leaders. These traits have included personality, intelligence, masculinity, drive and motivation, emotional intelligence, and sociability, to name a few. Essentially the main idea is that groups work better if they have the right person or if a person presents the right traits and characteristics, regardless of the social environment. In more modern times, a trait approach is used for developing self-awareness and for reflection and some theorists have proposed that the trait-based perspective be combined with other approaches below as a hybrid
Behavioral Theories or Frameworks (including Leadership Styles)	Lewin (1936), Blake, Mouton, and Bidwell (1962), House (1971), Stogdill (1963), Yukl (1971) and Arnold, Arad, Rhoades, and Drasgow (2000)	Contrasted from the trait theories, behavioral theories are focused on what leaders actually do. These theories also include leader styles that characterize the behavior of leaders. Lewin’s autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles are some of the most prominent, but there are various related styles and behaviors. The behavioral theories also often are represented as falling into one of two separate categories that relate to task or job-specific behaviors versus people or relationship behaviors
Situational Leadership	Hershey and Blanchard (1993)	This approach is focused on the leader’s style and her response in a given situation depends largely on the capabilities of followers. These can be somewhat similar to behavioral theories, but the behavior that is exhibited is dependent on the environment and development of those involved. This approach is different from the behavioral theories because followers’ competence and developmental readiness need to be considered by the leader to help determine her relative supporting or directive behaviors—it is an interactive approach that emphasizes flexibility

<p>Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)</p>	<p>Dansereau, Graen and Haga (1975) and Graen and Uhl-Bein (1995)</p>	<p>LMX is the first leadership theory in this presentation to focus on the process or the interaction between the leader and the follower. Leadership, per se, is effectively the interaction. This relational theory is focused on dyads and the relationships between individuals where each dyad is a unique relationship. More broadly, LMX focuses on the in-group versus the out-group(s), which then influences leadership and the relevant social capital more broadly</p>
<p>Full-Range Leadership Model (including Charismatic and Transformational Leadership)</p>	<p>House (1977), Conger and Kanungo (1987), Burns (1978), Bass (1985) and Bass and Avolio (1994)</p>	<p>Transformational leadership is arguably one of the leading theories in leader studies currently. However, it is only one of the components of the Full-Range Leadership Model. The broader model includes elements of charismatic leadership including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized concern, and intellectual stimulation at the transformational level. At the lower levels, there is laissez faire (non-leadership) through transactional leadership that includes management-by-exception and external feedback through contingent rewards. These elements of leadership focus on a progression from non-responsive, to punishment, and then reinforcement to various degrees as transactional leadership before achieving transformational leadership</p>
<p>Adaptive Leadership</p>	<p>Heifetz (1994)</p>	<p>This theory focuses on the development of leadership through the struggles of work that are difficult to define that also drive change. Differentiating between technical challenges where the problems are clearly defined and solveable, adaptive challenges do not have known solutions and require conflict and change for growth. The theory also focuses on process elements like those that are central to LMX, but the processes are focused instead on what leaders do and whether they have the authority to act. Leaders engage in the process of leading through “productive disequilibrium” that promotes engagement and motivation</p>

### 10.1.1.2 Process as Content: Epistemic Cognition

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the notion of taking up disciplinary processes as content knowledge (Parker & Rubin, 1966), or process as a way of thinking, was prominent in the educational academe. However, shortly thereafter, evidence of learning became largely outcome based. As this framing of learning became entrenched in the US public school systems, over time cultural norms in the United States have grown to favor outcome-based assessment, largely through standardized testing, as evidence of learning “how to solve problems” and learning more generally. Unfortunately, success in standardized testing is commonly achieved through solving “well-structured problems” (i.e., algorithmic problem solving) where all the required information is included in the problem (Jonassen, 2012). However, leading in an increasingly complex and globalized twenty-first-century world requires skills to negotiate “ill-structured” problems where problem elements may not be known with a high degree of certainty (Wood, 1983) and may have multiple solutions, solution paths, or no solution (Kitchner, 1983). In envisioning what will be required of leaders for the future, it should be no surprise that in the last two decades process as content knowledge has experienced a resurgence as the basis of instructional designs (i.e., problem or project-based learning (PBL) (Bridges, Botelho, Green, & Chau, 2012) and process-oriented guided inquiry learning (POGIL) (Eberlein et al. 2008)).

“Process as content” acknowledges that learning how knowledge is constructed and reformulated as an epistemological system is essential to developing lifelong learning processes and is an important skill for leaders. In effect, the developing leader is developing the capabilities for addressing cognitive complexity (see Zaccaro, 2001, 2007, for review). Also known as epistemic cognition, the process of constructing knowledge has been addressed from both the sociocultural (Kelly, 2016) and cognitive (Moshman, 2003) perspectives. Originally recognized by Kitchner (1983), epistemic cognition is beyond an individual’s ability to learn facts and figures and even to be reflective about his or her thoughts (metacognition). Epistemic cognition addresses “knowing how” by also understanding the context and environment in which the knowledge is constructed and who is involved in the construction of knowledge. This approach aligns with theories of cognitive development as evidenced by Kegan’s constructive developmental theory (1982, 2009). In this theory, humans develop through stages where they learn the process of knowledge construction, context, and relationships. They progress from an imperialistic (self-centered) mindset to one that can consider themselves and others in context (socialized mind) to even change their perspective and understanding of the world objectively (self-authoring). Along with the work of Heifetz (1994), this progression occurs through the individual experiencing adaptive challenges rather than just learning the knowledge that can help them respond to technical problems. Still, the challenge for developing epistemic cognition is making the process visible and whether a didactic process can serve to accelerate its development—the framework proposed here attempts to address this challenge.

Epistemic cognition is not only related to cognitive development as it has also been related to leader development by Day, Harrison, and Halpin (2009). They note that epistemic cognition develops well into adulthood and provides leaders with the tools to understand both how they and others acquire knowledge and how the leader can consider the perspectives of followers in various contexts (p. 89–90). More pointedly, epistemic cognition allows leaders to be more flexible rather than only focused on outcomes because they understand the process of *how* followers come to learn and perceive their environment. Enhanced epistemic cognition allows leaders to change and adapt with their environment or changing contexts, and more importantly to understand how their followers are learning to understand, process, and perceive these changes. The work of Heifetz and colleagues (1994; Heifetz & Laurie, 1997) suggests that creating a holding environment that promotes adaptive challenges is productive for building the capacity for cognitive complexity. However, information about how to further develop this complexity through behavior is limited.

### ***10.1.2 The West Point Context***

The current USMA definition of leading and leadership provides an example of this state of affairs. Currently, the USMA conceptualization of leadership and leading is defined through their purpose in meeting the goal of the institution—“developing leaders of character”—a clear and meaningful overarching goal for acculturating new learners into a profession of arms in the United States Army. What this definition does not address and what is currently missing at the Academy is *how* the capacity for leading in unknown contexts (or the more fluid forms of leadership) is developed within a framework that meets the goal of “developing leaders of character.” A similar argument can be made for how students develop capacity for taking up the instructional designs of our academic and military programs as students bring different experiences and expectations from all over the country and internationally. To date, how the instructional processes and practices for building this capacity for leading, as well as learning, is only now being explored and developed.

This state of affairs creates the necessity for a transformation in the current model of leadership, leading, and instructional designs for leading to one that provides ways of building repertoires in and across everyday events of military life at West Point. To accomplish this integration that blurs the boundaries between instructional processes and decision-making practices in the field, we need an epistemic framework that will support actors at all levels of the academy in exploring how, when, under what conditions, for what purposes, and with what outcome designated leaders will engage in a reflexive (i.e., reflecting, reformulating, then acting with an informed mind) process for decision making. None of the fixed leadership models presented in Table 10.1 or the introductory chapter fully address the reflexive process of leading where, in this example, a leader must hand over

(see Edwards & Mercer, 1987, for review) the role of leader at particular moments to meet particular challenges facing the designated leader in accomplishing the assigned task. We adapted this concept of “handing over” authority to the process of leading, given that handing over leadership in a complex problem situation to someone with particular expertise does not relieve the person designated with the role of leader of the unit from the responsibility to the larger system. Therefore, in order to address this military goal of developing leaders of character, we draw on a series of longitudinal studies in education settings based on advances in social science research across diverse theories and methodologies related to capacity building as well as self-to-collective relationships and interactions. These disciplines that frame concepts of human activity (e.g., anthropology, sociology, psychology, sociolinguistics, and others) provide a foundation for examining and designing instruction for leading, leadership, developing capacity for leading, and designing of instruction for leading as processes in and beyond the curriculum.

### ***10.1.3 (Re)Formulating “The Framework” in the Current Context***

Having determined the need for a new paradigm for building capacity for leading, we now turn to addressing this issue grounded in a specific context. Rather than imposing a design, we propose a new way of thinking (an epistemological process or framework), which we call simply “the framework” to explore how to build capacity for leading. However, the framework is not static. Rather this is a dynamic “developmental model-in-the-making” for building capacity for leading to guide how individuals and collectives co-construct individual as well as collective models-in-the-making that both inform and reformulate interpretations and understandings through collective actions. These collective actions are formed by dynamically constructed common understandings of the *meanings* of leading and leadership in a given context.

The given context that serves as a telling case (Mitchell, 1984) in this chapter is a teamwork “curriculum-in-the-making” in general chemistry classes at USMA beginning in 2015 where the teamwork aspect of a new inquiry-based curriculum was leveraged to address institutional goals for teamwork. Underlying this initiative in this chemistry group is identifying the principles and challenges in supporting faculty, military, and non-military, in the processes of capacity building. While we are not claiming that disciplines should transform their curricula in the same way that this program is doing, we are showing how this dynamic framework was used in the context of transforming the curriculum for a particular discipline to make visible the principles of design and implementation (not the precise actions) that can be taken from one context to the next. In other words, teambuilding will likely look different in a history class than in a chemistry class because of the demands of the discipline and the kinds of problems being addressed.

Specifically, this chapter first explores the conceptual foundations and roots of the framework that informs how to look at relationships between individual and collective activity as an orienting theory, and a set of key principles that guide a theory of human activity. Through this orienting theory, the framework is used as an inquiry-based approach to examine the phenomena in a principled and common way. The patterns identified through this process may be explored further through explanatory theories found in the extant literature. This orienting theory serves as a conceptual perspective for using the epistemic framework that guided a developing curricular approach to a key aspect of leader development for building repertoires for leading. In effect, this process serves as a grounded model and pilot study for reflexive exploration in how faculty develop professional understandings of this process and the challenges they may face for developing unknown instructional approaches for unknown contexts.

Relative to other theory and research in the leadership arena, this process facilitates and promotes a method for exploring and addressing adaptive challenges as discussed by Heifetz (1994; Heifetz & Laurie, 1997). Central to this process, we are building a more holistic understanding consisting of integrating three elements of transdisciplinary research (Swiss Academy of Arts and Sciences, n.d.): encyclopedic understanding to integrate different disciplines' bodies of knowledge, problem solving to generate practical leading and leadership solutions that are implemented, and reflection-as-action and for-action to consider the risks of taking up particular leadership solutions (situated actions) and the unintended consequences of this solution. These three elements are *scientific understandings of these practices* generated through research while problem solving also involves *knowledge-of-action in practice* from the experience of different actors (i.e., military specific). Following this telling case, we propose implications for various stakeholders who take up and use these dynamic and developmental processes for building capacity for leading. Finally, we propose next steps for further developing this framework in situated contexts outside of the context in which it was developed.

## 10.2 Overarching Conceptual Perspectives

The conceptual approach or orienting theory consists of theories and methodologies from several disciplines. This section addresses two overarching conceptual perspectives underlying the orienting theory: social constructionism and an ethnographic perspective.

### 10.2.1 Social Constructionism

Social constructionism involves three important elements for our discussion. First, knowledge is socially constructed (Gergen, 2009; Vygotsky, 1978). It is generally accepted that knowledge, whether declarative or procedural, is socially constructed

in that what counts as knowledge does not belong to an individual but is constructed by a social or disciplinary community with individuals in a dialectical relationship within this collective. In the same way, what counts as leading is determined in part by the social situation (context), perceived formal or informal roles and responsibilities, and commonly understood goals and outcomes.

This does not mean that what counts as leading is exactly the same for all persons in a given social situation. Rather, the relationship of self to collective is constantly being negotiated and developed as both are interdependent (Lima, 1995), to include in a leading-following context. From a social constructionist perspective, an actor exercises agency by constantly proposing, challenging, modifying, or maintaining the social norms for what counts as leading.

Second, it follows that learning is a social and relational process (Vygotsky, 1978). In this way, a leader cannot develop practices for leading in isolation. Rather, leading practices, as all practices, develop in nonlinear, iterative, and recursive processes (Green, Skukauskaite, & Baker, 2012) of engaging in their proposed practice, receiving a response from other actors, and then reformulating their practice towards a more mutually acceptable response. In other words, actors serve as context for each other (Erickson & Schultz, 1977) to form intertextual relationships. An intertextual relationship is a social construction and must be proposed, recognized, acknowledged, and have social significance (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993). This includes actively engaging with other people, disciplinary texts, and cultural artifacts. The social world effectively serves as an actor that pushes back or responds in various ways to an individual's proposal to hold, modify, or reject the social or cultural norm.

Third, learning precedes development. Although much more complex than what will be discussed here, we take up Vygotsky's notion that learning and developing are different and initiated by learning processes (Vygotsky, 1978). This difference is inherently present in the way that we use these words in common language. Here, we learn to tie a necktie, to charge a car battery, and to cook spaghetti. In common language, the object of learning is a technical process or skill that is finite and bounded.

With respect to leading, a leader learns through experience about expectations of leaders in specific institutions and contexts, such as leaders eating after their troops in the army. "Learning" is distinctly different than the context in which we use the word "develop." We develop character and how to engage, interact with, and motivate followers over time. In these examples, development encompasses many iterative, recursive, and abductive learning cycles where, over time and through experience, the learned processes and skills take on a comprehensive and integrated meaning. In other words, developing as a leader means developing a system of understandings upon which a leader may take reflexive action for interacting in-the-moment.

Taking up social constructionism to inform an orienting theory in our context of building capacity for leading means that developing these capabilities requires actively engaging in leading processes with others and in many contexts in order to



recognize the particularities of a social group and the consequences of these differences for leading in any one specific context. The next section proposes an anthropologically based epistemological perspective for guiding how to understand unknown social systems and meanings through their actions and interactions.

### 10.2.2 *An Ethnographic Perspective*

In order to bridge “insider” and “outsider” perspectives to negotiate the self-collective relationship for acting in the social world, the generalized interdependent processes that make up the framework are grounded in an ethnographic perspective (Green, Dixon, & Zaharlick, 2003), not a method, but an epistemological approach with particular attention to the role of discourse (or a discursive base). Grounded in social constructionism within an ethnographic perspective, ethnography is defined as the study of cultural practices as entailing a contrastive and a holistic perspective as proposed in Green et al. (2003). Simply, *listening, conversing, recognizing, and sharing* ideas and information around culture and an individual’s self-concept are central to the negotiation and related ability to grow.

*Contrastive Perspective.* Fundamental to the contrastive perspective is understanding the meaning of “situated.” By conceptualizing ethnography as the study of cultural practices (Green et al., 2003) within a socially constructed view (Vygotsky, 1978; Agar, 2006), cultural practices must be studied with respect to the situations and conditions under which they transpire. In other words, cultural practices and their meanings are situated (Heap, 1991). Heap (1991) proposed elements of a situated perspective that have provided a framework to locate where culture may be made visible and to understand constraints in inferring meaning within this perspective. These elements include phenomenological conception of consciousness, adoption of the actors’ point of view (or emic perspective), and language as constraining meaning (Heap, 1991). The phenomenological conception of consciousness contends that actors act intentionally. Because actors act intentionally, outsiders can infer the meaning of an act and, in this process, take the point of view of the actor. In this way, the conceptions of consciousness and the emic perspective are intimately related. Within Heap’s (1991) conception of how language constrains meaning, in a situated perspective, a learner or an outsider must take an emic perspective considering the insider’s view of an event within the framework of their linguistic history (experience) with a specified type of event. For the layman, this may simply look like empathy, which is partially correct. Yet, the contrastive perspective is a process of reflection where the actor must actively take the perspective of other actors in the situation.

If meaning is situated in context, then a way to uncover meaning is by contrasting otherwise similar elements of different contexts and observing the outcomes, in effect asking, “What difference does a difference make?” This principle of a contrastive perspective is based on Hymes’ (1977) concept of contrastive relevance.

Contrastive relevance can be understood in the context of Agar's (2006) claim that culture is relational, "Culture becomes visible only when differences appear with reference to a newcomer, an outsider who comes into contact with it" (p. 5). In this way, contrastive relevance can be used as a methodological strategy for identifying roles and relationships, norms and expectations, and rights and obligations as newcomers to a group negotiate what is acceptable and not acceptable for the cultural group within the situated event under study.

In these situations where a newcomer does not understand what is happening or how this situation came to be, Agar (1995) drew on Mehan's (1979) "frame clash" as demonstrated in the anchoring event of a student's response to a teamwork survey. Frame clashes provide an opportunity for the newcomer or outsider to explore the understandings or interpretation of the insider in what Agar (1995) calls a "rich point" (p. 141). The concept of contrastive relevance also guides in identifying event boundaries where moment-to-moment collective actions to include language-use signal that a different cultural event is taking place. So when comparing otherwise similar groups, differences in action and/or discourse practices (frame clashes) provide opportunities to learn about the cultural features of a group. Therefore, a contrastive perspective is not simply a method or strategy. Rather, it implicates conceptual understandings about how actors learn through and contribute to a cultural group.

*Holistic Perspective.* If, in using a contrastive perspective, we look across actors, actions, times, and events, then we are in effect taking a holistic perspective. In the realm of psychology, this is functionally similar to the concepts promoted by Gestalt psychologists in Germany in the early 1900s and was further considered by Einstein as discussed in field theories as mentioned in the opening chapter. Within a holistic perspective, phenomena must be examined within all the spaces (time, space, text, action) it exists. Taking up a holistic perspective requires consideration of different levels of analysis to approach the phenomena from different angles as well as identifying and showing whole-part relationships between actors, events, times, and spaces (Green et al., 2003).

*Role of Discourse.* Central to an ethnographic perspective is a focus on language where everyday life is socioculturally constructed in and through discourse, what Agar (1995) calls "languaculture." Language theories in the traditions of interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2008) and ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1972) provide the conceptual bases for discursive practice in inferring meaning. These closely related traditions bring theories about how people gain fluency in being able to recognize and participate in various sociocultural systems through language use. Hymes (1972) argues that as people gain communicative competence, they expand their linguistic repertoire (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2008). This means that actors make choices of which language style to use from their available linguistic repertoire, and that these choices signal cultural meanings or reflect the actor's interpretation of the situation. Actors make action (including discursive) choices based on their understanding of the sociocultural system in which they find themselves and the ways in which they are positioned and then choose to position themselves within that system. In these ways, language can

be conceptualized as a sociocultural practice. Interactional sociolinguistics and ethnography of communication recognize that actors bring sociocultural histories as knowledge obtained from prior situations and consider how these influence understandings (meanings) to the event under study, which will, in turn, influence what is, will, and can occur (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2006).

To infer meaning, we also draw on Bahktin's (1986) assertion that *actors speak with an implicated hearer* where the speaker's choice in how to craft their message is dependent on their understandings of the role of the hearer, what the hearer knows, and in what ways the speaker proposes to position the hearer. This concept is similar to those previously discussed with regard to actions; meaning can only be inferred with respect to the conditions under which the act (speech act or utterance) is situated. Therefore, the outsider must analyze the discourse including contextualization cues (Gumperz & Berenz, 1993) for patterns signaling what the interaction is about (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2006).

## **10.3 Conceptual Foundations of the Framework That Inform How to Look at Individual-Collective Activity**

### **10.3.1 Background**

This framework has been developing informally over four decades from an ongoing dialogic process between educators in multiple settings including classrooms, administrative positions, and curriculum designers in different formal and informal educational settings (e.g., K-12, higher education, business among others) and is now being adapted for constructing a developmental framework for building capacity for leading at the United States Military Academy. These conceptual roots are grounded in both the collective knowledge base of an interdisciplinary and international thought community of scholars working with faculty and students most recently in higher education within and across disciplines (e.g., physical sciences, oceanography, medical, dental, law, physical education, musicology, social sciences, studio art, global engineering, humanities [history and literature], language, and linguistics) and innovative learning environments (e.g., a 24/7 architecture studio, an integrated lab/lecture undergraduate science studio classroom, three undergraduate interdisciplinary groups from three countries meeting as a virtual "class" to study design thinking). What this thought community has come to understand are the processes that these actors across many disciplinary contexts must engage in to promote disciplinary identities-in-the-making.

Since the 1990s, these researchers and educators have worked to develop co-expertise through developing a common orienting theory from a history of longitudinal engagement in research partnerships with the actors in their research contexts. This framework (or a version of "the framework") has emerged as a grounded systems approach that makes visible what is required for in-the-moment decision mak-

ing and reflexive actions. Recently, in the context of USMA, this framework has become a resource for reformulating and rethinking not only what to teach, but also how we want to engage the learners in the developmental process (i.e., contrasting opportunities for learning disciplinary language-in-use (Kalainoff, Kowalski, & Fallot, 2016), integrating the process of leading and disciplinary knowledge (Kalainoff, 2017), and framing a developmental process for teaching and learning at an undergraduate institution (United States Military Academy, n.d.-a, in draft)).

This way of thinking has also been used collaboratively in different settings other than higher education (i.e., making visible the recursive nature of a reflexive curricular design over time for a community education program (Chian & Couch, 2017) and tracing the practices of an intern onboarding program for a private business (Bacon, 2017)). Foundational to all these studies is a common understanding of the nature of individual and collective relationships built on common principles. It is these common principles that constitute a proposed orienting theory that is adapted to better articulate our approach and how and in what ways this approach to creating an inquiry base for building capacity (repertoires) for leading is undertaken to make the reflexive process visible. The first principle provides a framing of the type of knowledge we need as context for this particular discussion. The next two principles are theoretical stances. The remaining five interrelated principles have been adopted from an anthropologically driven empirical research base. These eight principles are examined in detail.

### ***10.3.2 Differentiating “Knowing That” and “Knowing How”***

To underscore the strong link between learning process as disciplinary content and building capabilities for negotiating unknown environments and situations, it is important to recognize that there are two types of knowledge: “knowing that” and “knowing how” (Ryles, 1945). “Knowing that” is declarative knowledge that includes facts, steps, formulas, or definitions. Per Heifetz, the process of knowing that is used to address technical problems (Heifetz, 1994; Heifetz & Laurie, 1997). This is task- and memory-based knowledge that can be recalled and reproduced. In an academic discipline, declarative knowledge may more commonly be associated with “the basics.” With respect to leading and following, declarative knowledge may include acts that count as leading behaviors but where the leader may not be fully cognizant of the cultural meaning or social significance of the act within the value system of the organization.

Declarative knowledge alone does not enable a leader to adapt this knowledge to negotiate new or ill-defined contexts. Contrastively, “knowing how” contextualizes declarative knowledge with meaning within an integrated and holistic system of meanings. Moving from “knowing that” to “knowing how” is a process of constructing social and cultural understandings (Roland, 1961) by asking and addressing a litany of questions for any act: How (do we do  $x$ )? When? Where? With whom? For what reason? With what purpose? With what outcome and/or consequence for

subsequent actions or knowledge constructions? Acquiring both types of knowledge is critical to building conceptual understandings that can then serve as resources for interpreting and acting with an informed mind in new contexts. Viewed in this way, there is a dialectical process in which both “knowing that” and “knowing how” forms of knowledge develop together as declarative knowledge takes on cultural meaning as it is used in different contexts and over time. Getting from declarative knowledge to discipline-based practice, therefore, requires exploration over time and sets of experiences in many different contexts.

### ***10.3.3 Defining Culture as a Conceptual System***

The word “culture” has many different meanings from a plethora of disciplinary perspectives. The way we define “culture” is based on arguments beginning in anthropology and later other disciplines (e.g., sociology and applied linguistics) where culture is conceptualized as ways of knowing and doing and made visible in socially patterned actions (Goodenough, 1981; Spradley, 1980). Within this definition, cultural boundaries exist in the social space between “outsiders” and “insiders” to the cultural group. To understand this concept, consider any situation where an outsider is making efforts to learn how to be an insider. Outsiders become insiders by coming to understand accepted roles and relationships, norms and expectations, and rights and obligations of the group members by experiencing how things are done within the group as evidenced by interactions and the outcome of those interactions. In other words, learners are acculturated into the cultural group by learning the meaning of actions and how these meanings work as a comprehensive system that addresses who can do what with whom, under what conditions, when, for what purpose, and with what outcome (Green & Meyer, 1991). In the context of leading and following as necessarily coexisting and co-present, the roles of leader and follower in a social group are socially constructed as different yet interdependent cultures within the larger organizational culture. In this way, it is essential that in developing for leading, an actor must be equally knowledgeable and fluent in the culture of following for a particular group. Thus, in entering a new and unknown context, a leader must come to understand the cultural system by gathering information in order to make informed decisions in this new context.

### ***10.3.4 Stepping Back from Ethnocentrism***

Rooted in the reflexive, social, and linguistic turns in the social sciences, another conceptual argument central to this perspective is *stepping back from the known (or ethnocentrism)* (Heath, 1982). Street (1993) proposes actions that further characterize *stepping back from the known* to develop local and situated understandings through analysis of the observed actions of particular actors in particular contexts.

In *stepping back from the known*, we mean that in interpreting a new context, an actor must refrain from applying a priori interpretations and meanings to what is seen and heard. Street (1993) calls this *suspending known categories*. This can be difficult for inexperienced leaders (and even experienced ones) and can produce a state of disequilibrium. In institutions where solving problems is heralded as critical to success, inexperienced leaders tend to apply their own interpretations of the situation and quickly identify the “problem” so that they may move right along to building solutions. Instead, leaders in new contexts need to use great restraint and patience to afford themselves the opportunity to develop grounded cultural understandings to inform their interpretations and decisions. By suspending known categories, we allow a new system of categories which represents the culture from the *emic* perspective (of the other) to emerge from “the ground.” When encountering cultures much different than our own where we have little in common, suspending known categories may not be an option. The gap in understandings may be so vast that a leader may not have a basis from where to begin the process of interpreting. Effectively, the disequilibrium created by this process is an opportunity for growth. But leaders do not have to engage with a distant and foreign culture to suspend known categories. We must also suspend known categories anytime we need to see the world from another’s point of view and “step in their shoes” whether the “other” is on the other side of the world or on the other side of the street.

In an unknown and complex environment, leaders need to *acknowledge differences between what the leader knows and what the actors in the context know and also the process of how they came to obtain the knowledge* (i.e., epistemic cognition). Thus, leading also means being able to solicit the meanings from the actors who experience the context in the field. In this way, leaders will need to continuously create an information base that is ongoing and developing given that we are building capacity for leading for unknown settings. In the language of cultural anthropology, we say that those who have the cultural knowledge can be positioned as *cultural guides* to provide the needed contextual understandings to help the decision maker make informed decisions.

### ***10.3.5 Learning Cannot Be Observed in the Moment But Is a Phenomenon Over Time***

In the research community of educators and researchers discussed previously, “learning” means that the learner understands the cultural meaning of a concept such that the learner does not simply “use” the concept if given a priori, but recognizes that the context of the problem requires a specific concept amidst all the other possible concepts and then “applies” the concept appropriately. With this conceptualization of “learning,” ethnographic studies trace “learning” by showing temporal changes in patterns of activity (Green & Meyer, 1991). Once a leader learns to

attend to the need for these temporal changes, he or she can learn to recognize the need and the process more rapidly so that it can be put into practice. This is where the role of reflexivity can be clearly recognized.

### ***10.3.6 Layers of Work Are Necessary to Understand the Phenomenon***

The process of coming to understand phenomena depends not only on observation over time, but also on considering the appropriate perspectives in order to explore the phenomenon holistically. For example, in one such study of transforming a curriculum, the researcher needed to first consider the context and include the history of the institution, its mission, and developmental objectives (Kalainoff, 2017). Additionally, there were several other stakeholders, each of whose concerns contributed in some way to the developing instructional design. These individual influences on the instructional design took place over time, space, and events, which also had an impact on the developmental path of the design. In much the same way, leaders need to consider the layers of work that brought a phenomenon into being in order to make informed decisions that are culturally sensitive to the situated nature of a particular environment.

### ***10.3.7 The Iterative, Recursive, and Abductive (Nonlinear) Nature of Designing and Decision-Making Processes***

In negotiating complex contexts where decision making is informed by an ongoing and developing series of questions, the process of authentic problem solving uses an abductive logic that consists of iterative and recursive processes (Agar, 2006; Green et al., 2012). Abductive, iterative, and recursive processes are characteristic of problem solving in everyday life where the problem is ill defined or the path to a solution is unknown. This is in stark contrast to pre-defined linear processes characteristic of algorithmic “problem solving” often found in formal learning environments. In an abductive process (Agar, 2006), the logic of the next step in the process is based on what was just learned in the last step as well as the series of steps preceding it. The iterative nature of this process means continuously moving from question to data and back to the question for reconsideration while at the same time considering insights that might inform the process up to that point. The recursive nature of complex analyses means that information gained from new questions can be used to inform analyses of prior questions. As an example of what this might look like for the more experienced leader, this recursive process results in the ability of the leader to

consider the impact on subordinates, the whole organization, the situation, and themselves. Likewise, this could be considering actions, plans, mission, strategy, and people simultaneously. As a snapshot, this will appear that the leader is multitasking, but in practice it is a dynamic process of considering each element individually and then reformulating solutions as a result of the interdependent considerations of each specific area.

### ***10.3.8 Need for Reflexivity for Action as a Basic Phenomenon***

In developing processes, such as in designing innovative learning environments, taking reflexive action means stepping back from the known to interpret the outcome of the last action taken from an emic perspective, rethinking and reformulating understandings of the cultural system based on this interpretation, and then taking informed action in the next iteration as a normative element for this developing process. The layers of work, observation over time, and iterative/recursive/abductive nature of decision making and problem solving in coming to understand the logic of new instructional designs (i.e., Castanehiera, Crawford, Dixon, & Green, 2001; Kalainoff, 2013; Stewart, 2016) and the process of transforming to new instructional designs (i.e., Chian, 2016; Joo, 2016) are characteristic of the reflexive nature of building grounded and culturally based understandings as a repertoire for leading in a specific situated context. In this context, *taking reflexive action* is central to building capacity for leading through *constructing a logic-of-inquiry-for-action-for-leading* for self as a comprehensive system for interpreting and enacting or adapting repertoires for leading.

### ***10.3.9 Interpreting Meaning by Observing Discourse-in-Action***

We cannot see meaning in the heads of people but we can see meanings in the discourse-in-action as these are accomplished through interaction (Frederiksen & Donin, 2015). With Agar's (2006) conception of "languaculture," language is a primary place to look for interpreting cultural meaning through observing discourse-in-use where meaning is interactionally accomplished as actors propose, recognize, and acknowledge cultural acts as socially significant (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993). At the center of this particular approach is the notion of culture as a conceptual system and a discursive construction.



## 10.4 An Orienting Theory Based on a Grounded Approach

An orienting theory is a system of presuppositions, perspectives, or principles (that are often invisible) that guides how an actor interprets and engages with the social world. Here, the overarching conceptual perspectives (Sect. 10.2) and the detailed principles (Sect. 10.3) constitute an orienting theory which we have made visible for further use in Sects. 10.5 and 10.6. Used in our context of leading, the purpose of the orienting theory is also to support learners in becoming capable of learning in new ways and learning how to lead when their particular knowledge base is needed. When they are not in their discipline or knowledge base, leaders (and learners) need to learn how to communicate (as appropriate for the social context and role) what they are doing in the context of the culture (as a disciplinary or social system) for building a reflexive model for developing common understandings and communicating with others based on the situated context. This is not a generic model to be applied universally, but grounded in a context which can be applied and modified locally.

We believe that the process that we have employed can transfer to other military academies or similar organizations at civilian universities, yet it is an empirical question for further examination. For example, as new learners enter the United States Military Academy, they bring different experiences and expectations from all over the country and internationally and, as such, may not have experienced some of the instructional designs of our academic or military programs. They are learning new ways of being by taking up a sense of self as a professional (and military) identity as well as a disciplinary self (University of Leuven, n.d.) and what these look like in academic classes, on the sports fields, and in military field training. It is in the everyday processes and practices that institutional actors engage with these developing leaders that shows them ways of being a “cadet.” Both explicitly and implicitly, in and through every interaction, they develop common and cultural understandings for interpreting and acting as a “cadet” at the United States Military Academy as preparation for becoming an army officer in the twenty-first-century military. Therefore, it is critical that institutional actors make the ordinary extraordinary and invisible visible by orienting the students’ attention not just to the processes and practices but *why* these are done in a certain way. In this process, we also ask them to step back from what they think they should do (or what they want to do) and engage differently to build a common collective trajectory for building repertoires for leading for the military profession, and specifically as an officer in the United States Army.

As with all cultural groups, there are particular ways of knowing, being, and doing life in a particular cultural group (Heath, 1982; Street, 1993) and these become patterned over time. So if we are building new ways of knowing, we need to observe the meanings of these social interactions through discourse-in-use over time and be able to communicate what is being interactionally accomplished. In the next section, we will draw on research from this orienting theory based on an ethnographic and discourse frame to explore how to build a reflexive process and the

principles that guide what we call a “reflexive design” required in building an informed base of knowledge for making decisions and taking action as we explore the epistemic processes involved in a developing teamwork curriculum-in-the-making in an undergraduate course.

## **10.5 An Illustrative Case for What Is Required for Building an Informed Base for Taking Action**

### ***10.5.1 Background***

In 2015, an undergraduate science course at the USMA transitioned from an algorithmic problem-solving instructional design to guided inquiry using process-oriented guided inquiry learning (POGIL) resources (Moog & Farrell, 2014). Although not formally part of the curricular resources available to students, the intent of the design of the process-oriented portion of POGIL is that students work in learning teams to develop process-oriented skills of which one is teamwork (The POGIL Project, 2016). At this institution where its primary mission is to build “leaders of character” (Building Capacity to Lead, n.d.-b), the individuals responsible for leading and managing the course leveraged and reformulated the teamwork aspect of the instructional design in a manner that was informed by the desired institutional outcomes and other stakeholders’ interests. In this example, we reconstruct the process of developing an instructional design for developing teamwork practices in order to make visible what is required for building an informed base for taking action using the framework as a guide for reflexively designing an opportunity for learners to take up this repertoire for leading as part of a learner’s *logic-of-inquiry-for-action-for-leading* for self.

### ***10.5.2 Preparing the Mind for Taking Reflexive Action***

Consider the following deliberate learning opportunity and a learner’s reflection on his actions: In this undergraduate course, the primary mechanism for students to learn disciplinary concepts is in learning teams of three or four students in a class size of 18. To facilitate group work in negotiating the disciplinary content, student desks are arranged in groups such that there is not a formal front to the classroom except by virtue of the instructor area. In a typical 80-min class, learners spend most of this time working in their groups and then coming together as a class intermittently for class discussion led by an instructor who reinforces key concepts.

As a formal requirement of this course, learners conduct self-assessments to explicitly reflect and document their actions with respect to teamwork over time. In this particular class, students changed groups three times over the semester, and the

**Table 10.2** Teamwork survey questions and sample student response in second survey

Question	Transcript of student written response
Q1. In what ways did you improve how you contributed to teamwork this semester? Explain	001 <i>Since our last assessment</i>
	002 <i>I believe</i>
	003 <i>That I have gotten better</i>
	004 <i>At listening to other's ideas and opinions</i>
	005 <i>And have been better at holding mine</i>
	006 <i>Until I believe that they will be useful</i>
	007 <i>I struggled with this</i>
	008 <i>At the beginning of the semester</i>
Q2. Identify your most significant teamwork contributions for the semester and what impact these had on teamwork in your group over time. Explain	009 <i>I believe that I am a strong team leader</i>
	010 <i>And effectively facilitate discussion</i>
	011 <i>I am able to keep the group on track</i>
	012 <i>I keep a positive atmosphere</i>
	013 <i>Where people are encouraged to share</i>
	014 <i>This creates a more productive discussion</i>
Q3. Identify teamwork-related skills that you still need to work on. Explain	015 <i>Talking less and listening more</i>
	016 <i>Would still benefit me more</i>
	017 <i>This would allow me</i>
	018 <i>To explore other views and ideas</i>
	019 <i>And better understand the material</i>

assigned roles rotated by lesson. The “team leader” was one of these assigned roles. As part of self-assessment, every student in this class addressed the same three questions for each of their three assigned groups over the semester. These questions and a sample student response from the second self-assessment during the Spring semester of 2016 are shown in Table 10.2.

This learner is taking up an opportunity for building an informed base for taking action. Building an informed base for taking action requires multiple forms of information: knowing about self, knowing about how to read the world, and knowing about how to read others (epistemic cognition). This sequence of survey questions guides the student through a deliberate process of reflecting on their actions and assessing the effectiveness of these actions (Question 1) based on the outcomes of their actions (Question 2) in the context of his team in this class at this institution. This particular student’s response to Question 1 makes visible his awareness of the need for building an effective self-to-collective relationship to facilitate the team’s learning of disciplinary content. In this context, this means “[getting] better at listening to other’s ideas and opinions” (Lines 4–5). Knowing that students were assigned to different learning teams at the beginning of the semester, his comment that he “struggled with this at the beginning of the semester” (Lines 7–8) suggests that listening to other’s ideas is a skill that may be required beyond the current team and into the class more generally.

The student’s response to Question 2 shows that, from his perspective, his most valuable contribution to this team is in his ability to lead, and he contextualizes what

this means. In Lines 09–14, we see that this student is making public his interpretation of what counts as “a strong team leader” in this context by bringing forward the aspects of his experience that were challenging and noteworthy from his perspective. According to this student, a “strong leader” in this context is defined by “effectively facilitat[ing] discussion,” “keep[ing] the group on track,” and “keep[ing] a positive atmosphere where people are encouraged to share.”

In Question 3, the nature of the question then shifts perspective so that the student must now think about what actions were missing and needed that may have led to a more desirable outcome. Looking ahead, this student believes that in his future interactions within his team, he should “[talk] less and [listen] more” in order to “explore other views and ideas and better understand the material.” His response makes visible another important aspect of what he has come to understand as required in this learning team in this class at this institution—in order to better understand the disciplinary content, he needs to better utilize his team as a resource for learning by affording himself opportunities to listen and explore their views.

The reflection in Table 10.2 is an example of a student making visible how he needs to change the way he sees his role as a team member and leader in this context because what this student did in the beginning of the semester in these roles did not work. In this one example of deconstructing a student’s guided reflection responses, we begin to see what is required for student leaders to reflect and then be positioned in ways that orient them towards ways of thinking and interpreting (and then acting) that promote long-term developmental growth.

Positioning is central to how the student learns to see their role in the epistemic process and it is important to conceptualize the difference between position and positioning (Heras, 1993). “Position” is an official label that is given by an authoritative body or individual. “Positioning” is an interactionally constructed definition. This is an action taken to reorient an individual to focus on another aspect of a task or another task. People are also being repositioned from a known category to an unknown category as they take on a new task and are “tasked” by others in the system to take up a leadership position. Thus, the meaning of leading and leadership and how they manifest in action is based both on understanding of position and of situated efforts in positioning. Positions, especially in the military, are assigned by actors with predefined authorities, and service members take up (accept) their positions and responsibilities readily. However, even within an assigned position (institutional definition), actors in the social situation will position (interactionally constructed definition) a leader by proposing actions or responsibilities that the designated leader can take up or not.

Each of these experiences by the student is a foundation for a repertoire for leading, that is, an unbounded but comprehensive system of roles and relationships, norms and expectations, and rights and obligations affiliated with the situated context under which the repertoire is constructed. But this is only one opportunity for learning one repertoire in one situated context. This, in concert with many more such opportunities and iterations of reflexive action, drives learning towards long-term developmental processes and outcomes. These are the types of processes that

we want for our students. This is the beginning of a new way of seeing and knowing where we do not yet have a common understanding or language but for which we will explore to initiate this process.

## **10.6 A Case of Designing a Teamwork Initiative for Opportunities for Reflexive Action**

### ***10.6.1 Background***

In order to build an informed base for taking action, we need our graduates to be able to think about their sense of reality as leaders, their interactions with others, and what is missing in order to solve the problem (of how to position self as leader with respect to the collective to complete a task) because all our graduates are in problem-solving situations, not just assigned leadership positions. This type of responsive design thinking is central to our students building repertoires for leading that are afforded by opportunities to think reflexively as integral to this learning environment. The teamwork initiative is one such example that was designed based on these principles.

Here, we will make initial efforts to explore constructing common understandings and language by examining how this teamwork initiative developed over two years in an undergraduate course. This section unpacks the layers of context, theory, and action required to design and redesign this initiative where our orienting theory (discussed previously) guides how we interact with a framework of generalized interdependent processes to dynamically construct a logic-of-inquiry-for-action. The framework of generalized interdependent processes and logic-of-inquiry-for-action is explained in detail in this section.

### ***10.6.2 The Context***

The student response in Table 10.2 comes from a second-year Cadet who took the second semester General Chemistry (GenChem 102) course in the Spring of 2016, during the first year of implementing this teamwork initiative. Table 10.3 shows a timeline for the 2 years under study and the location in time and level of General Chemistry course of the surveys in this instructor's perspective. In academic years 2016 and 2017, this particular instructor taught GenChem 101 in the first and fourth semesters and GenChem 102 in the second and third semesters. With respect to teamwork, this initiative was implemented in years 1 and 2 in three iterations (Year 1, Year 2: Fall, Year 2: Spring) that delineate major shifts in the level of instructor autonomy in implementing a process designed to provide students with opportunities to develop teamwork skills.

**Table 10.3** Timeline, course, and progression of teamwork survey options from one instructor's perspective (*A* = resources available, *M* = mandated)

Semester	Year 1		Year 2	
	Design Iteration 1		Design Iteration 2	Design Iteration 3
	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Teamwork Rubric	A	A	M	M
Using Roles	A	A	M	M
Rotating Teams	A	A	M	M (×3 w/assessments)
Self Assessment	A	A	M	M (×3 at course level)
Peer Assessment	A	A	M	M (×3 at course level)
Select Instructor Courses	GenChem 101	GenChem 102	GenChem 102	GenChem101

The teamwork initiative began in the first semester of implementing the new guided inquiry curriculum for General Chemistry in Fall 2015 (Year 1). This first year served as a pilot where instructors were given some discretion as to how to implement “teamwork” with respect to using a teamwork rubric, using roles, rotating teams, and completing self and peer assessments. In the second year, course leadership used feedback and observations from the year prior to develop a standardized program in iterations 2 and 3. Note that tracing the key design components was based on the GenChem 101 run concurrently with the follow-on course GenChem 102. The second course, with a different cohort of students being that this course is not required, also included teamwork as a course outcome and 4% of their grade.

### 10.6.3 *Linking the Orienting Theory to a Reflexive Framework for Taking Action*

The designing of this curriculum for developing teamwork in this course was an iterative, recursive, and abductive process centered at the course and program levels. The process was guided by the orienting theory and a framework of generalized interdependent processes used in this specific context to produce an initial model of this teamwork initiative with the purpose of providing opportunities for learners to develop capacity for leading as a logic-of-inquiry-for-action. Fig. 10.2 shows how the orienting theory, the “framework,” and the logic-of-inquiry-for-action are related. The orienting theory provides ontological and epistemological principles used for interpreting and analyzing the social situation through “the framework” of generalized interdependent processes that guide how to interact and interpret in a reflexive manner. As these cultural meanings are interpreted, they dynamically compose a system of understandings leading to a *logic-of-inquiry-for-action* with respect to leading, which may be held, rejected, or modified in the next iteration of interactions with the unknown context. The epistemic “framework” will be discussed in detail.

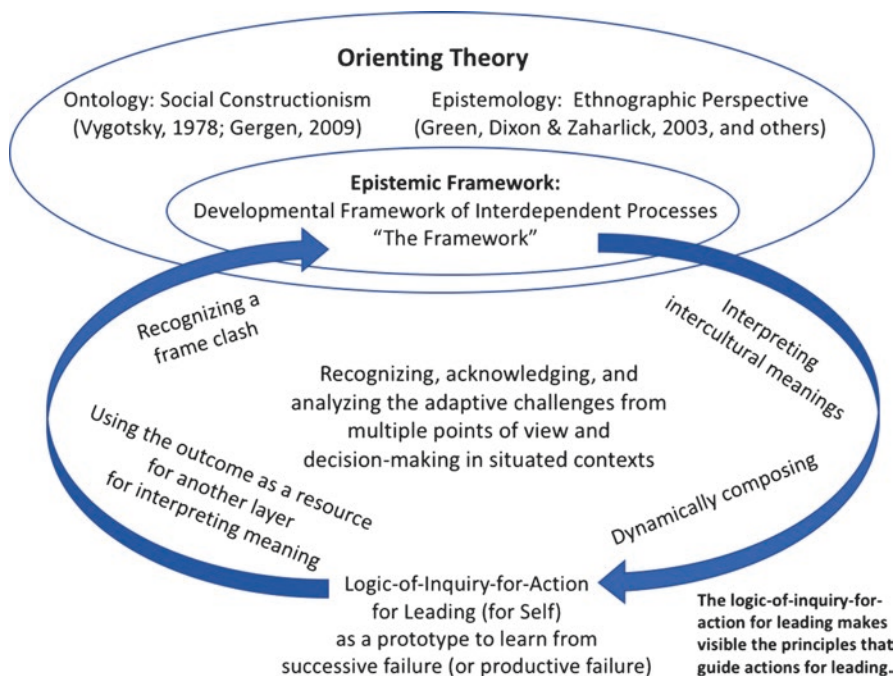


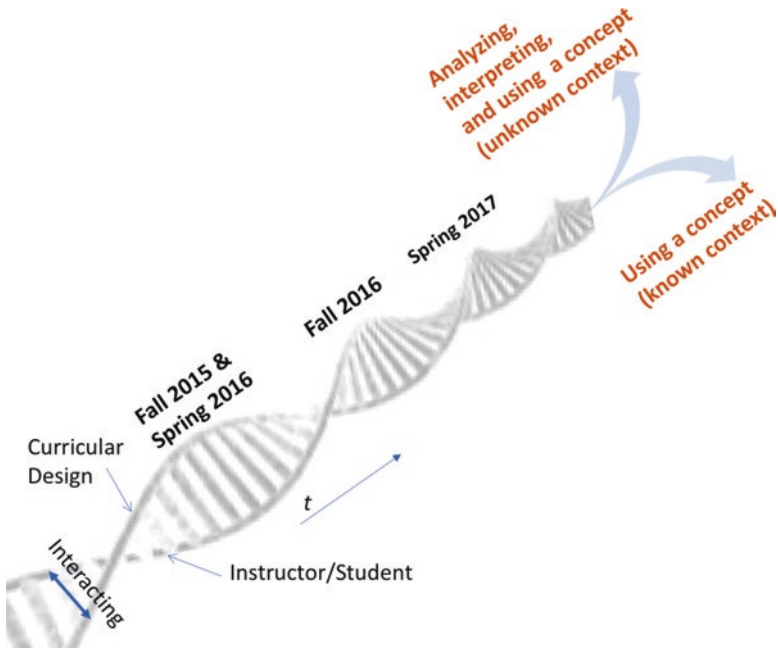
Fig. 10.2 Elucidating epistemic cognition through a framework of an epistemic process

### 10.6.4 A Developmental “Framework” of Generalized Interdependent Processes

This developmental framework of generalized interdependent processes is an epistemic and dynamic framework for developing practices for leading and constructing how actors co-construct and understand culturally based knowledge in individuals. As discussed previously, this framework is itself dynamic in that it acts in iterative, recursive, and abductive ways to negotiate complex and ill-structured problems and environments to construct patterned actions as cultural interpretations and understandings. As we have discussed the differences between learning and development (Vygotsky, 1978), the “framework” represents these differences clearly as two parts or perspectives.

#### 10.6.4.1 The “Framework”: The “Development” Perspective

We begin our discussion of the framework with the developmental layer in Fig. 10.3 which features two paths, one at the individual level of the new or developing leader and one of another actor. The other actor may be a cultural guide that actively guides



**Fig. 10.3** Partial representation of the framework showing the axis of development for 2 years and three iterations of the teamwork initiative design

the learner, a collective that interacts with the new leader in a group of leader-follower relationships, or any other actor who recognizes the individual in their role as leader. At the level of curricular design, these paths represent an iteration of the design and the instructor/student collective that engages in it. These paths rotate around each other along an axis that represents “developing” over time. Each rotation may represent a “phase” of a developing curriculum, such as the iterations of the teamwork curricular design or a much less defined “phase” in an individual’s developmental path. These paths represent the understandings and capabilities of each actor with respect to a specified developmental aspect. The space between them represents these actors interacting which reflects their understandings that are being co-constructed as cultural meanings. However, in this process of coming to *common knowledge* (Edwards & Mercer, 1987), these meanings are not completely the same.

Although the paths rotate around each other in one direction, the paths never intersect. We assert that the actors come to the interaction with different resources for learning based on the shared and independent histories of the actors. Therefore, it is not possible for one actor to come to the same understandings of another actor in an absolute sense, although these understandings may become more alike as they interact in this developmental process over time. For our purposes, in the case of the new leader, the axis of development represents developing capabilities for leading.



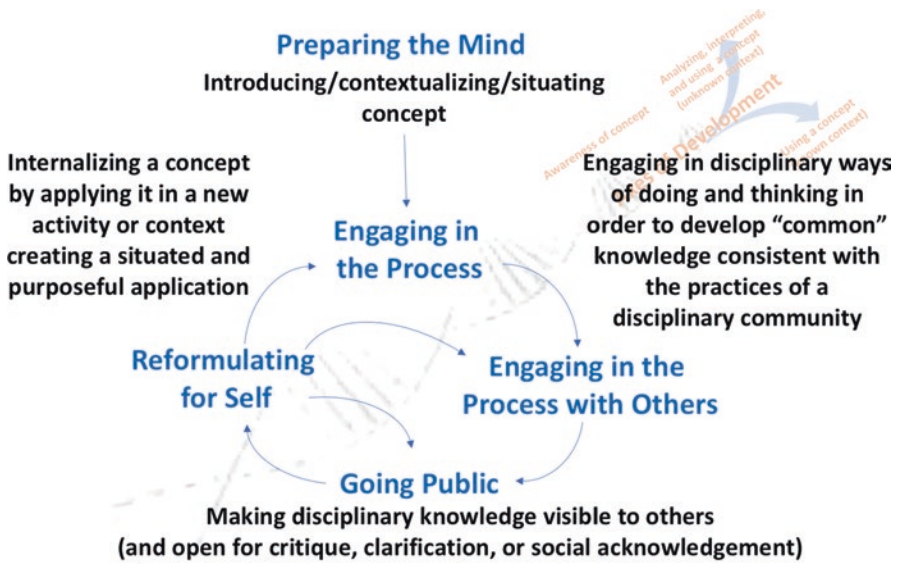
This single axis of development represents just one of the many ways in which a learner (and guide) are developing. Therefore, conceptually, there are many axes of development that are co-present and interdependent (Vygotsky, 1978) but, for clarity, we show only one here. As shown, the axis moves from the bottom-left-front to the top-right-back over time. The direction of the axis of development, although arbitrary in space, represents the nature of the learning and developmental process (i.e., instructional design) used and is, therefore, consequential for the nature of the capability being developed. Specifically, we distinguish between developing for known contexts, which constitutes the types of capabilities required for algorithmic problem solving and reproducing declarative knowledge which are affiliated with less rigorous forms of thinking (i.e., technical problems), and for unknown contexts, which is characteristic of real-world problems of the twenty-first century which are often ill structured and complex (i.e., adaptive challenges).

In the context of developing capacity for leading, naïve leaders who develop only a declarative type of knowledge for leading will enact leading behaviors that are situated in a specific environment, but may be inappropriately generalized by the individual. When the context changes, say they are assigned to a new position that requires leading at a higher organizational level, they will most likely not have the resources for adapting to the new and unexperienced requirements.

#### 10.6.4.2 The “Framework”: The “Learning” Perspective

In Fig. 10.4, we set back the axis of development and bring forward four generalized interdependent processes that serve as the mechanism for driving learning towards developing along the axis of development, in this case, for guiding and leading. The four interdependent processes shown in Fig. 10.4 are conceptualized as perpendicular to and centered on the axis of development. These four generalized interdependent processes characterize the iterative, recursive, and abductive driving mechanism of teaching and learning or guiding and leading processes towards developing a logic-of-inquiry-for-action with respect to leading. The four interdependent processes that will be discussed in detail include preparing the mind, engaging in the process (and with others), going public, and reformulating for self.

*Preparing the mind.* Before engaging with new content, guides need to prepare the minds of learners by introducing and contextualizing the content (i.e., what needs to be learned) such that the new content may be best integrated with existing conceptual frames. In more formal learning environments, this happens in many ways. Instructors prepare the minds of learners by making content known in syllabi, foregrounding upcoming content, explicitly referencing past content linkages, or creating an opportunity to recognize the need for a concept or an idea. Learners also prepare their own minds by orienting themselves to upcoming content by reviewing lesson outlines, doing before-class homework, and reading disciplinary texts. As a note on the before-class homework, it should challenge the learners to think rather than just to commit words, images, or ideas to memory. Rote memorization may not prepare the mind as effectively for the type of processing necessary to fully inter-



**Fig. 10.4** A developmental framework of generalized interdependent processes in the context of teaching and learning (or guiding and leading) highlighting the interdependent processes as an iterative, recursive, and abductive process

rogate new concepts in themselves or through others. Challenging learners to question ideas and the content should best prepare the mind for engaging with others. Effectively, learners need to prepare themselves appropriately in the culture of the discipline in order to engage with content in ways that are expected of the discipline.

In the same way that learners of a discipline must learn the geography of their discipline to guide how to engage in it, new or developing leaders should similarly prepare their minds by taking up opportunities to learn what counts as leading in a specific context. This may include shadowing a leader currently in this position, interviewing a past leader in this position, or, in a more general sense, seeking a guide who will help prepare the mind by sharing in their experiences with leading. A learner may also read about a historical leader in or out of the target context to widen their understandings of what a leader can or should be. Opportunities to prepare the mind can be initiated by a learner or their guide. Institutions will (or should) structure their formal "leadership" programs by using prior experiences as opportunities to prepare the mind for the next leadership position. Additionally, a common method for preparing the mind for leading is to use case studies as examples of situations that would require a leader to act. When guided through the topography of the situation where the learner may be deliberately oriented to the salient aspects of the problem, a learner may put themselves in the position of the leader and consider how he or she may act, and then discuss their ideas with other learners or a more

experienced guide so that learners may be best prepared to engage in authentic leader processes and decision making.

*Engaging in the process (and with others).* Although represented as different processes, there is little that separates engaging in the process independently and then with others, so we discuss these together here. In order to learn how to lead, there is no alternative to engaging in the processes of leading. Learners must engage in opportunities for leading in ways that challenge their current state of understandings and towards applying and adapting understanding in the complexity of real-world environments. Learners must be given (and must readily afford themselves) opportunities for leading such that learners may experience the consequences of their actions, that is, the response of the environment to their proposed action. The response from actors in an environment or social situation either confirms, restrains, denies, or modifies what counts as leading in this context. Actors act in response to construct, limit, or refine what counts as being a leader (i.e., roles, relationships, obligations). In this way, a leader, followers, and related actors co-construct what counts as leading in their situated context.

In the process of leading, through the development of epistemic cognition a leader must learn to understand the self-collective relationship: how the learning processes for developing as a leader requires acting upon and in the environment and that the environment (other actors) will respond in some way. The response may be immediate or delayed. From a constructionist perspective, what counts as leading (the roles, relationships, etc.) is being negotiated continuously by actors. Leaders must take up opportunities and risk being wrong or receiving a negative response to learn the culturally defined limits of their role. Therefore, at the onset of developing as a leader, a learner must internalize that their actions may not garner the expected (or hoped) response. As part of the learning process, learners must accept that getting it wrong provides an opportunity to explore the roots of this “frame clash” (Agar, 1995) where the leader may have misjudged the social situation and acted contrary to the cultural norm. Receiving a negative or an unanticipated response from followers or other actors signals that the leader should consider exploring the roots of the “frame clash” and resolving these naïve conceptions such that in the next opportunity to lead he or she can use a different approach for a desired response. This dynamic process is taking reflexive action.

In this way, the processes and practices, roles and relationships, norms and expectations, and rights and obligations that characterize what constitutes “leading” must be experienced through interaction with the social (as opposed to the internal cognitive) world. A learner must not only have opportunities to take up declarative knowledge, but also “know how” (with whom, under what conditions, with what outcome) this knowledge is brought to bear in the real world. Effectively this is where the epistemic cognition meets the reality of action with and through others, and this process of engaging others is essential for leader development.

*Going public.* It is essential that learners have opportunities to make their knowledge public such that this knowledge may be accepted, rejected, or modified by the disciplinary community or organization. Opportunities to make knowledge public can take many different forms. Most commonly in whole class interactional spaces in

formal learning environments, instructors ask questions to learners requiring that learners formulate their ideas and make their responses public to the class. In this common interactional space, these ideas may be accepted, rejected, or modified by the instructor or other students. Working in learning teams affords significantly more opportunities for learners to construct knowledge together. Here in a low-risk environment of a small learning team, multiple students can make their knowledge public. Team members can challenge current thought, expose misconceptions, help to understand the material in the context of the discipline, and develop “common” knowledge consistent with the practices of a disciplinary community. Furthermore, peers are in a good position to challenge in ways that are within developmental range. These types of interactions also afford students opportunities to learn how students can use their peers as resources for learning. In a formal learning environment, this means that there should be many opportunities to go public with knowledge such that understandings can be challenged and affirmed or refined. In this process, students also make their knowledge public to themselves. Often, students may believe that they fully understand a concept but then fumble when explaining it to others or trying to use it in a different context. In support of the lifelong learning mindset that is required for leaders in complex and uncertain environments, instructors should guide students to create opportunities for themselves to make their own knowledge explicitly visible to themselves and also seek feedback from more capable others.

Similarly, in the context of leading, “going public” means that the learner should make visible the logic that guides their actions for leading, what we have been calling a “logic-of-inquiry-for-action.” A learner may make their logic visible to themselves through journaling and/or seek the counsel of a more capable other, their guide or mentor for leading. This is a sharing of ideas such that the logic may be critiqued, challenged, supported, modified, or reinforced. There are advantages to a student making mistakes as they go public with their thoughts and ideas in a supportive environment, but there are also cultural sensitivities that should be appropriately considered when going public. This means that in certain leader contexts, there needs to be discretion and restraint. This too is a leader challenge, but a good one for growing leaders through experience. This also highlights the need for leader development of this type occurring in learning and supportive environments. Heifetz calls these places “holding environments” where young leaders encounter adaptive challenges while they are also supported (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997).

*Reformulating for self.* Reformulating for self is internalizing a concept by applying it in a new activity or context creating a situated and purposeful application (not just reproducing knowledge). This part of the process develops capabilities that apply knowledge to multiple situations and in concert with other knowledge from disparate areas. This is integrating knowledge rather than applying it in isolation within a discipline or leadership context. Reformulating for self is a critical process that expands a learner’s repertoire in how they interpret and respond to the world. From a social constructionist perspective and in the process of guiding, the guide also engages in these generalized processes as he or she must reconstruct their own logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading as a resource. This, therefore, is also developing the guide or leader, but in a different way than the learner. By guiding, the guide is afforded the

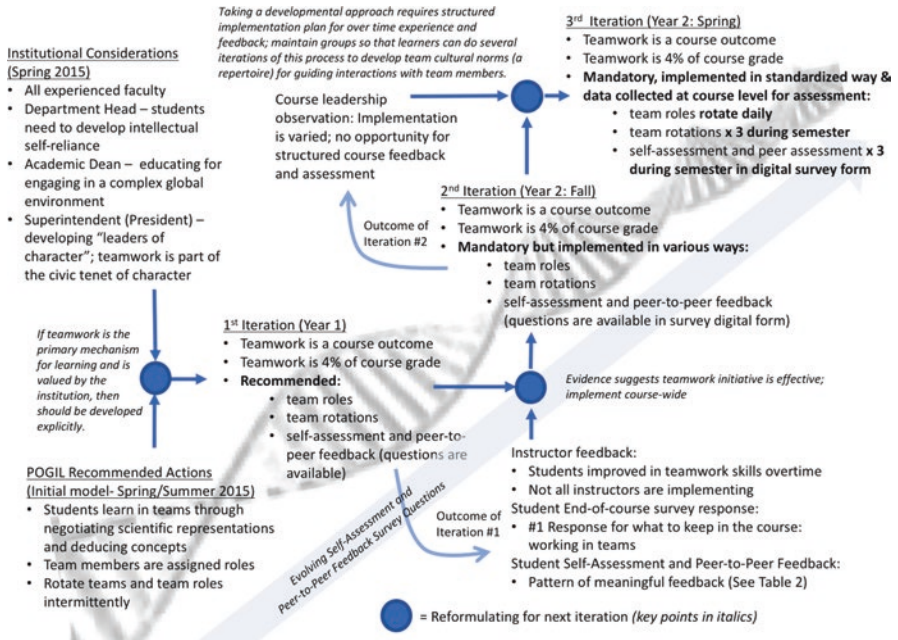
opportunity to reformulate their own logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading in order to make this visible (by talking about it or explicitly demonstrating). This co-presence of logics being re-constructed and re-formulated by both guide and learner is represented in the framework as the two strands rotating around each other such that their axis represents an axis of development (for leading).

These four processes do not exist in isolation. Rather they work together in iterative, recursive, and abductive ways as shown by the arrows that represent this interdependency (Fig. 10.4) to drive learning processes towards developmental outcomes. Also, this framework of generalized interdependent processes does not direct specific methods of instruction, although the selection of specific methods is consequential for developing capabilities for known vis-à-vis unknown contexts as discussed previously. Rather, these provide a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between guiding and leading as well as informing the designing of opportunities for learning or modifying existing ones.

Each interdependent process in the framework requires the learner to take action to learn and develop. This action-oriented framework is reinforced by deliberately shifting the common language towards using action-language. According to Rorty (1989), one cannot say the new (ways of thinking) in the old language. So to the extent possible in describing the framework, nouns such as “leader” and “mentor” have been replaced by verbs such as “leading” and “guiding.” By turning nouns into verbs, we highlight the overt actions that are required to fully realize the intent of the framework.

### ***10.6.5 Opportunities for Developing This Framework with the Specific Environment in Mind***

The teamwork initiative developed through three interacting levels (curricular design, instructor-collective class, and student) and was informed by institutional interests. Fig. 10.5 shows a simplified representation of the whole of this process from the curricular design perspective informed by institutional goals, stakeholder interests, and outcomes of each iteration of the instructional design. Building on Fig. 10.3, Fig. 10.5 is a simplified representation of the axis of development of the teamwork initiative in Years 1 and 2 showing the key aspects of each of the three iterations of design and the recursive nature of information gathering and reformulating for each iterative design. The process began with an initial design that was organic to the POGIL curriculum that called for students working in teams. This curriculum recommended that team members assume roles and that teams rotate regularly, although the duration of maintaining the same team was not specified. Conceptually, because teamwork was foundational to this curriculum, this curricular design offered a new potential for engaging in teamwork that could be leveraged in accordance with the goals of the institution. Informed by institutional considerations at the time, an initial recommended set of deliberate opportunities were provided to instructors to pilot in their classes. This included doing team roles, rotating teams, and conducting self and peer assessments using a recommended survey and a modified teamwork rubric (American



**Fig. 10.5** Simplified representation of the developmental perspective showing key information used in decision making for Years 1 and 2 of the teamwork initiative

Association of Colleges and Universities, 2009). As the requirements changed over time, the questions evolved as each instructor experimented with question in their own classes until standardized questions were mandated in the third iteration and collected for assessment at the course level.

While Fig. 10.5 shows the dynamic nature of this developing teamwork initiative over two years, Fig. 10.6 is a simplified representation that unpacks the first iterative design by the generalized interdependent processes and the opportunities for learning afforded by the curricular design (to include the teamwork initiative) from the student perspective. While considering goals and outcomes of the institution at all levels, these layers of designing the initiative (curricular level), providing opportunities for engaging in the process (instructor-collective level), and engaging in teamwork and leading processes (instructor-to-student and student-to-student level) are continuously and interdependently informing each other across actors, space(s), and time(s) in a reflexive design.

### 10.7 Re-constructing “Building Capacity for Leading”

We expect learners to not only learn required skills and practices for leading. We expect that they will develop an understanding of how these skills and practices are related and work holistically to form a logic-of-inquiry-for-action that characterizes



**Fig. 10.6** Simplified representation of the student opportunities for learning in a particular undergraduate course using a guided inquiry instructional design with the planned teamwork initiative in Year 1

in what ways, for what purpose, and with what outcome an actor will act by leading, and how they can make this logic visible for others. By our first proposition that knowledge (of how to lead as a set of commonly accepted principles as to what counts as leading) is socially constructed, an actor is constantly applying their logic-of-inquiry-for-action such that it is reformulated as needed depending on the social response and desired outcome within iterative, recursive, and abductive processes. In this way, a logic-of-inquiry-for-action is never static. Rather, it exists as a dynamic and reflexive model for leading which may also be called a “logic-of-inquiry-in-the-making.” This logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading, consisting of behavioral repertoires constructed through many leading opportunities, observations, and efforts to prepare the mind for leading in different contexts, constitutes “capacity” for leading. Consequently, the reflexive process of “building capacity” is made visible in the dynamic system of theories, methods, and actions (see Fig. 10.3) which we use as a basis for framing epistemic cognition.

### 10.8 Implications

#### 10.8.1 Learning to Lead

In learning to lead, the learner must deliberately seek opportunities to enact the interdependent processes in order to develop a logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading. This logic-of-inquiry-for-action will always be developing as new experiences challenge prior mental models and expand the leader’s repertoire of ways to lead

depending on the social situation. The learner must understand that developing skills for leading requires taking up responsibility for learning, and at times creating opportunities for leading for themselves and others. The most significant leading experiences towards long-term development will be those that pose a new context requiring interpreting the context and then drawing on epistemic cognition along with a logic-of-inquiry-for-action (repertoire of actions) to act. Leaders engaging in unexplored contexts must be attuned to aspects of the cultural system to take on an insider (or emic) perspective made visible in interactions.

Likewise, this approach to creating opportunities for learning to lead is a behavioral and social process that allows the developing leader to identify their own “productive zone of disequilibrium” that promotes regular engagement and opportunities for growth (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009). In formal learning environments, these opportunities allow the developing leader to be prudent and take measured risks in exercising actions for leading in order to challenge a developing logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading under conditions where real-world consequences are minimal.

### ***10.8.2 Guiding Learners for Leading***

Guiding involves co-constructing opportunities for learning with learners (exploratory leaders) that allows learners to actively build, in this case, process-based knowledge in meaningful ways, and then challenge them to reach beyond their current capabilities. Vygotsky (1978) refers to the zone of proximal development where a learner is guided by a more experienced other towards common understandings. The ZPD has several elements that support both learner and guide constructing knowledge through the framework. In the classical sense, a more experienced teacher guides a less experienced student. However, using the framework at the college age in particular can build upon the regular use of methods associated with the zone of proximal development that are more widely accepted during childhood development. That is, the framework provides a means to progress from a more structured form of development to a less structured form that requires engaging with others in assessing the context, and defining the problem and the solution as discussed in Sect. 10.6.3 (aka tackling adaptive problems as recognized by Heifetz, 1994). We project that this process, in time, will foster capabilities in the developing leader that slowly move thinking processes from imperial thinking to the socialized mind as represented in Kegan’s model (Kegan, 1982, 2009). Individuals may reformulate the same processes over time to gain experience that promotes the conditions under which the self-authoring mind can be achieved in Kegan’s framework. In short, this means that the process of creating a logic-of-inquiry-for-action develops the capacity for more connected and independent thinking, acting, and leading in growing leaders and the process of managing and leading in a complex world is built-in to the system of those operating through this process.



The term “guide” was selected deliberately in this discussion because of the developmental process (axis of development) that is intended for the learner to construct a logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading that is agile and flexible to act in ill-structured contexts; then the “instructor,” “supervisor,” or “mentor” must be **guiding** the learner in these practices. That being said, the developmental framework can inform how to approach guiding. Although the primary responsibility of a guide is to prepare the mind of the learner, a guide can influence each step of the process. Namely, a guide can share the meaning of each process in the framework by introducing it as a way to direct a learner’s actions for learning to lead and as essential to constructing a deliberate logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading. What we know about teaching and learning, which serves as a parallel to guiding and leading, shifts the role of the “instructor” from directly instructing to indirectly guiding by orienting the learner to the most salient aspects of a situation that requires interpreting the social situation and taking action.

As learning requires that the learner engage in the process of leading, it should be absolutely clear that no one can make any learner learn or, much less, lead. Rather, a guide’s responsibility is to assist a learner by preparing the learner’s mind such that he or she will be as prepared as possible to engage in the processes of leading. Additionally, knowing the learner’s strengths and challenges in leading, a guide may design and make available the best possible opportunities for learning how to lead. However, it is important to socially signal to the learner that it is his or her full responsibility to take up the opportunities for learning and, in fact, learn to lead.

### ***10.8.3 Redesigning Curricula to Create Formal Opportunities for Leading***

A common method for shaping the learning environment for learning is to purposefully challenge naïve ways of thinking. In other words, guides or institutionally driven opportunities for learning deliberately put learners in situations where the conceptual model of the learner clashes with what they observe or are trying to influence. Developmental change occurs as learners struggle to build conceptual frames that appropriately interpret and address the problem at hand. From this perspective, “struggling” is an essential part of learning and should be accepted and normalized in any learning environment. With that said, it is important that learners are afforded the opportunity and needed time to struggle to reconcile their understanding with what they observe (e.g., Heifetz’s productive zone of disequilibrium). Part of this process is allowing the learner to experience the outcomes of their actions. This means that guides, although very well intentioned, should refrain from providing direct “answers” or assuming responsibility to realize a desired outcome. Some guides may believe that this is required and expected as part of their role; however, it only serves to undermine the developmental process. Indeed, it may also reduce the sense of autonomy on the part of the learner and developing leader, which only further reduces their potential intrinsic motivation. Additionally, what

we know about teaching, learning, and development directly opposes instructional designs that expect students to “learn” concepts and be able to apply them immediately. Aside from tasks involving rote memorization, being able to apply concepts in different ways requires that learners be engaged in different situations that require leading and time as a developmental process—not only over lessons but also over courses. Therefore, it is in a learner’s best interest to engage with content over time and seek different examples that apply a concept. With this in mind, it is helpful for faculty to make these linkages visible.

At the curricular design level, the process of designing curricula may be informed by the processes made visible in the framework and informed by the proposed (or a modified) orienting theory. Specifically, the interdependent processes may guide the design of curricula by effectively linking broad higher level goals and outcomes to how these manifest as action in the planned curricula (Posner, 2004) to bring goals and actions in dynamic relationship.

#### ***10.8.4 Framing Epistemic Cognition***

As student leaders engage in different ways of thinking and interpreting and then acting in different contexts for different purposes, these pieces of “experience,” forged from informed interactions with the social world, begin to form a dynamic logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading. We have proposed a social model that guides learning and developing a logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading that complements cognitive models. To be most effective, a process of developing leaders or developing any skill/practice should be well understood and internalized as a framework that guides not only the designing of instruction (or design of the developmental experience) but also in-the-moment interactions (as a disposition) such that actors orient their actions and interactions in ways that promote and maximize opportunities for learning and developing. This requires a mental model of an epistemic process that frames and guides what actors (i.e., the guide and developing/exploratory leader) do in terms of process, roles, and responsibilities that are informed by research in teaching and learning. Specifically, the logic-of-inquiry-for-action requires that the leader process the problem (cognition), self-monitor his or her processing of the problem (metacognition), and evaluate the sources of his or her knowledge and experiences used in processing and solving the problem (epistemic cognition) (Johanes, 2017). Therefore, we believe that the framework proposed can be viewed directly as a means to develop epistemic cognition.

### **10.9 Conclusion**

This chapter proposes a new way of conceptualizing a behavioral and social process for building capacity for leading using theories and methodologies from various disciplines through a sociocultural and ethnographic approach as an orienting

theory in a dynamic framework for constructing a logic-of-inquiry-for-action for leading in complex and ill-defined environments. This inquiry-based approach is grounded in a reflexive design requiring that learners step back from ethnocentrism, reflect on actions and outcomes, understand how to acquire new information if needed, and then take informed action in iterative, recursive, and abductive decision-making processes and supported by epistemic cognition requiring learners to evaluate the source of knowledge. This accessible and dynamic framework provides the conceptual system for developing leaders to build capacity for leading in the ever-changing and ill-defined environments of the twenty-first century who can think and act independently with and through the collective.

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**Part III**  
**Social and Environmental Influences on**  
**Leader Development**

# Chapter 11

## The Impact of Selection and the Assessment Center Method on Leader Development

Hubert Annen

### 11.1 Introduction to Selection

We are regularly confronted with examples of inadequate leadership in the media with reports about transgressions of leaders in economics, politics, or sports as well as in daily lives. We also sometimes become victims of poor leadership on our own and then ask ourselves how those superiors even achieved their functional positions.

It in fact often seems that the factors of selection and promotion do not count; yet they are relevant for successfully exercising management functions. In particular, at the higher levels of a hierarchical organization (e.g., senior managers and executives) selection and development of leaders are often performed on a random basis, backed by experiences and intuition, anticipations and prejudices, as well as personal interests and power claims of decision makers in organizations. Additionally, the leading position involves certain temptations. In this way Bendahan et al. (2015) showed in an experiment that even those test persons, who defined themselves as being outstandingly honest and socially competent, changed their moral attitude and perspective, as soon as they were promoted into a leading position. With the corresponding power they adjusted their moral view, put their own benefits before their employees' well-being, and let themselves become involved in fraudulent activities.

Against this background it is not surprising that there are an increasing amount of studies published in scientific literature in the field of leadership on topics such as “toxic leadership” (Dinh et al., 2014). Also, the contribution to Dark Triad by Furtner, Maran, and Rauthmann in Chap. 4 of the present volume addresses a related topic. Obviously there is a certain dynamic and the question is raised regarding what is going wrong in the selection and development of leaders. A difficulty might be

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that the factors decisive for leadership success are not directly tangible and calculable and thus also not measurable. Of course, there are plenty of attributes and examples of successful leaders in relevant literature, but these have to be transferred to a specific situation, function, and culture. Furthermore, it is not a guarantee that a person who is successful in positions lower in a hierarchy will also be successful in higher levels. Accordingly it is not a coincidence that the term “The Peter Principle” (Peter & Hull, 1969), which states that the selection of a candidate for a position is based on the candidate’s performance in their current role rather than on abilities relevant to the intended role, does not generally need to be explained to anyone. Considering such uncertainties, routines, and stereotypes is often the typical behavior when there is a time pressure and a perceived urgency to make decisions—which seems to always be the case in daily business activities. In other words, organizations effectively rely on “functional stupidity,” meaning an absence of deliberation, in order to function (Elmholdt, Elmholdt, Tanggaard, & Holmgaard Mersh, 2016). Despite an understanding of how “functioning” in the respective situations might occur, and considering the effect, it is recommended to choose a more deliberate, considered, and structured methodology for selecting and developing leaders.

This chapter addresses the topic of selection in leader development. While it is a topic that is somewhat out of the control of the developing leader, it is still a major environmental factor that heavily influences the development of individual leaders. As you will see, assessment not only involves leader selection and development, but it also impacts the culture and climate of leadership within organizations and serves as “business card” for others, both internal and external, to see how the organization operates. From the perspective of leader development, you will see that this acts as a “force multiplier” within the organization where all members of a given organization stand to benefit through a democratic assessment and selection process.

## 11.2 Investment in Leader Development and Selection Provides a Clear Return

“Due to a wrong decision in the chief physician choice an entire hospital might fall into a severe existential crisis” (Fritz, 1999, p. 495). This quote explicitly shows the dimension of such a decision. Scholars in this area have discussed at length the enormous enduring influence, which leaders have within their organizations (Day & Lord, 1988; Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994). It has been demonstrated that CEO’s traits and leadership styles predict firms’ financial performance (e.g., O’Reilly, Caldwell, Chatman, & Doerr, 2014). Thus, through their interactions with subordinates and stakeholders, leaders can profoundly influence follower behaviors and thereby create a workforce aimed at success (Barling, Christie, & Hopton, 2010). As a consequence, the decision-making process involved in deciding to invest in leader and leadership development should be similar to the decision-making process used by organizations whenever there is a decision to incur costs for anticipated

benefits. Thus, it is not surprising that according to estimates, firms in the United States invest more than 15 billion dollars in the development of leaders (Elmholdt et al., 2016). But the following question is raised: What return comes from these investments in a targeted and profitable manner? Day et al. (2014) make clear that there are considerable differences, and depending on various factors, the respective return on investment varies from a negative value up to more than 200%.

Investment in selection, education, and development of leaders can pay off repeatedly, or it can also have a negative impact (Staffelbach, 2006). To prevent the latter and considering the explanations above, the related processes and decisions should not be left to the arbitrariness of individuals or organizational routines that are hardly ever questioned. Instead, the relevant elements should be identified and placed in a deliberate manner with clear business processes. If the focus is subsequently laid on evaluation and selection processes they are mainly based on considerations of Schein (1985).

Schein has noted that leadership is a critical component of the organization's culture because leaders can create, maintain, or change culture. He defines culture as the basic assumptions and beliefs shared by members of a group or an organization. In addition, he asserts that culture impacts employees' behavior because one of its major functions is "to help us understand the environment and determine how to respond to it, thereby reducing anxiety, uncertainty, and confusion" (Schein, 1985, p. 86). As a consequence, a leader who has been in power for a substantial length of time can mold a corporation's culture. According to Schein this happens through the following five "primary mechanisms": what leaders pay attention to; how leaders react to crises; how leaders behave (role modeling); how leaders allocate rewards; and how leaders hire and fire individuals. Besides behaviors and activities of an organization's leaders, including reactions to problematic occurrences and crises such as what they are exemplifying in everyday life, it is about what is considered, evaluated, and controlled in the organization. Examples include the criteria for granting of bonuses and status as well as the criteria and processes for recruiting, selection, promotion, and exclusion. If these processes should not be left to momentum or even chance, they have to be named, made tangible, and regularly questioned with subordinate objectives in mind.

To sum up, through Schein's primary mechanisms we can see how leader decisions affect the organizational culture and thus the development of leaders within an organization. In effect, this is a potential mechanism for how selection and thereby leader development impact long-term organizational success. How these selection processes can look is explained now by means of the assessment center method.

### 11.3 Assessment Center

The assessment center (AC) is a diagnostic method that usually lasts 1 or 2 days and can be described as a condensed probation period in which candidates are observed and judged in a variety of simulation exercises (e.g., role-play, group discussion,

DIMENSIONS	EXERCISES				ASSESSOR RATINGS	
	Role play	Present-ation	Discu-ssion	...	Initial rating A/B	Final rating
Communication						
Problem solving						
Planning	OBSERVING				RATING	
...						
...						
...						
OVERALL RATING/SCORE						

Fig. 11.1 The assessment center method

presentation) by a group of independent assessors concerning several relevant behavioral dimensions (e.g., communication, problem solving, organizing and planning) (Fig. 11.1), typically used to identify leadership potential. Besides exercises for behavioral observation, an AC also can involve performance tests, computer-aided problem-solving scenarios, or a personality inventory. Although aimed at employee selection and development, an AC has far-reaching effects in the organizational context, which becomes evident on the basis of its history and origin.

### 11.3.1 A Bit of History

In Germany, officer candidates used to be recruited from nobility until shortly after the First World War. The result was that the candidates had a relatively homogenous educational background and there was an assured conception of duty. However, being from nobility, the permanent financial problems of military were eased, as young people had to pay for joining the army. Effectively, the opportunity to serve was provided by social origin (Jeserich, 1991). With the conclusion of the Treaty of Versailles and the limitation of a hundred-thousand-man army, there was a fundamental change. New selection methods had to be found and the prevailing historical privileges of nobility had to be abolished (Simoneit, 1972). Thus, the main task of army psychology was the improvement of selection methods for officer candidates, which led in 1926–1927 to the predecessor of today’s AC. The main test in the officer selection became a characterological procedure performed in the so-called psychological recruiting stations of the time. Declared intention of the responsible persons was to objectify practical knowledge of human nature. Thereby principles were applied which complied in many aspects with what is considered today to be a modern AC.

A modern AC is defined by a coherent system of test stations; several, partially independently effective assessors who were officers and psychologists; selective inclusion of those results accepted by all assessors; separation of observation and assessment; and fair treatment of candidates. Also at the test stations of the time,

there were clear parallels to currently used AC exercises including interviews, tests, role-plays, group discussions, and presentations (Obermann, 2013). Subsequently this program—with its emphasis on social interaction and selection of candidates, independent of their origin—came into conflict with the political doctrines of the national socialism of the time. Both the old officer traditions and the party ideology contradicted these objective democratic approaches (Jeserich, 1991). It most likely also played a role that the sons of many national socialists were considered as being unsuitable for the officer career by German army psychologists (Flik, 1988). Little by little the programs were discontinued. Even today the basic organizational and methodological concepts of the event as well as the emphasis on the holistic view of the candidates remained the same.

This particular approach impressed the military attachés residing in Berlin so much that they sent positive reports to their home countries. As in no other way and like Germany it can be argued that the assessment center was implemented first in the military field in almost all other countries with some modification. The British War Officer Selection Boards (WOSB) borrowed the notion of multiple assessment procedures, but focused less on intrapsychic processes and more on the prediction of social skills. In the United States, the Office of Secret Service (OSS) employed Henry Murray to institute an elaborate method for selecting future spies and saboteurs (Highhouse & Nolan, 2012). Murray and his colleagues borrowed many of the situational practices developed by the British and Germans, but also developed many of their own, e.g., the use of pooled judgments made by multiple assessors (Taft, 1959). Many of these wartime practices found immediate application by industry in Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand, and the United States.

“The rest is history”—one would be tempted to say. Inspired by the OSS report *Assessment of Men* the procedure was used at AT&T several years after the war ended. In the context of a longitudinal analysis (Bray, 1964) the predictability of the AC method for career development was evident. The spread of the method really started as of the beginning of the 1970s and nowadays it is applied all over the world.

### ***11.3.2 Shaping the Culture***

Exercises and dimensions oriented at the activities and challenges of a leader, clearly predefined structures and processes, as well as the participation of several assessors with different backgrounds following a systematic observation and rating process result in a well-founded assessment of the candidates (Fig. 11.2). Likewise, due to this systematic and multistage approach the assessment is completely comprehensible, and there is no place for aspects other than the clearly defined requirements, such as unreflected stereotypes and opinions or hidden selection criteria. Considering this broad-based procedure, the central conclusion can be drawn that the implementation of AC methods goes along with a democratization of selection

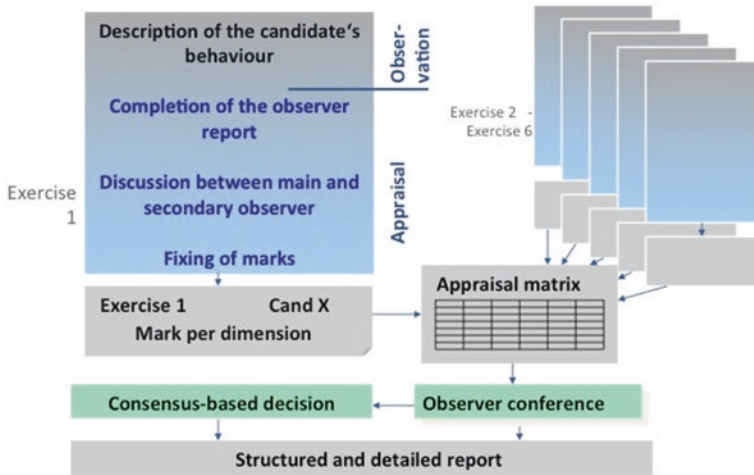


Fig. 11.2 Systematic assessment process

procedures. Accordingly, selecting leaders with the AC method is a pivotal element of a rational, transparent, and tangible leader development.

The targeted use of the AC method has an impact on the leadership and organizational culture in a firm. Concerning Schein, it can in this way be assumed that in an AC for leader selection, for example, the weighing of intercultural competences in the assessment dimensions as well as a particularly heterogeneously composed assessor committee positively influence the diversity management in the organization in the long run.

This value of an AC for leader selection and cultural change is backed by many meta-analyses that have demonstrated support for assessment centers as predictors of on-the-job performance (e.g., Arthur, Day, McNelly, & Edens, 2003; Gaugler, Rosenthal, Thornton, & Bentson, 1987). Beyond the prediction of performance it is postulated that supervisory-level ACs help organizations identify individuals who have abilities related to effective leadership (Thomas, Dickson, & Bliese, 2001). Given the importance of leaders as creators or shapers of organizational culture (Schein, 1985), and that unethical behaviors have spillover effects (Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2009), it is indicated that this aspect has to be considered in the design of the selection process. Concerning sustainability in the leadership culture as well as economic considerations it is also important that AC results can also predict the person-organization-fit (Garavan, 2007). This is because the firm delivers a “business card” by means of the AC with which it is evident how (leader and organizational) success is perceived and which (leadership) culture is enacted. Within the organization the AC also further educates all involved persons, which influences espoused and enacted values and virtues (i.e., individual behavior is adjusted, thereby further changing the culture) (Fritz, 1999).

These effects on culture only apply if AC procedures are developed, implemented, performed, and evaluated according to well-established and data-driven directives. The Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations (International Taskforce on Assessment Center Guidelines, 2014) and the Standards of the Assessment Center Techniques (Arbeitskreis Assessment Center Deutschland, 2004) for the German region (as an example) offer an orientation and implementation approach. The significance of implementing these guidelines is demonstrated in a study by Boltz, Kanning, and Hüttemann (2009). If 12 of the 15 standards are used in creating an AC, the predictive validity amounts to 0.5, in cases where 10 standards are considered the predictive validity drops to 0.27, and if only 7 standards are followed the AC has no predictive power as a tool. Due to this fact, it is reassuring that the investigation by Eurich, Krause, Cigularov, and Thornton (2009) demonstrated that 93% of the US firms included in the study stated that they comply with the established guidelines. However, this result should be handled with particular caution. Experiences with certification procedures in Switzerland show that between providing the information and the actual behavioral evidence of action, a considerable hurdle has to be overcome (Eggimann, Stöckli, & Annen, 2015). Put another way, implementing an AC is much more challenging than getting organizations to realize that there would be value if they did.

## 11.4 The Guidelines and Their Consequences

Accepting the given evidence of action, it can be assumed that an AC can have a great impact within an organization. Thus, following the guidelines, the central part of the contribution is about discussing the characterizing elements of the AC method and demonstrating which consequences the concrete implementation has on leader development and surrounding culture.

### 11.4.1 Purpose

Assessment centers are used throughout the world to measure general managerial and leadership competencies needed for success in leadership positions, and they are used for both selection and leader development purposes (Eurich et al., 2009; Simonenko, Thornton, Gibbons, & Kravtcova, 2013; Spsychalsky, Quinones, Gaugler, & Pohley, 1997). A survey by Eurich et al. (2009) on US organizations showed that assessee promotion was the most frequent objective of ACs (54%), followed by development (27%), and selection (19%). The most important developmental goals were training/development needs (27%), stabilization of leadership culture (16%), and cooperation/team building (10%). Finally, the conclusion is remarkable that the original purpose of ACs—leader selection—decreases considerably.

According to the guidelines, ACs have to be developed, implemented, and evaluated according to their intended purpose. That means *before* developing and enacting an AC, the objectives and framework conditions of the order, as well as the consequences for the participants, have to be clarified. That may seem obvious, but if insufficient attention is paid to the integration of existing processes and instruments of personnel work during the implementation of an AC, it can happen that the AC is deceptive. Put another way, while it would be sold as a developmental workshop for employee promotion, in fact it would just serve as a concrete sighting of candidates for the next promotion round. This is counterproductive because it will lead to distrust and build resistance among employees in the long run. This resistance will not only occur in the workers at the base level of the organization. Resistances can also occur in line managers, as principally an AC results in a change of their role in leader selection. Appropriately, it has to be prevented with a clear, broad-based definition of decision processes. Otherwise, line managers will see it as a strong restriction of their decision power, and thus create a negative attitude towards the AC and be counterproductive.

If an AC is used as a pure selection instrument as is the case with the assessment center for prospective career officers of the Swiss Armed Forces (Annen, Eggimann, & Ebert, 2012), it is necessary that the line managers are appointed as AC assessors and can follow and understand how the selection decision takes place. If the AC serves as a recommendation, to some extent as a puzzle piece, within the selection process, the decision makers have to be comprehensively informed about the contents of the AC so that they can assess the value of the candidate assessment in the general context of the promotion and selection requirements. They need to have a clear idea of what it means if a candidate is not recommended due to his or her performance in the AC. If an AC is performed for the development and support of leaders, the candidates have to be offered concrete measures in the form of courses, trainings, coaching, etc. on the basis of their individual profiles of weaknesses and strengths.

Additionally, leaders and other responsible persons need to obtain clarity about “what” they want to capture by means of an AC and why it matters for their organization and people within it. Basically, with leadership ACs one can measure all competency components, including job-specific behaviors and skills, as well as personality and attitudinal dimensions (Povah & Thornton, 2011). Furthermore, Hsin-Chih (2006) suggests that ACs have the capacity to measure unique characteristics of human capital and match them to organizational strategy and culture. Collectively, these make the ACs uniquely well suited for integrating and aligning leader development with organizational success through clarity of strategy and implementation of vision.

To accomplish these objectives through the AC, the responsible persons thus need to clearly define which skills and abilities are central for the targeted functions and parts of the organization. From that, the influences can be clarified through the implementation of the AC, which consequently will influence the organizational culture. Thus, according to Garavan (2007) the AC development process must be rooted in organizational processes such as competency modeling and job analysis. These seemingly tactical components will have a strategic impact on the organization while affecting leader development.

### 11.4.2 Systematic Analysis of Job-Relevant Behavior

“Effective” leadership can take many different forms in different settings and at different times. Similarly, leader and leadership development take many forms. For instance, different patterns of personality tend to be more equally representative at junior-level leadership positions compared to more senior-level positions (Mumford, Marks, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000). Furthermore, comparing positions across different organizations or sectors such as corporate, military, government, or nonprofit has its shortcomings. So, in order to aim at maximum payoff, organizations should consider investing resources into the development of ACs. Specifically, they should use sophisticated methods of job analysis and ensure that dimensions are developed and chosen with scientific rigor. However, 54% of organizations develop their own ACs, 24% use adapted versions, and less than 22% apply “off-the-shelf” versions (Eurich et al., 2009). Regarding the methods of job analysis according to Eurich et al. (2009), 70% of the surveyed firms use job descriptions, 54% interviews with job incumbents, 47% interviews with supervisors, 40% questionnaires to incumbents, 30% observation of incumbents on the job, 28% a critical incident technique (CIT; Flanagan, 1954), 26% questionnaires to supervisors, and 14% workshop/teamwork methods. These results reveal on the one hand a certain trend towards “off-the-shelf” ACs, which raises concerns about validity. On the other hand, the use of more sophisticated methods of job analysis, such as CIT, would be welcomed to address this shortcoming.

That these guidelines are not applied consistently in practice is a result of activating energy and the perceived necessary effort. The user’s estimation of practicability is primarily connected with the effort, which is necessary for the construction and performance of the procedure (Schuler, Hell, Trapmann, Schaar, & Boramir, 2007). Considering the importance of this process step, the effort is worthwhile. In terms of a broad-based job analysis as many stakeholders as possible should be actively involved (Thornton, Rupp, & Hoffman, 2015) to assure that they are informed about the AC. Expanded awareness about ACs ideally increases commitment towards the procedure. Furthermore, the substantive basis for the orientation of participants is created and the transparent communication about what is evaluated and not evaluated is likely perceived as a positive result promoting fairness within the organization. Also, clear signals are provided regarding what is considered as important to the organization and for leadership success in particular. The assessment center for prospective career officers in the Swiss Armed Forces once again serves as an example, where against the background of putting an emphasis on human-oriented leadership culture (Steiger, 1991), the assessment of social competences receives great importance. This emphasis on social competence in the organization delivers a binding commitment for the anticipated leadership culture and at the same time it is ensured through a seriously performed requirement analysis and communication that there are adequate tools available for further development for growing leaders.



### 11.4.3 Behavioral Classification

On the basis of the defined requirements, it is necessary to define success-relevant behaviors. The guidelines for implementing an AC specify that the behaviors captured within the assessment context must be classified according to the behavioral constructs or dimensions, respectively. Dimensions are clusters of behaviors that can be defined and observed with consistency (Caldwell, Thornton, & Gruys, 2003).

The number of dimensions assessed per AC should not be too high. Because of cognitive and information processing limitations of human assessors, it has been suggested that the number of dimensions per AC not exceed seven (Thornton, 1992). As the number of dimensions rises, the risk of their becoming indistinguishable grows, complicating assessors' difficult task of differentiating behavioral categories (Chan, 1996). Otherwise, the likelihood that the assessors will make blanket judgments (e.g., halo effect) will thereby be intensified unless the number of dimensions is limited.

Regarding the types of dimensions being assessed, the results of two meta-analyses (Arthur et al., 2003; Bowler & Woehr, 2004) indicated that six dimensions have construct and criterion validity: communication, consideration of others, drive, influencing others, organization and planning, and problem solving. Eurich et al. (2009) demonstrated that, overall, the most valid dimensions are the most popular, with the most frequently assessed dimensions being communication (91%, i.e., 91% of the AC included in this analysis use this dimension), problem solving (91%), organizing and planning (77%), and influencing others (63%). Consideration of others (49%) and drive (37%) were least frequently assessed, and rightfully so, as they were—according to Arthur et al. (2003)—found to be relatively the least dimensional predictors of performance. More generally, the data suggest that the dimensions of communication, problem solving, organization and planning, and influencing others are universally valid whether the AC is being used to develop leaders or non-supervisory workers and should be included in your AC.

More specific to leadership, the dimensions commonly measured include planning and organizing, initiative, consideration of others, adaptability, tenacity, oral communication, and tolerance for stress (Gatewood, Field, & Barrick, 2011; Meriac, Hofmann, Woehr, & Fleisher, 2008). These specific dimensions aligned to the leading activities have yet to be proved in the particular case. However, they may provide utility in an AC when considering leader development. While the data is yet to be borne out, the utility of the dimensions for the general aspects of an AC suggests that there may be value in their consideration for use.

The dimensions are usually defined by behavioral anchors. The respective behaviors used as scale anchors are those identified during the competency modeling and job analysis data collection stage (Herd, Alagaraja, & Cumberland, 2016). The development and definition of behaviorally anchored rating scales is a key stage for ensuring valid measurement of competencies in the skill-based exercises (Brownell, 2005). A strict behavior orientation should be implemented because it prevents assessors from bringing their stereotypes and unreflected ideas of good

leaders into play and it helps avoid other psychoanalytic methods from being assessed as well. In other words, this keeps assessors honest and the process as objective as possible. As for the candidate, the principle “current behavior is the best predictor for future behavior” creates transparency and a basis for feedback, which stimulates the potential for further development as behavior can be changed. Alternatively, a response concerning psychological “traits” will hardly result in approaches or feedback for improvement.

If in ACs a trend towards “people-focused” exercises (role-play, group discussion, presentations) is found, this is influenced by the increased attention organizations are paying to “people-focused” knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies (Cascio, 2003). At the same time, this makes clear that the behavioral dimensions have to be the basis for the design of exercises. More pointedly, exercises have to be constructed in a way that the required behaviors can also be demonstrated.

#### ***11.4.4 Realistic Exercises***

The guidelines require that the assessment center components are developed or chosen to elicit a variety of behaviors and information relevant to the behavioral constructs. As such, ACs may be entirely comprised of multiple behavioral simulation exercises, or some combination of simulations and other measures, such as psychometric tests. Specifically, typical AC exercises utilize a variety of measurement methods to tap into all facets of competencies, and include the following: leaderless group discussion, role-play, in-basket, case analysis, structured interview, personality and cognitive ability tests, and in-depth simulation exercises (Thornton, Rupp, & Hoffman, 2015). Among these, the most common exercises are role-play (applied by 76% of the surveyed firms), presentation (64%), and in-basket, i.e., candidates receive a number of mails, telephone calls, documents, and memos; they then have a limited period of time to set priorities, organize their working schedule accordingly, and respond to mail and phone calls (57%) (Eurich et al., 2009). The predictive validity of ACs increases as the number of types of exercises increases (Gaugler et al., 1987).

As with the behavioral dimensions, a framework with approved content exists for the exercises. However, when implementing the exercises there are still different pitfalls to consider. Thus, it is certainly tempting to adopt or purchase certain exercises (e.g., the extensively created in-basket exercise), but there is the risk that these will not address the requirements of the target position. Also, placing an over-emphasis on certain exercise types should be avoided due to economic reasons. Assessment center designers must also take steps to ensure that the exercise content does not unfairly favor certain assessees (e.g., those in certain racial, ethnic, age, or sex groups). Finally, when implementing exercises, the largest possible standardization has to be the goal (i.e., clear role allocations, standardized instructions for all participants), which is the reason for the decreased use of the group discussion exercise.

In the context of developing leaders with ACs, the critical skills can be assessed using domain-specific (e.g., military or specific industry) situational leadership scenarios, which are used to predict performance outcomes for the leader to be selected. Yet, this contributes to the understanding of leader development by describing skills that are important to senior-level leaders as well as by providing a way in which these skills can be objectively measured (Day et al., 2014). Accordingly, an AC that uses lower hierarchical levels for assessment makes this an effective means of addressing future leader potential within a specific organization. This is the case because lower levels in a hierarchical organization have greater specificity relative to a given position. This means that candidates can be put into target positions unfamiliar to them allowing for a widespread assessment of leader potential. Thereby, on the one hand the diagnosis of leading potential is enabled and on the other hand the fair prerequisites for the participants are created, as they are confronted with the new situation and thus existing knowledge and skills only play a minor role. Because every candidate has the same challenges dealing with unknown problems where prior knowledge plays only a minor role, the AC is also fair to the participants in the process.

The use of realistic exercises that are based on requirement profiles developed through a deliberate leader-guided and organizational value-oriented process gives rise to specific behavioral dimensions for selection. These therefore provide relevant information about the participants while also promulgating the needs and culture of the organization in a way that maximizes leader development of selected persons. These have to be processed accordingly with regard to the well-founded assessment and any selection decisions.

#### ***11.4.5 Systematic Recording and Scoring of Behaviors as Key Element of an Assessment Center***

According to the guidelines, assessors must use systematic procedures to record and rate assessee behavior, prepare a report of observations before integration discussions, and participate in integrated discussions to determine assessee ratings. Behavioral checklists have been found to allow raters to carefully observe behavior objectively, as well as make fewer subjective judgments overall (Hennessy, Mabey, & Warr, 1998). Consistent with these findings, behavioral checklists appear to be the most frequently used system of observation (Eurich et al., 2009).

The systematic assessment process is a central distinctive criterion involved in the daily practice of assessment operations (Robie, Osburn, Morris, Etchegaray, & Adams, 2000). Usually the assessors are instructed to take notes during the exercises as they occur. Only after the end of the respective exercise are the assessment forms handed out, whereas the noted behaviors are allocated to the respective dimensions and evaluated according to the pre-established rating scale. The tendency of hasty assessment is counteracted through this strict separation of observation and assessment. Employing a multiple eye principle, a candidate is observed by two assessors, who first rate the individual under assessment independent of each

other. Then, the two discuss their assessment until they agree on one grade for each dimension. Depending on the design of the AC the grades can also be arithmetically integrated. After conclusion of all exercises, the grade matrix of each candidate is discussed at an assessor conference and a selection decision is made or the development measures are decided.

Due to the potential that the procedure will differ dramatically through daily practice, a targeted training of assessors is indispensable. Accordingly, assessors are informed about the contents, i.e., the targeted behavioral dimensions and exercises, in the respective trainings. Furthermore, they become familiar with the documents and the assessment processes are exercised by means of practical examples. Ideally, this is connected with frame-of-reference (FOR) training (Schleicher, Day, Mayes, & Riggio, 2002). This training includes videos or role-playing certain behaviors to demonstrate the key points, which comply with a grade protocol stipulated by the exercise leader. Subsequently grading is under better control and scores are likely to be calibrated to one another. That is, the assessors should make similar assignments regarding the dimensions observed and regarding the overall assessment. Thus, it is recommended to evaluate the assessors' capabilities at the end of the training, which obviously most of the firms also do (Eurich et al., 2009).

The selection of the assessors or the composition of the team can influence the quality of the assessment process. There are indications that a combination of line managers and psychologists leads to validated judgments (Gaugler et al., 1987). The inclusion of line managers is necessary concerning their acceptance of the procedure, face validity, and acceptance of the resulting assessments. Line managers also have profound knowledge about specific work or leadership context, which can be beneficial but it can also be influenced by stereotypes and social norms. In contrast, psychologists are more likely to comply with the predefined assessment system and often have a finer sensorium for critical behaviors. The guidelines further define that regarding the selection of assessors their race, ethnicity, age, education level, and sex should be considered with view on the organizational culture and the aim of the AC, but this is only taken into account by a few firms (Eurich et al., 2009).

Distortion-free assessments are an illusion and strictly speaking are not possible. Assessments cannot be performed without assessors or, in other words, when humans assess humans the subjectivity can never be excluded. Using a heterogeneous group of trained assessors, standardized documents, and a structured assessment process, in which the assessment is repeatedly compared, the unavoidable subjectivity is controlled in the best possible way.

### ***11.4.6 Feedback***

In the course of an AC candidates are exposed to different social situations and disclose a lot about themselves. Simultaneously, their behavior is observed, recorded, and assessed. The comprehensive information acquired thereby is on the one hand relevant for the overall assessment and the decisions concerning the selection or

development measures. On the other hand, the participant has a right and often also a needs to benefit from the experience as well.

Overall, it appears that assesseees receive a variety of feedbacks (Eurich et al., 2009). The written output is often a strength-weakness profile oriented towards behavioral dimensions, which should be revealed to the participant during a personal feedback discussion. On the basis of this profile the candidate is informed about what is considered as successful (leader-relevant) behavior. The line manager is usually the feedback provider, which once again underlines the importance that the line managers be actively involved in the AC. On demand the line manager can also include a psychologist. Relative to the strength-weakness profile the feedback report also includes target-oriented developmental hints, which in particular for leaders might serve as a basis for coaching interventions (Herd et al., 2016). In total, the AC presents an opportunity for developing leaders and it is inherently able to address leaders where they are in their development because assesseees usually are only working towards advancement at a level appropriate to their current location in the organization (e.g., a new entry-level hire is not applying to be the next CEO). Consequently, through the AC they can gain position and developmentally relevant feedback for growth as a leader.

By means of giving feedback professionally, not only the foundations for the individual, but also information for further growth and development are provided for future growth. Furthermore, providing individuals with information regarding organizational decisions increases the perceptions of fairness (i.e., informational justice; Greenberg, 1986), and is positively related to trust and evaluation of authority (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). At the same time the feedback discussion can be used to give the candidate the opportunity to speak about the AC and, if required, about the entire selection process. Seeking feedback from assesseees will not only help to improve the AC process, but it is also likely to enhance the assesseees' perceptions of voice, which is the primary component of procedural justice (Lind & Tyler, 1988).

With the feedback the organization gives a clear statement about what is viewed as good (leader) behavior. The candidate experiences by means of a well-founded basis where he or she actually stands and how he or she can approach the ideal image of both a follower and a leader. Furthermore the feedback is an expression of fairness and appreciation towards the candidate. This impression is intensified when the candidate has the possibility to express his or her experiences about the AC and his or her perception is one of the information sources concerning the evaluation and optimization of the procedure. Functionally, organizational commitment is enhanced through a dialog related to the AC and effective leader behavior.

### ***11.4.7 Evaluation***

Clearly, an assessment center is a very time- and personnel-intensive procedure. However, the decisions based on ACs have a great impact on the selection and development of leaders. At first, a newly developed AC is only a collection of

hypotheses above the connection between requirement and positional criteria, AC components, and success criteria in practice. Evaluation provides the validation required for the AC to ensure that requirements align with the outputs and serves as a quality control mechanism. This quality control ensures that above-mentioned connections are supported empirically and makes sure that the procedure is permanently improved. In this way the necessary effort is legitimized. Thus, an evaluation provides a way to assess that the AC actually provides a prediction about the (leadership) success (predictive validity) through the way it measures what has to be measured (construct validity), and evaluates the way the procedure is accepted by the participants (social validity). Consequently, evaluations are indispensable.

In the AT&T Management Progress Study, Bray and Grant (1966) reported that assessors' judgments of candidates' management potential predicted their actual promotion to middle management level at rates far exceeding what would be expected by chance. This was the starting point of the AC's history of demonstrating strong predictive relationships between AC ratings and criteria outside the AC such as promotions, performance evaluations, or salary progress (Adler, 1987; Thornton & Byham, 1982). The average corrected validity of 0.37 between overall assessment ratings and various criterion measures, found in a meta-analysis by Gaugler et al. (1987), has become a generally accepted benchmark for the AC's predictive validity. According to Schmidt and Hunter's (1998) review of selection methods, this average validity for ACs compares favorably with many other assessment methods.

However, recent meta-analyses have found lower average validity coefficients between overall assessment rating and performance ratings (e.g.,  $r = 0.26$ ; Hardison & Sackett, 2007). The reasons for this decline are not clear. It could be that recent research studies are not as rigorous (e.g., small samples, unreliable criteria), or that recent ACs are not designed and implemented as rigorously. Schuler (2007) expressed pointedly that the AC became a playground for amateur diagnostics and argued that ACs are increasingly performed by non-psychologists, the methodological capacity of the procedure is not exploited, and the face validity for the selection of exercises is higher weighted than the requirement reference.

If in contrast the methodical capacity is used, by following the guidelines, the prerequisites for an AC with high predictability are met. Of essential importance is also the success criterion, i.e., the outcome, which should be predicted by the AC result. The criteria outside the AC could be promotions, performance evaluations, and career and/or salary progress. Mostly these criteria are generated on a significantly less sound basis than the AC result (e.g., performance ratings based on unstructured observation in daily routine) and it is worth it to make a deliberate effort determining meaningful success criteria. This again results in a clear statement about what is considered as success in an organization. Furthermore, this procedure would also question certain still non-analyzed aspects and would contribute to more transparent career models in total.

Even if the contents of ACs are based on a systematically performed job analysis it is not assured that the AC dimensions measure what is said to be measured. However, establishing construct validity evidence for ACs has often proven as being challenging. For a long time it was expected that valid AC ratings of the same dimension across exercises would be highly correlated (convergent validity) and

ratings of different dimensions within an exercise would be correlated to a much lesser extent (discriminant validity). However, many of the studies that followed this approach found precisely the opposite pattern (Sackett & Dreher, 1982). Despite numerous advances in analysis techniques, the pattern of strong exercise effects and somewhat weaker dimension effects persisted, and the strong method or exercise effects were considered error or noise (Lance, Foster, Gentry, & Thoresen, 2004; Schneider & Schmitt, 1992). On the whole, this body of research led to the conclusion that the dimensions traditionally assessed in ACs were not viable constructs and that one should focus instead on exercises as work samples (e.g., Sackett & Tuzinski, 2001; and to the current state of the discussion Borman, 2012). In practice this means that the assessors are not requested to perform something impossible, namely the highly selective use of dimensions. Rather method effects should be seen as expressions of a situation specificity for a given behavior. That is, the dimensions are not renounced, they are the content-related framework of the AC, and serve accordingly as an orientation aid. When discussing and defining the assessments, the exercises have to be taken into account in a way that for instance there is a differentiation between communication in a group discussion and in a presentation.

Overall, the behavioral approach is characteristic for an AC. In the broader sense, the construct validity also refers to the confrontation with the content of the dimensions by correlating for example the behavioral dimension grades with established personality constructs. Concerning the selection of leaders it thus makes sense to check if successful AC candidates have personality traits that are commonly associated with leadership effectiveness. Results of relevant studies have indicated that the relations of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness with leadership generalized and that more than 90% of the individual correlations were greater than 0. Extraversion was the most consistent correlate of leadership criteria (leader emergence and leadership effectiveness) (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002). The comparison of behavior with personality traits serves for detecting the construct validity of a respective dimension where appropriate. That is, it makes sense when the behavioral dimension “communication” correlates highly with a trait like “extraversion.” Thus, where appropriate, non-behavioral measures can help with validating a given behavioral measure.

In addition, DeRue and colleagues (2011) conducted a meta-analysis that reiterated the importance of both leader traits and behaviors for leader effectiveness. They concluded that traits and behavior explain about one-third of the variance in leader effectiveness and that extraversion and conscientiousness were consistent predictors of leader effectiveness. Alternatively, there is sometimes criticism about the AC procedure due to the specific exercise design and a reliance on observation (especially when psychologists are not involved) and assessment of social interactions. The criticism is that there tends to be a bias towards extroverted personalities. Consequently, leaders should ensure that certain traits are not weighted too heavily to ensure an objective result that is consistent with the needs of the position and culture. For example, we conducted a study (Annen & Kamer, 2003) and identified a connection between the overall assessment rating and emotional stability (positive

manifestation of neuroticism), which is generally desirable in the selection of military leaders. Correlations with extraversion only showed in group discussion exercises and not across the board as one might expect if there were systematic bias. These results are an example of how the assessment can be performed to measure situation-relevant criteria in an AC that also make sense relative to the pursued leadership quality and culture.

Finally, the view of the participants concerning the respective AC also has to be recorded. On the one hand the assessors have to be convinced by the procedure in order to fulfill their tasks with the required commitment. On the other hand, the assessment center has to be realistic, fair, and professional from the view of the candidates to fully serve the needs of the organization by promoting leader quality and culture. Thus, the AC must have an obvious connection with the leader position on which it is oriented. These might be the most important requirements for an acceptance of assessment and the resulting selection decision. Furthermore the different aspects of fairness have to be assured. The candidates, for example, must have a shared view of the procedural fairness that all—independent of their origin, race, religion, sex, etc.—have the same chances to be successful (Gilliland, 1993; Melchers & Annen, 2010). And finally an AC has to be performed professionally and smoothly, which has generally a positive influence on the candidates' trust in the procedure, and consequently in the organization and its leaders. The recording of assessee's perspectives is generally accomplished with a standardized questionnaire (e.g., Kersting, 2010) and it accordingly makes sense to use it on a regular basis to keep an eye on relevant elements of social validity.

It is invariably stated that any leader and leadership development initiative must include an evaluation component (Day et al., 2014). As explained, an assessment center is an integral part of such a process and there must not be any exception because no organization can afford to use ineffective ACs. However, although collecting all types of validity evidence is essential, systematic evaluation of ACs occurs only 50% of the time, and when evaluations exist, only 33% of organizations report compiling written documents for ongoing or future use (Eurich et al., 2009). As another example, in German-speaking regions a systematic analysis of ACs is only performed in about 25% of the organizations. This again is not positive because the AC is always a tailored approach for a given leader selection and organization, which cannot be perfectly designed in one step from the office desk (Kanning, Pöttker, & Gelléri, 2007). Thus, in the end evaluation is critical for success.

Unfortunately, it seems that numerous organizations are simply satisfied with the fact that assessment centers are “working” and in this way the selection and development of leaders tend to be left to a certain momentum within an organization. To prevent the risk that an assessment instrument is uncoupled from the leadership reality in the organization (Elmholdt et al., 2016), and to generally care that the possibilities of an assessment center as corrective measure are exploited, a strict alignment to the guidelines and the regular quality control are indispensable from several perspectives, including but not limited to leader selection, organizational change, positive employee commitment, and development of a culture conducive to quality leader and follower development.



## 11.5 Conclusions

The risk that leader development and the related contents, processes, and decisions may develop irrational tendencies cannot be ignored, particularly concerning the appointment of individuals to leadership positions. Fortunately, unfavorable momentum that disrupts the organizational culture and climate can be prevented by means of using clearly defined processes for selection, assessment, and promotion. An AC can help with that process. The contents of the AC occur in accordance with the corporate and leadership culture, the inclusion of different stakeholders, as well as an external perspective and the regular systemic control and critical questioning of the process. With the implementation of the assessment center method, the required factors expressed above can be made comprehensible and implementable and affect both leader development and the organization as a whole.

By naming and making processes and contents transparent, the firm gives a clear statement concerning the perception of good leadership and which the stated leadership culture is pursued while also providing transparency to the assessees who know which requirements are important for leader selection and promotion. This can be of particular importance for military organizations and other organizations squarely in positions of public trust that are also concerned with public perception and acceptance. The assessment center method used by the Swiss Armed Forces is, for example, the highest selection hurdle for future military officers and aligns explicitly on the basics of human-oriented leadership (Annen, 2007). Therefore, the organization demonstrates unequivocally that it has distanced itself from an antiquated image of the military leader. The AC also allows the military to pursue a corporate culture in which the leaders are conscious of their mission accomplishment and that they can only reach it together with the people involved. Thus, in general, the assessment process may itself project positive perceptions concerning the professionalism of the organization and how progressive it is (Garavan, 2007).

The inclusion of as many stakeholders as possible is a clear sign for the initially mentioned “democratization” of the selection and development of leaders. Consequently, a broad acceptance of processes and contents is achieved, and in the result is concrete implementation where unavoidable subjectivity is controlled. Line managers react in their area of responsibility with a certain suspicion, as they perceive in the assessment center a limitation of their decision power. Yet, often it still applies that they make certain promotion decisions, and they have to be aware of what it means for example to suggest a candidate, even if he or she has been assessed negatively in an AC. The discussion of which information an AC obtains is thus unavoidable for all responsible persons. Thus, the AC method ensures that leaders are selected and developed based on the deliberate decisions of the organization and the direction in which the leadership would like it to progress.

In the context of the implementation of an AC it is recommended to engage psychologists and external assessors. They bring a neutral external view and contribute to the process of uncovering certain stereotypes and blind spots within an organization. They also promote a learning environment while assisting with the purpose of maintaining objectivity through the selection process.

But also the AC on its own has to be repeatedly evaluated in a critical manner. Eventually its methodical capacity can only come to full effect if the guidelines and quality standards are met. But as it is also the case in many fields of psychology, there is the perception concerning ACs that the existing potential of this method cannot be fully exploited in practice (Kanning et al., 2007). That is, ACs have limitations and to maximize the potential of ACs we need to be critical of the AC process as well and evaluate it continually for improvement. This is the advantage of the method—in particular concerning the required effort for professional implementation—which is not immediately obvious. Assessment centers are not necessarily seen as being as important to everyday work and careers of the managers as many other assessment or evaluation standards of must-win battles. So, in order to describe if an AC actually helps good leadership under way becomes a matter of whether the practitioners consider it as producing a legitimate version of good leadership (Elmholdt et al., 2016). In effect, this means that intellectual honesty is critical for obtaining consistent and quality results through the use of an AC.

The AC completes the processes in leader development with a comprehensive, multidimensional approach, which is based on theoretical foundations and practical experiences. And as a part of leader development programs they have broader implications than simply creating better leaders. On the one hand, they serve to strengthen or modify organizational identity on the part of participants; on the other hand they may serve as vehicles for acculturating participants into the norms of the organization (Carden & Callahan, 2007). ACs thus also serve as a business card of an organization that is willing to invest targeted resources into the development of leaders and to take a chance of designing the proper leadership culture.

In conclusion, assessment and selection are a clear way that leader development can occur both directly and indirectly in a given organization. The obvious elements are that applicants who are selected through an AC process will see what is important to leadership in an organization and how leaders are selected—this will clearly and explicitly shape the leader qualities future leaders will possess. Yet, the leadership aspects related to the development of social capital cannot be ignored because they not only impact leader development, but they also clearly shape the leadership environment. Organizational climate and culture admittedly can be difficult to change, but leader selection is one very clear manner in which they can be altered. Thus, due to their impact, assessment and selection need deliberate consideration in organizations to gain the benefits of their full potential.

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## Chapter 12

# Leading with Support: The Role of Social Support for Positive and Negative Events in Leader Development

Courtney L. Gosnell

*“No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself, or get all the credit for doing it.”—Andrew Carnegie*

*“Leadership is unlocking people’s potential to become better.”—Bill Bradley*

*“Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others”—Jack Welch*

The quotes above speak to the importance of growth as a leader—and not only navigating growth for oneself but also taking part in the growth of others. In addition, these quotes all allude to the vital role that relationships with other people play in propelling leaders to success. Although there is a large literature on leader development, the roles of the social context in which leaders reside have received less attention, particularly in terms of the diverse ways in which social support may contribute to leader development. Social support has been defined as “responsiveness to another’s needs and more specifically as acts that communicate caring; that validate the other’s worth, feelings, or actions; or that facilitate adaptive coping with problems through the provision of information, assistance, or tangible resources” (Cutrona, 1996, p. 10). It can take many forms but includes things such as providing encouraging words or reassurance, cheering someone on after a success or cheering someone up following a failure, or helping or mentoring someone through a challenge. Although past work has mentioned the importance of social support, there has not been a large focus on understanding the specific ways in which support may aid leader development or how different types of social support may play different roles or lead to varying types of outcomes.

Prior work emphasizes the distinction between leader development and leadership development (e.g., Day, 2001, Reichard & Johnson, 2011). Leadership development focuses on creating an organizational and a social environment that can run effectively whereas leader development focuses more on the individual—helping

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him or her to develop their own unique sense of self and identity as a leader—as well as building the knowledge and skills that are required. Social support certainly plays a role in leadership development, helping to create a more positive and effective social network. However, in this chapter, I focus on the unique role social support plays in *leader* development (a focus on the individual rather than the dyadic or organizational effects of support). I examine various ways in which different types of support (both support that is focused on helping us through negative events as well as support that helps us celebrate and feel good about our positive events) and different support roles of leaders (both as support provider and as support recipient) may help develop leaders. First, I briefly review past work on leader development, highlighting three primary areas of interest in this field (self-awareness and identity formation, motivation and willingness to change and develop, and development of competence and key leader skills), as well as current tools that are employed to assist with leader development. Next, I make a case for why social support may contribute to leader growth in these areas, specifically through its ability to promote acceptance, provide affirmation, and bring in outside perspectives. I then dig into past work into various conceptualizations of both received support and support provision in both positive and negative event contexts to more deeply explore the ways in which these processes may contribute to leader development. Finally, I consider how early developmental models of relationships shape social support, how to respond to failure given our understanding of support, and how support needs may change over the career of a leader.

## 12.1 Past Work in Leader Development: What's Important

### 12.1.1 *Identity and Self-Awareness*

One key area of interest in the leader development literature is a focus on identity development and a clear self-concept (e.g., Day & Harrison, 2007; Snook, Ibarra, & Ramo, 2010). Self-awareness, in fact, has been argued to be one of the most important skills that leaders need in order to develop (George, Sims, McLean & Mayer, 2007). Being more self-aware allows the developing leader to acknowledge weaknesses and adjust behaviors as necessary. In addition, our identity can include not just our current self (which we are hopefully aware of) but our sense of possible selves (Ibarra, Snook, & Ramo, 2008). Both our view of self and our potential self can help provide structure around which we can make sense of situations and plan future actions or work towards future goals. As leaders transition from role to role, it is important they are able to incorporate new aspects of their role into their identity (Ibarra, Snook, & Ramo, 2008).

When we discuss leader identity, we can focus on many different aspects. Hammond, Clapp-Smith, and Palanski (2017) argue that we can assess the strength of the identity (extent to which one identifies as a leader), integration of the identity (how well the leader identity meshes with other aspects of the self-concept), the level



of identity (which can focus on the self as an individual, the self in relation to close others, or the self as a member of a group), and meaning (how one defines a leader and what having a leader identity means to the individual). Furthermore, they argue that identity development often involves sensemaking (making sense of and interpreting and imparting meaning on various life events). Sensemaking in their model involves noticing an event, interpreting the event, authoring (or adjusting one's identity in light of the event(s)), and enacting (which involves actually using the new identity as leader). In terms of the impact of various events, Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, and Walumbwa (2005) argue that in order to achieve greater self-awareness, it is not just making sense of salient negative events that play a role (though these sometimes have received more attention as “triggers”) but also salient positive events. When individuals reflect in meaningful ways on *both* positive and negative events they grow in self-awareness and ultimately further their development as a leader.

### *12.1.2 Motivation to Develop the Self and Willingness to Change*

We want leaders to have a clear identity and a great awareness of the self—but coupled with that need is a need for leaders to be motivated and ready and willing to change, adjust, and adapt. If leaders cling to an initial identity and are never willing to make adjustments or challenge themselves, there would be little growth or development. Past work has shown that leaders typically rate highly in adaptability and openness (Zaccaro, Kemp, & Bader, 2004; Zaccaro, 2007).

Although organizations can force individuals to receive training or engage in other activities that seem fruitful, recent work has argued for the importance of promoting leader self-development—essentially allowing leaders to adapt and develop in the ways they best see fit (Reichard & Johnson, 2011; Boyce, Zaccaro, & Wisecarver, 2010). Self-development occurs when leaders choose their own developmental activities to aid them in enhancing their leadership and is thought to involve behaviors such as “engaging in stretch assignments, self reflection and self-awareness, and learning from others” (Reichard & Johnson, 2011, p. 35). Reichard and Johnson (2011) note that self-development is often cost effective and important for organizations that want to push forward and continue to adapt and evolve to changing demands and environments. Although self-development is thought to be an important part of leader development, past work suggests that some individuals are more likely to use these tools. For instance, Reichard and Johnson (2011) note that individuals high in conscientiousness or intelligence may be more likely to engage in self-development, but also note that perceptions of supervisor and organizational support can also influence motives to develop the self. In addition, Boyce, Zaccaro, and Wisecarver (2010) identified several individual factors that can promote self-development, such as greater work orientation (which includes stronger career motives, and greater involvement with and commitment to the job/organization), self-efficacy, conscientiousness, an openness to new experiences,

self-regulation, and career growth orientation (which involves exploring careers and seeking feedback about one's own career or performance). In addition, they found that for individuals who had low or moderate inclinations to engage in leader self-development, providing tangible support (in the form of a website with information about how and why to pursue leader self-development) was helpful in increasing the number of self-development activities they engaged in.

Other work has focused on the importance of “transformative change” or “changes in the leader’s worldviews and meaning structures” (McCauley, 2008, p. 9). Many leaders report having “crucibles” or experiences where they were challenged or pushed in a profound way that causes them to reevaluate many different aspects of their life—their values, their views of self, their ways of doing things, etc.—and find new strength and meaning after going through the experience (Bennis & Thomas, 2002). This work further underscores the importance of being open and willing to change and adapt. Leaders who aren't particularly motivated to develop themselves or open or receptive to changing key aspects of their self or leadership style may not benefit from or survive “crucible”-type experiences. All leaders will encounter some form of difficulty or challenge, but those who are most likely to grow and develop are those who are open and willing to change as a result of difficulties.

### *12.1.3 Leader Competence and Skill Acquisition*

Competence and skill acquisition is another area of interest within the leader development literature as leaders must continue to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are needed to lead their organizations (Hammond et al., 2017). Hammond and colleagues argue that competence can be promoted through observing and practicing leadership skills in multiple domains of life (not just the work domain) and that having a strong, coherent identity can help enable gains in competence.

There are many types of skills that can be considered essential leader competencies (McCauley, 2008)—some of which overlap with my earlier discussions of identity and willingness to adapt and develop. Day (2001) argues that when we are focused on leader development, intrapersonal competence is key as leaders must know themselves and be able to use their clear identity in a range of interactions. In addition, Day (2001) argues that key skills required for leader development include self-awareness (which includes emotional awareness, self-confidence, and an accurate self-image), self-regulation (which includes self-control, trustworthiness, personal responsibility, and adaptability), and self-motivation (which includes initiative, commitment, and optimism). Leaders who possess these skills (or can develop them) will be better positioned to further develop as leaders.

Furthermore, Goleman (2004) argues that emotional intelligence is one of the primary markers of leader potential (emerging even more strongly than other competencies such as technical skills or IQ). He defines emotional intelligence as including some of the same traits Day (2001) recognized as important including self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation—but also adds in the importance of

empathy (which involves the ability to read and understand others' emotional reactions and respond to them appropriately) and social skills (which involves being able to effectively build and maintain social connections and relationships).

A recent review notes that in addition to the skills described above, the following have also received attention as important to leaders and leader development: wisdom, intelligence, creativity, and business/strategic skills (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014).

### ***12.1.4 Methods and Tools to Promote Leader Development***

There are many ways in which organizations can go about promoting leader development to cultivate, amongst other things, a clear sense of self, an openness to change and develop the self, and the competencies desired for the leader role. Hart et al. (2008) argue that there are four primary approaches to leader development: (1) personal growth (emphasizes personal reflection on behaviors and characteristics of the self), (2) conceptual understanding (focus on theoretical understanding of leadership), (3) feedback (focus on providing feedback to leaders on specific behaviors), and (4) skill building (where specific leadership skills are taught).

Others have instead defined three primary types of leader development including “formal instruction, work assignments, and self-directed learning” (Boyce, Zaccaro, & Wisecarver, 2010, p. 159). However, this maps pretty closely onto the distinctions proposed by Hart et al. (2008) as formal instruction likely includes both conceptual understanding and skill building and self-directed learning maps onto personal growth and perhaps incorporates the search for feedback. The most commonly used tool for leader development is the use of formal instruction—though it has been argued that this is not necessarily the most effective due to poor transfer back to the home organization (Boyce, Zaccaro, & Wisecarver, 2010).

Scholars have also proposed theories on how the process of leader development can be accelerated or optimized. For instance, Avolio and Hannah (2008) argue that leaders show greater developmental readiness when they possess a learning goal orientation (focus on learning for its own sake as opposed to just performance); have developmental efficacy (perceived ability to develop), self-concept clarity (clear sense of who you are), and self-complexity (greater number of components of the self); and show metacognitive abilities (ability to think about one's own way of thinking).

Some methods have also received attention for their ability to facilitate certain aspects of development. For instance, Day et al. (2014) argue that 360° feedback has been shown across studies to be helpful in building self-awareness and competence as one gets feedback from a variety of sources (including from those above, below, and equal to oneself in rank). In addition, composing self-narratives (or life stories) has also been shown as a useful tool to help one better understand the self and develop self-knowledge through which they can evaluate new events (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014).

## 12.2 Potential Contributions of Social Support to Leader Development: The Big Picture

Although there are many ways in which organizations can promote leader development or offer formal or informal activities to promote leader development, here we want to examine unique ways in which social support (in a variety of settings) may play a key role in leader development. Past work on leader development has sometimes mentioned social support and the potential importance of support to leader development. For instance, Larsson et al. (2006) studied military leader development amongst officers from various countries. They found that everyday interactions between officers and their peers, supervisors, and subordinates played a significant role in their development. In addition, many officers referenced the importance of watching role models and getting feedback as also important towards the growth. These findings highlight the general importance of the social environment in leader development—and provide some evidence for the role social support may play in development. It is likely that many of the day-to-day interactions with their colleagues involved support—either emotional support or other forms of tangible support as they worked together to solve a problem. Furthermore, one way in which a superior or peer may offer support is by modeling (or teaching) certain behaviors to an up-and-coming leader who is unsure of how to do a particular task. Finally, social support can also be a context for feedback where others provide their thoughts on challenges or events that come our way and often provide perspective in terms of how they view the event and the options one has to deal with the event. The authors also noted that both social interactions and real-world mission participation played large roles in leader development whereas more formal leader training or development opportunities were rarely mentioned.

In addition, Allen (2008) found that some of the most useful, cost-effective, and enjoyable methods to provide leader development include things such as developmental relationships, individual/group reflection, action learning (learning via challenges presented to and reflected on by a group), networking with senior executives, multisource feedback, and coaching. All of these six methods (out of the top ten they presented) likely involve social support, but the top strategy of “developmental relationships” is actually defined by the presence of a relationship that offers support, information, and challenge. This work suggests that amongst all of the bells and whistles that organizations might employ—social connection via social support may be a key element to furthering leader development.

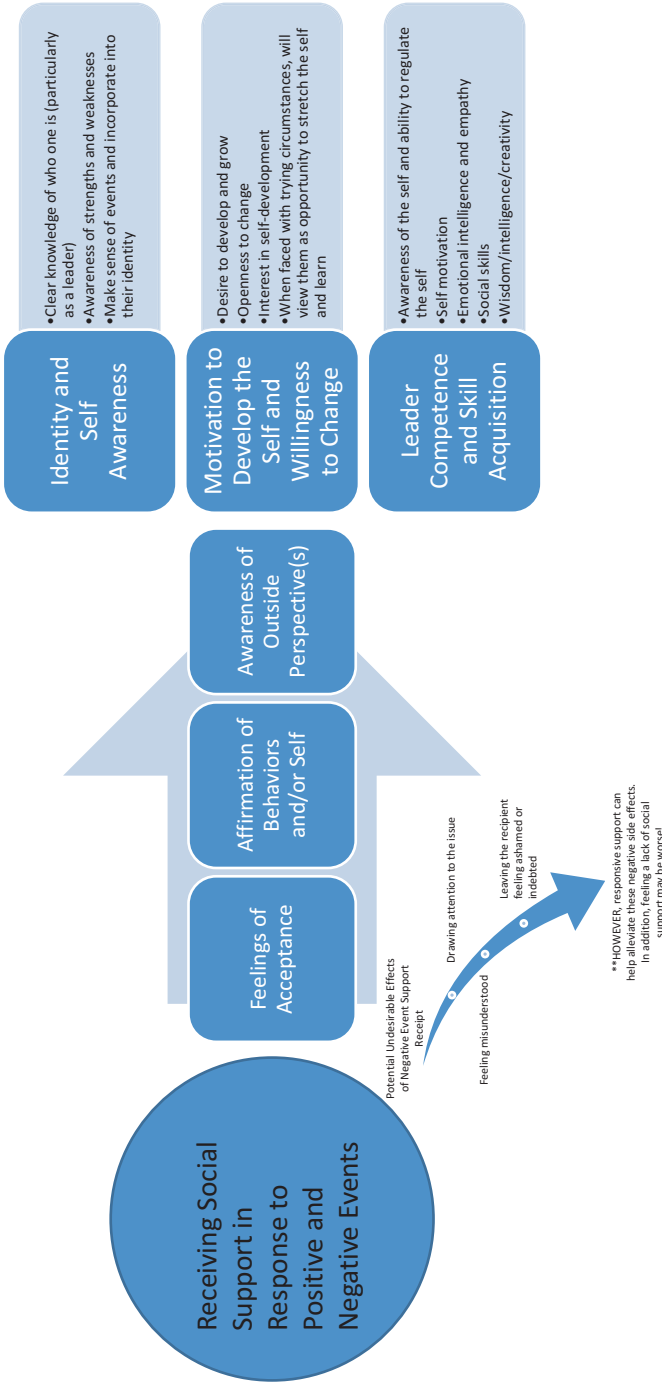
In addition, work interviewing successful, authentic leaders has noted the importance of leaders developing a support team (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007). George et al. (2007) found that most leaders have a diverse support network made up of personal relationships outside the work setting (spouses, friends, family members) and inside the profession (colleagues, mentors). They also note that leaders need to both provide and receive support to really sustain a healthy and beneficial relationship and need to have others whom they can be completely authentic with without fear of rejection. In addition, scholars are starting to recognize the

need to take a more “whole-person” approach to leader development—and are considering more and more how experiences from outside the work environment are shaping leader development (for brief review see Hammond et al., 2017).

Although there has been some discussion of how social support can be important to leaders and leader development, the findings from the broader social support literature remain largely unapplied to the leader development setting. Most of the work discussing the connection between social support and leader development focuses on the vague notion that having people to support you is helpful and doesn't necessarily explore the specific outcomes of support, the various types of support, differential roles of support provision vs. receipt, or factors that may influence our ability to provide or receive support. Below, I explore different areas of work within the broader social support literature and discuss specific ways in which this work may help promote leader development.

The model below (see Fig. 12.1) represents an overarching framework for the role of receiving social support in leader development. When receiving support, I propose leaders can benefit from the following:

1. *Feelings of acceptance.* As humans, it has been argued that we have a fundamental need to belong and connect with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2000). When others provide support to us—it shows us that they care and are willing to still include us despite the obstacles we may be facing. By communicating genuine care and concern, we can feel valued and accepted by our support provider. In an organizational sense, receiving support from those within our organization can allow us to further infer that we still are accepted as a member of our organization. Indeed, past work on social support demonstrates the value of support that communicates care and acceptance (e.g., Maisel, Gable, & Strachman, 2008).
2. *Receiving affirmation of their behaviors and/or affirmation of who they are as individuals.* When supporting others, many people include messages that reassure and affirm who the individual is. By communicating that we understand why someone made the choice that they did or reminding them of why they are a good and valuable person, we can affirm key aspects of who they are and point out positive aspects of their behavior. Past work suggests that high-quality support often involves messages that validate the recipient's identity, effort, actions, or emotions (Maisel et al., 2008). Affirmation also helps communicate to the recipient that the support provider views them as competent. Feeling a sense of competence has been argued to be another innate human need—which is important for motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In addition, affirmation is thought to be important in building confidence and shaping one's leadership identity (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006).
3. *Gaining greater awareness of outside perspectives.* Often when others provide support, they also share their own evaluation of the situation and/or what they feel the recipient could do or might have done. Past work suggests that high-quality support attempts often involve offering new perspectives or elaborating on consequences or meaning of events (Maisel et al., 2008). Support providers



**Fig. 12.1** How receiving social support influences key components of leader development

share how they see the event, which may oftentimes be different from recipients' perspectives. By sharing events with others and getting their feedback, recipients are often made aware of new ways of seeing their situation. In addition, outside perspectives from those in our social networks can often prevent us from engaging in pessimistic thinking or becoming overly anxious or negative about our experiences and can also lead us to view situations in a new (and hopefully more positive) way (Hazler & Denham, 2002; Moores & Popadiuk, 2011).

These benefits of social support all contribute to building leaders who have a greater sense of identity and self-awareness, a greater motivation to develop the self, and a greater willingness to change. Below, I use past work in social support to provide support for this overarching framework and to discuss practical implications for how this can be applied in a leader development setting.

## **12.3 How Past Work in Social Support Can Inform and Improve Leader Development**

### ***12.3.1 Perceptions of Availability and Social Support Receipt***

Perceptions that others will come to your aid in response to stressful life circumstances are consistently associated with better physical and mental health outcomes, including reduced anxiety and depression (e.g., Cohen, 1988; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Fleming, Baum, Gisriel, & Gatchel, 1982; Kaul & Lakey, 2003; Uchino, Cacioppo, & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996; Uchino, 2009). It has also been found to be helpful in terms of goal pursuit. For instance, Turan et al. (2016) found that daily perceptions that others would be there for you in the event of a personal problem amongst people living with HIV were associated with higher treatment self-efficacy (in other words, people believed that they could adhere to treatment more on days when they felt like they perceived greater availability of support). In this way, the basic presence of a support system may help fuel leader success as they are more mentally and physically prepared to handle stress, an important aspect of being a competent and self-regulated leader. Perceived support, after all, just requires having the sense that others will be there for you should you need them.

When individuals perceive that they have more support available to them, that is thought to lead to greater self-confidence and beliefs in the self, and these changes are thought to contribute to the benefits we see in well-being (Liu, Li, Ling, & Cai, 2016). In addition, those who perceive more social support available to them also tend to pursue more positive coping styles, which includes things like finding ways to adapt or change or seeking the help of others, whereas those who perceive less support may be more likely to avoid issues or use unhealthy coping behaviors (Liu et al., 2016). Other work has shown that perceptions that others will provide support to you if needed boost self-esteem and one's sense of control, which in turn influence overall quality of life (Warner, Schuz, Wurm, Ziegelmann, & Tesch-Romer,

2010). This work highlights how perceptions of support availability can play a key role in leader development. Individuals who perceive that others are there for them may be able to grow and develop in the face of adversity (more willing to adapt and change and confident in their ability to do so) and possess a more positive and growth-oriented view of self which may help them develop a more positive sense of identity and buy into the idea of a future self that is an improved leader.

However, actually receiving social support shows mixed effects. Some work has shown that receiving support, like the general perception that one has support available to you, can have positive effects. For instance, one study found that daily receipt of emotional support related to smoking cessation was actually associated with reduced smoking (Scholz et al., 2016). However, many other studies have demonstrated negative effects of received support on health and well-being (e.g., Barbee, Delega, Sherburne, & Grimshaw, 1998; Gleason, Iida, Bolger, & Shrout, 2003; Warner et al., 2010). Although feeling like others are there for us should we need them is a good thing, when we actually receive support it can be a blow to our self-esteem or feelings of competence and can lead us to feel indebted to our support providers (e.g., Bolger et al., 2000; Gleason et al., 2003; Shrout et al., 2006). This work highlights a potential area of concern in terms of connections to leader development. Although perceptions of support availability are almost uniformly associated with positive outcomes (and likely play into an individual's identity, sense of competence, and willingness to grow and adapt), actually receiving negative event support may actually cause a leader to question his or her competence (or even one's identity as a leader)—especially if the leader is frequently reaching out for support. This might occur when the support leaves the leader NOT feeling accepted or when the support given doesn't resonate in a way that makes them feel affirmed. Instead of feeling like one gained a new perspective or insight, the leader receiving the support may instead just be focused on what they now owe the person who was trying to support them. Negative events can often serve important functions in a leaders' development leading them to question themselves and move forward in transformative ways—however, the quality and helpfulness of the support given may play a key role in whether these events promote or inhibit leader development.

*Practical Applications:* This work suggests that perceptions of a good social support base are critical. Those who feel like they have support tend to be healthier, are better able to adapt to new situations that are thrown at them, and are more confident in themselves. Thus, leaders need to prioritize relationships that provide them a sense of social support. In addition, organizations that want to promote optimal leader development need to recognize and contribute to the maintenance of social support networks for their leaders. This could be efforts within the organization (socials, mentoring relationships) to help leaders find others within their organization that they can connect with and rely on. However, it may also mean giving leaders the time and flexibility to improve their relationships with friends and family members who often provide the bulk of our social support.



### ***12.3.2 Received Support: The Importance of Responsiveness***

I've highlighted the benefits of feeling like others are there for you, but have mentioned the downsides that can arise from actually receiving social support. The work on actual received support can seem alarming—Does actually providing support to someone else who has encountered a difficulty actually make them worse off? And by extension, does giving support to leaders potentially lead to hits to well-being and confidence in the self? Early work on something called “invisible support” led many to conclude that it was best to get support in subtle ways so that you weren't actually encoding it as support (Bolger, Zuckerman, & Kessler, 2000). The researchers found that when studying for the Bar exam, law students showed reduced depression on days when romantic partners reported providing support (via listening and comforting their partner) but recipients did not report receiving it—a process they refer to as “invisible support” (Bolger et al., 2000). Luckily, past work has shown that received support (even when “visible” and encoded as support) is not always linked to negative outcomes; the key to successful support (regardless of context or “visibility”) seems to be that it communicates responsiveness (or responsiveness to the self) (Gable, Gosnell, Maisel, & Strachman, 2012; Maisel, Gable, & Strachman, 2008; Reis et al., 2004). When support is responsive, it communicates to the recipient that they are understood, validated, and cared for (Reis et al., 2004). For instance, Maisel and Gable (2009) found that received support was beneficial when it was high in responsiveness—and high responsiveness was associated with reductions in sadness and increased relationship connection and security. This was true whether support was visible (the recipient reported receiving responsiveness support) or invisible (the provider partner reported providing highly responsive support but the recipient did not report or recognize the support).

The communication of responsiveness is likely to play a key role in the promotion of leader development. When a support provider responds to a leader's disclosure of a stressor and is able to communicate “I hear you and know you” (understanding), “I respect your thoughts, ideas, and perspectives” (validation), and “I genuinely care about you and am concerned for you” (caring)—these messages can directly speak to a leader's sense of identity (“Hey—I'm still a good/worthy person!”) and help affirm them and reassure them of their competence (“Hey—someone else sees me as reasonable, valuable, and possessing worthwhile ideas!”). In addition, the affirmation and acceptance provided may make them more likely to feel confident in their abilities to change or further develop the self as needed. If they receive support that is low in responsiveness, they might spiral downwards and begin to question who they are, whether they have the necessary skills to lead, and whether they are capable of growing into the leader they desire to be. Hopefully, leaders will have a strong support base outside of their work environment—that can communicate to them that no matter what happens at work, they are understood, valued, and cared for. However, this support may be even more important if it comes from within the organization. My husband or wife telling me they value me at home may be different than someone from my work communicating that I am valued as a

teammate or in the organizational setting. This suggests that organizations may need to think strategically about how to communicate these sentiments to employees.

*Practical Applications:* Even if we are approaching someone after a failure, the ability to communicate that they are still understood, valued, and cared for may be key in helping them to maintain their sense of professional identity and their confidence in their abilities—while at the same time challenging them to use this experience to change and adapt and develop skills or competencies that they may be lacking. If a leader doesn't receive that sense of acceptance and affirmation, he or she may not feel as confident that they can change and adapt. Furthermore, having the outside perspective of the support provider may provide greater insight into how they might continue to change and adapt to move past the negative event. Assuming that a failure is not so egregious as to warrant separation from the organization or the responsibilities as leader, organizations can encourage its members to be mindful of their communication practices and make attempts (especially in the context of a failure) to communicate that that individual is still a valued and understood member of the team and that the organization is committed to seeing the individual grow and thrive as a leader.

What strategies can be used to communicate responsiveness? Past work has outlined behaviors that contribute to interpersonal perceptions of responsiveness (Maisel, Gable, & Strachman, 2008): Understanding can be communicated by asking for additional information or details, acknowledging that one is following along (through paraphrasing or even a simple head nod or “mm-hm”), or even explicitly stating that one understands. Validation can be enhanced through communicating that one understands the significance of an event and where it fits in the “big picture,” agreeing with the discloser; reassuring and expressing confidence in the discloser; affirming the discloser's feelings, efforts, or identity; or sharing a similar personal experience that relates to discloser's experience. Finally, caring is communicated via expressions of love, support, empathy, or concern, discussing the joint outcomes (or joint investment) of an event, and engaging in thoughtful behaviors such as offering assistance or promoting a more positive mood (Maisel et al., 2008). These specific behaviors offer specific applications into leader development as organizations or other individuals invested in the development of a leader can utilize these strategies in an attempt to better convey responsiveness and hopefully leave the leader still feeling that they are competent, and that they are capable of growing and adapting even in the face of adversity, and without causing them to question their identity as a leader.

### ***12.3.3 Capitalization Support Receipt***

In the broader social support literature, most work has focused on how we receive support for negative events. Similarly, in the leader and leadership development literatures, there is more of an emphasis on failures and negative experiences shaping leaders and at times researchers have proposed that positive events may offer less opportunity for leader transformation (for brief review see Ellis, Mendel, & Nir, 2006). In both fields, however, recent work is making a case for the importance of understanding the impacts of positive events.

Support for positive events (also known as “capitalization” or “capitalization support”) provides an opportunity for close others to demonstrate that they are there for us—and it may be an easier context to communicate responsiveness (Gable, Gosnell, Maisel, & Strachman, 2012). Gable et al. (2012) conducted a daily diary study to determine how participants responded to positive and negative support attempts from their romantic partners. They found that individuals were more likely to perceive responsiveness (a sense of understanding, validation, and caring) when getting support for positive events—compared to negative events. In addition, they left the interactions feeling more supported, thankful, and admiring of their partner. In a leadership context, we know from past work that feeling positive other-directed emotions like a sense of thankfulness or gratitude helps promote authentic leaders who demonstrate fairness, honesty, and putting more respect for and value on others’ opinions (Mitchie & Gooty, 2005).

Furthermore, Gable et al. (2012) demonstrated that the potential benefits of received support are greater with capitalization support (and risks are lower!). When providers provide especially responsive support for recipient’s personal positive events, recipients show significant reductions in daily feelings of anxiety, have a greater sense of well-being (a composite measure of happiness and life satisfaction), and show greater signs of relationship quality (as measured by self-report ratings of relationship satisfaction, connection, and security). When they received less responsive support for positive events, they still had better personal outcomes than on days they didn’t disclose a positive event and it had no effect on their relationship. In contrast, on days they receive support for negative events, even highly responsive support could not make up for the dips in well-being and increases in anxiety. Highly responsive support did help promote greater relationship quality. However, on days when less responsive support was received for negative events, recipients reported being especially anxious, had lower well-being, and reported much lower relationship quality. In a leader development context, providing support to leaders when they succeed may be an easier opportunity to reinforce that we are there for them. Ironically, the receipt of capitalization support (as opposed to negative event support) is actually a better predictor of changes over time in how much we perceive providers will be there for us when something bad happens (Gable et al., 2012). And, as we mentioned earlier, it is the perception that people will be there for us when bad things happen that is so clearly tied to mental and physical health outcomes across studies.

We also know that receiving capitalization support can result in greater experience of positive emotions. For instance, Monfort et al. (2014) conducted a lab study on romantic couples and found that when one individual received feedback that they had been successful on a stressful lab task and shared their success with their partner, receiving a supportive capitalization response led them to report more positive emotions and less negative emotions—and also to show greater positive emotion facial expressions. Through the promotion of positive emotions, capitalization can be important in the leader development context in a number of ways. First, past work has linked the experience of positive emotions with creativity. For instance, participants in a lab setting who were shown a positive emotion-invoking film clip were able to come up with more potential courses of actions they would like to take

(Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). Leaders who experience positive emotions may also see more possibilities in the organization (a valuable skill) and more possibilities in the self (potential future selves, ways to grow/develop). In addition, they may bring in more creative ideas that allows them to build a greater sense of competence and effectiveness. In addition, past work has demonstrated that a leader's positive mood can spread to followers and lead followers to actually view the leader as more effective (Bono & Ilies, 2006). Thus, leaders may grow in their own sense of competence and self-efficacy if they perceive that their followers trust them.

Capitalization also helps us make the most of our positive events. Reis et al. (2010) found that when individuals shared positive events with others (as opposed to just remembering the events or even writing about the events) and received enthusiastic responses, they later rated the events as being even more positive than they originally rated these events. This might be important in the context of leader development, as capitalization support may actually help leaders better remember and encode their successes into their identity as they will view those successes as being especially good and important events.

Furthermore, capitalization can also build interpersonal resources (Reis et al., 2010). Reis and colleagues found that capitalization interactions amongst strangers led to increased liking, trust, greater self-disclosure of personal information, and more prosocial orientations. Fun interactions, in comparison, result in increased liking but didn't build trust or increase self-disclosure. They suggest that this may be due to the communication of security that comes from an enthusiastic capitalization response which may diminish concerns over self-protection (Reis et al., 2010; Murray et al., 2006). By building interpersonal resources, leaders may be sharpening their social skills, a key skill for leaders.

Recent work has begun to examine how capitalization support at home may have organizational or job implications. Ilies, Keeney, and Scott (2011) found that even when controlling for the pleasantness and number of positive work events, participants reported significant increases in job satisfaction when they received support from their romantic partner or spouse in regard to a shared personal positive event that occurred at work that day. It is likely that individuals who are more satisfied with their job are more motivated to continue to grow and develop and are more likely to have developed an identity that meshes with their organization. In addition, we know that "commitment" and "optimism" are skills necessary for leader development (Day, 2001) and these are likely fueled by job satisfaction (whereas dissatisfaction should make one less committed and perhaps more generally pessimistic).

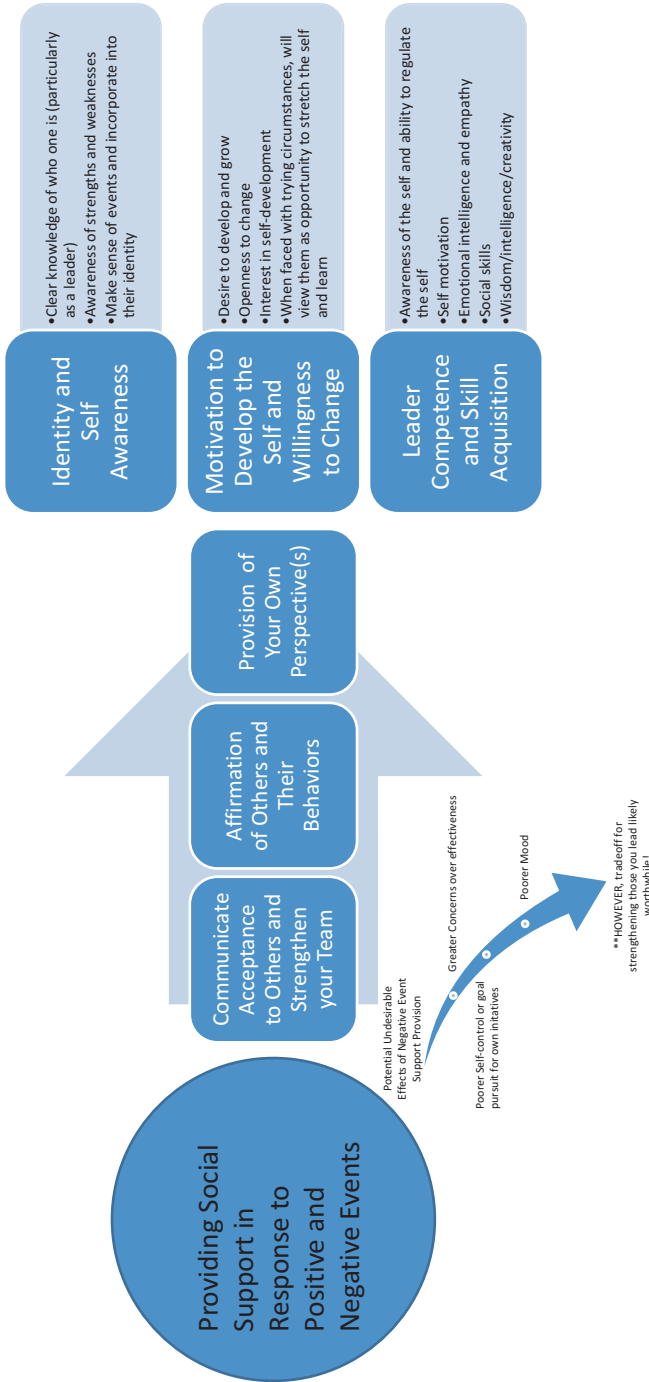
Finally, an exercise called "appreciative inquiry" is a method of leader development that shares some overlap with capitalization support (Hart, Conklin, & Allen, 2008). Appreciative inquiry (AI) involves having a leader reflect on "peak moments" of leadership (in other words, highly positive events and experiences) on their own and also in the context of group discussion. From there, the leader develops ideas of how those positive events might shape their future potential for impact and commits to take action to bring about desired changes for the organization. Many participants in their AI exercises reported feeling opened up to new opportunities and possibilities

and overall the AI exercises seemed to lead to greater self-awareness, a key asset for leader development. While appreciative inquiry isn't capitalization support per se, it involves some similar processes (having others reflect with you on your especially positive moments) and has been found to be effective and helpful for achieving greater awareness and opening the self up to develop and make practical changes in the organization.

*Practical Applications:* Going back to our model, this work suggests that with positive event support it might be easier to communicate acceptance and affirmation and (without the defensiveness or indebtedness that may come along with negative event support) capitalization may also free leaders to more easily appreciate others' perspectives on the event. If capitalization offers an easier context to communicate acceptance and affirmation, and share outside perspectives, it may also be an easier way to encourage leaders to solidify their identity, motivate them to continue to change or be open to new experiences, and make them feel more competent while also building competencies (e.g., creativity, social skills). Given this, organizations should make a point to celebrate good news and accomplishments. This can be done on a group level (parties, awards, or other "recognition" activities)—but should also be encouraged at an interpersonal dyadic level, especially to those who have contact with developing leaders. Many of these capitalization studies focus on the benefits of getting support for everyday events—not just major life events. Organizations often have built in celebrations or ceremonies for major markers of success. However, if a leader's small victories or positive events are celebrated (especially since small events are likely to happen more frequently than major events), you are providing even more opportunities to give your leaders that reminder that someone else accepts them, affirms them, and sees great potential in them. These small reminders can ultimately make a big difference in leader's identity, their motives to continue to change and develop, and their skill acquisition.

### ***12.3.4 Social Support Provision in Good Times and Bad***

When we talk about social support, people tend to think about recipients of social support or the need for support. More rarely do we consider how *providing* support to others may influence us (as the provider). However, as leaders, providing support may be a critical activity. By providing support, leaders are further developing key competencies that they will need to continue to grow and develop such as empathy, social skills, emotional intelligence, and wisdom. Here, I propose a similar model for the provision of support as I did for received support (see Fig. 12.2 below). However, when we provide support, (1) we aren't receiving acceptance but are giving acceptance and strengthening our team; (2) we aren't being affirmed personally, but are affirming others and their behaviors; and (3) we aren't necessarily receiving new perspectives on an event of our own but instead are able to provide an outside perspective to someone who is figuring out their own event for themselves (and perhaps develop new ways of thinking about situations ourselves as we seek to



**Fig. 12.2** How providing social support influences key components of leader development

provide support). Broadly, I believe that these aspects of provision still lay the groundwork for improvements in key areas of leader development. When we communicate acceptance and affirmation to others, we are typically reminded of where we are compared to where this person is which can often remind us of or reinforce our identity. We often communicate acceptance or affirmation by sharing our own similar experiences, which can also increase our self-awareness as we reflect back. In addition, communicating acceptance allows us to include aspects of being a compassionate person or someone who looks out for others as part of our identity (which many consider to be important components of a leader's identity). In addition, when we offer our own perspectives on an issue that can also reinforce some of our core values and how we view ourselves and our work—contributing to our clear sense of identity and self-awareness. Affirmation of a support recipient's behaviors and the offering of our perspective may also involve suggestions of things they can do in the future to fix the problem or continue to be successful (depending on the context of the event). These suggestions can often motivate us in turn to develop ourselves and continue to change and adapt. In addition, wisdom is considered an important skill in leader development (Day et al., 2014) and the process of providing support to others can help us develop this skill.

Although the social support literature has largely focused on recipients of social support, there has been some work to identify some of the outcomes of provision—and particularly some of the ways in which provision may benefit us more than support receipt. For instance, providing responsive support to a friend that acknowledges their perspective and ideas and encourages their autonomy was predictive of greater assessments of the quality of a friendship and enhanced well-being for the provider (more so than actual receipt of support; Deci, La Guardia, Moller, Scheiner, & Ryan, 2006). In addition, those who perceive themselves as providing support live longer, suggesting potential health and well-being benefits, whereas just receiving support did not have the same beneficial effect (Brown, Nesse, Vinokur, & Smith, 2003).

Although the general perceptions that one provides support tend to be positive, the actual provision of negative event support can carry some costs (similar to what we see with received support). For instance, on days when individuals provide particularly responsive support to a romantic partner, they also tended to feel less satisfied with their relationship and have increased anxiety (Gosnell & Gable, 2015). In addition, providing support for negative events in an everyday context (particularly when a provider is concerned about the effectiveness of their support) as well as in a lab setting has been associated with reduced abilities to regulate behavior (such as refraining from over-eating, or over-drinking, or the ability to persist on a strength task; Gosnell & Gable, 2017). However, being someone who typically provides more responsive support for negative events is still associated with benefits (increased sense of vitality and trends to be more satisfied with one's relationship and life; Gosnell & Gable, 2015). Together, these results suggest that there may be short-term costs when leaders provide negative event support—whether that is to colleagues or to those in their own personal lives. Providing support for negative events, particularly if they are

events that lead to a lot of effort or concern on their part as the provider, might lead them to feel burnt out, anxious, and less connected to their social network, and perhaps make them less likely to make progress towards goals (which can inhibit their development) or regulate their behaviors in other contexts (i.e., regulation of emotion). However, it is likely that ignoring these opportunities is not the answer. Over time, providing support to others for negative events is still important in maintaining relationships and feeling good about the self.

Recent work has also turned to examining how providing support for positive events may impact individuals. Just as receiving capitalization support can promote more positive emotions, prior work has also demonstrated that capitalization support provision can promote more positive emotions. For instance, Monfort et al. (2014) found that when providers gave positive capitalization support to a romantic partner via a message (after their partner had shared their own success on a lab task), the providers reported feeling more positive and less negative emotion. Furthermore, we know that when individuals provide particularly responsive capitalization support on a given day (more than they might normally provide), they tend to also report being more satisfied with their life, and more satisfied with their relationship, and have a greater sense of vitality (energy) (Gosnell & Gable, 2015). In addition, providing positive event support to others may motivate leaders to achieve their goals. Prior work has shown that on days when individuals provided positive event support to others (friends, family members, coworkers, etc.), they also tended to report making more progress on their own personal and health goals (Gosnell & Gable, 2017). In addition, providing support has been linked to increased self-esteem and a sense of control (Warner et al., 2010). Providing support for other's positive events may promote leader's self-control, lead them to feel more confident in their abilities, and motivate them to pursue their own growth and development.

*Practical Application:* This work suggests that leaders may find real value in providing support to others, in a number of ways. Leaders should look for even small opportunities to provide support to others when good things happen to them—as this provides rewards to them but also to those whom they provide support to. Leaders shouldn't turn away from opportunities to provide support for others' negative events—but can remain aware that constant provision may leave them feeling burnt out. Learning strategies to provide effective support may alleviate some of this strain (as concerns about being effective in support provision might be reduced). In addition, balancing positive and negative event support provision may be helpful. If you feel that your day is being drained with helping others solve issues or handle bad experiences, can you also make a point to ask people what has been going well and celebrate even small accomplishments?



### ***12.3.5 The Function of Support Receipt and Provision and Influences by Early Experiences***

As part of Bowlby's (1988) attachment theory, he argued that caregivers (or support providers) provide both a "safe haven" (someone we can turn to for comfort/help if something goes wrong) and a "secure base" (someone who supports us as we go off to individually explore our environment). Collins & Feeney (2013) note that exploratory behavior in adults can include things such as pursuing goals, making new friends, developing hobbies or skills, and working. However, they also note that individuals need that secure base to really fully explore their environment (Collins & Feeney, 2013). I think this captures an important role that social support plays in leader development. Social support can help communicate to a close other that you are there for them and can fulfill that secure base function. If a leader perceives that they have that secure base, that will free them up to explore. Exploration can involve trying on new roles or new identities, taking on a job or role that is a challenge or outside one's comfort zone, or innovating in some way (breaking from the norm to explore new options). If we want leaders who will innovate, break the mold, and really lead with new ideas and vision—they need to feel that they do have that base.

Furthermore, past work has shown links between attachment styles and the ability to be a transformational leader (one who is able to motivate and inspire subordinates to go beyond their requirements and contribute in meaningful and unique ways; Popper, Mayseless, & Castelnovo, 2000). Popper et al. (2000) argue that transformational leaders are likely to be secure individuals (who tend to have positive views of themselves and others). Indeed, they found across three different studies using different measures that a secure attachment style was positively correlated with higher ratings of transformational leadership—particularly focusing on three components of transformational leadership: charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Other work has also suggested that the potential to lead is associated with characteristics of secure individuals, such as low anxiety (Popper & Amit, 2009). While all of this work focuses a bit more on leadership development (how can we create an atmosphere of transformation), there are implications for leader development. Leaders likely gain a lot from providing individualized consideration in terms of their skills and abilities to accommodate and work with diverse individuals. In addition, their ability to intellectually stimulate subordinates likely also has carryover on their own abilities to innovate and push themselves.

More directly related to leader development, Drake (2009) has argued that attachment theory can be applied to coaching leaders. He argues that coaches can themselves help fulfill some of those secure base needs by being supportive and understanding and can help leaders to further refine and develop their identities by exploring both how their early experiences have influenced how they relate to others and how they can adjust their models to improve their leader potential.

*Practical Applications:* Organizations or leader coaches/mentors may want to establish themselves as both a safe haven and a secure base. In practical terms, this means communicating clearly that you are willing to be supportive and not overly punitive should someone fail (a safe haven) but also to actively encourage trying new ideas and be willing to innovate (and thus serving as a secure base). Celebrating small positive events (as discussed earlier) may provide a foundation for leaders to see the organization or coach/mentor as someone who can fulfill both functions. Furthermore, the work by Drake (2009) suggests that there is practical value in examining how one's early experiences with caregivers (parents) or other close others may have influenced how you relate to other people. For some leaders, these may be helpful models, but in other cases, early relationships may lead us to expect the worst of others or have issues developing trust. Reflecting on these experiences and thinking of a personal ideal vision for leading may help the leader to better understand the self but also develop new ideas of how they might want to shift their identity in the future.

## **12.4 Special Considerations in Regard to Social Support in Leader Development**

### ***12.4.1 Social Support in the Context of Failure***

Many people like to acknowledge the value of learning from failure, but prior work suggests that many organizations don't really do this effectively and suffer as a result (Cannon & Edmonson, 2005). Cannon and Edmonson (2005) argue that there are many barriers to learning from failure—but particularly in the social domain, people are hesitant to admit that they've failed, and even if they do admit it, they and their leadership often don't want to discuss it or thoroughly dissect it due to strong emotions and intense reactions that may arise. They argue that if organizations want to be as successful as possible, they must learn from small failures to help avoid larger ones and contribute to organizational knowledge (knowing what doesn't work is often as important as knowing things that do work). To remove some of these social barriers, they recommend creating a culture without strong negative repercussions for reporting a failure (perhaps encourage "blameless" reporting for errors reported immediately), having leaders themselves identify failures publicly (to model to others that it is OK to fail and learn from the experience), developing guidelines for analyzing failures in depth (such as the military's "After Action Reviews"), and incorporating diverse perspectives and requesting diverse opinions within these contexts, as well as building an experimentation-based culture where people feel that innovation and trying new things are valued (Cannon & Edmonson, 2005).

*Practical Application:* This work suggests many avenues for the work on social support to inform organizational practices. Social support can provide a mechanism by which leaders who fail can learn that it is OK to fail and can benefit from an

outside perspective helping them to identify potential causes for failure and encouraging them to learn/grow from it. If someone spends all of their time criticizing a leader for their failures, the leader won't feel affirmed or accepted and they won't necessarily have gained much from the experience. They are more likely to feel unsure of their identity and their competencies and may even question whether they are capable of growing or succeeding.

It is also important for leaders to keep this work in mind as they *provide* support to others. The support that you give others after a failure will either communicate that this is a learning experience from which they can grow (which will help them to experience acceptance, affirmation, and a motivation to change) or focus the attention on the failure (leaving them less sure of who they are and their abilities). This is not to say that leaders can overlook all failures (and repeated or serious failures may require immediate and harsh consequences)—but especially in small failures, leaders have the opportunity to respond in a way that will build others up and make them more likely to innovate and grow from the experience. When leaders practice this, they will also be developing their own social skills and empathy and, if done effectively, can benefit from hearing of others' perspectives on their failures.

#### ***12.4.2 Social Support Over the Course of Leader Development***

I believe that social support is necessary throughout a leader's development. One might argue that confidence, self-awareness, and skills build over time so that towards the later parts of a leader's career they need less social support. And, in some ways this may be true. Avolio and Hannah (2008) argue that a key component of developmental readiness in a leader is leader complexity (or self-complexity). They argue that leaders who have simply had more experiences are able to have a more complex view of self and are able to evaluate new situations in more complex and multifaceted ways. Given that, leaders who are farther along in their careers may benefit less and less from outside perspectives (as they may already have so many experiences with diverse perspectives and tackling challenges in diverse ways). In addition, there may be less of a need to develop their identity or self-awareness because they may already have a very complex and multifaceted identity. Certainly there is always room to grow and develop, but their willingness to do so might be less important given that they have so many experiences and ways of viewing problems at their disposal (they have likely evolved and changed many times over their career).

However, as leaders progress in their careers, the stakes of their decisions and actions tend to go up and up. Their visibility to others in and outside the organization often rises and they are held accountable for more actions. Support may be particularly helpful in these contexts in terms of its ability to reduce stress—particularly from outside the organization. A leader in a high rank within an organization has likely had the opportunity to feel accepted and affirmed by those in their organization. However, when placed in a position of higher power, they open themselves up to more criticism. It may be especially important that they feel a sense of acceptance

and affirmation from those in their own personal lives so that need to belong can be satisfied, freeing the leader to truly make decisions they deem as best as opposed to those that will just keep people happy or maintain their favorable impression. In addition, although leaders who are advanced in their careers may have learned about a wide variety of perspectives as they have served, outside perspectives can always be valuable. Sometimes, leaders who are in higher positions may need to get support or advice from those underneath them to better understand concerns that they personally may not be actively dealing with. In addition, ideas and ways of doing things are constantly evolving so being closed off to ideas can still be stifling.

*Practical Application:* Future work is needed to more fully understand how support needs may change over the course of a leader's development. However, even within an organization, it may be worth noting the types of needs and concerns that come up at various levels of training and development to better meet the needs of the leaders. Earlier on, it may be that support within the organization is critical for introducing new perspectives or new ways of viewing a problem whereas later on support from outside sources holds a greater influence on well-being and success.

## 12.5 Conclusion

Most people would inherently say that social support is a good thing and research has demonstrated some of the value leaders place on supportive relationships both inside and outside their organizational network. However, less work has sought to really understand how various types of support may produce various outcomes for leaders. Focusing on leader development and drawing from the broader social support literature, I argued that both receiving and providing social support can help leaders develop self-awareness and solidify their identity (current and desired), motivate them to be open and willing to change, and help them develop core competencies and skills needed to lead such as social skills, self-control, creativity, self-motivation, and an understanding of the self. Social support does this because, as a recipient, it helps leaders to feel accepted by others, affirmed in their actions or thoughts, and presents outside perspectives that might motivate them or help them to see situations (or themselves!) in a new light. Similarly, providing support can contribute to leader development as providers give affirmation and acceptance and learn from the experiences of sharing their own perspectives with others.

Organizations or coaches and mentors seeking to develop leaders should recognize the importance of allowing leaders to develop social support networks and support initiatives, policies, or programs that help leaders to build support networks within and outside of the organization. Furthermore, they must take advantage of “low-stakes” opportunities to provide support for positive events and successes that leaders have along the way. Doing so can help them to feel affirmed and accepted and provide insight into *why* their contribution is valued and what they may want to do next. In addition, knowing that others are there for you when good things happen helps you to know that they will be there for you when bad things happen (Gable et al., 2012).

Leaders can themselves seek out people who can provide support and wise counsel to them. In addition, leaders should seek to build up others around them using similar strategies. Whether it be support for positive events or negative events, leaders should find ways to communicate key elements of responsiveness (understanding, validation, and caring) to those that work above and below them.

Most people will agree that being a leader and developing others to lead are significantly bolstered by the receipt and provision of quality support from our social network. Many organizations will agree with the mindsets proposed here (value small successes, communicate acceptance after failure and ways to grow, help to build solid social networks). However, the challenge to those developing leaders is to really go beyond agreeing with these ideas and instead to work to implement them in practical ways that actually achieve change and desirable outcomes. It is easy to say “cheer on people’s successes” but may take more work and effort to develop systems to recognize small successes or create time or appropriate rewards to show that these are valued. It is easy to say “we value our leader’s social networks” but it may be harder to give them additional time away from work to connect with friends and family or to plan intentional activities within an organization that will enhance relationships and not feel forced. It is easy to tell your leaders to “be supportive” with their subordinates, but it may take more time and investment to teach them how to be supportive (and demonstrate responsiveness) via workshops, training events, etc. We are inherently social creatures. Taking advantage of the power of our social relationships via their ability to provide us social support can help us further develop leaders whereas more artificial techniques (formal instruction) may do far less. However, it may take more work to truly harness the power of social support and teach those within our organizations to communicate support in a way that makes it uplifting and a catalyst for growth and development as opposed to a hindrance.

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# Chapter 13

## Seven Steps to Establish a Leader and Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program

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### 13.1 Introduction and Background

Leader development is a popular topic as evidenced by the countless web sites, programs, books, articles, workshops, seminars, and lectures that are currently available. Despite the vast amount of resources addressing leader and leadership development, additional information comes out almost daily. Why the endless stream of new resources? What new information is there to disseminate? Is there no single way, or several different ways, to develop leaders that have gotten it right?

Much of the information available in the literature and in various leader and leadership programs is relevant to develop effective leaders. But some of it is of little use, in no small measure because of confusion about the distinction between leadership and management, and conflicting efforts to develop managers where leaders are needed and vice versa. Leaders are aspirational and inspirational, and set vision, whereas managers follow vision and focus on production, operations, accountability, and efficiency (Babet, 2013; Bennis, 1989). It also is important to determine and understand whether an education and development program is designed to focus on leaders, leadership, or both. According to Day (2001), “leaders” refer to individuals or “human capital,” whereas “leadership” refers to relationships or “social capital.” Leader education and development focus on intrapersonal variables (e.g., trustworthiness), whereas leadership education and development focus on interpersonal variables (e.g., culture of trust).

We believe that the lack of systematic steps to establish effective leader and leadership education and development programs may be why so much information keeps appearing, despite the fact that it is often redundant yet incomplete.

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Identification of steps to establish a program to educate and develop leaders provides guidance to create a thoughtful and successful program. The identification of such steps does not necessarily result in a single approach to this important and challenging task. Instead, clear and understandable steps based on the goals and needs of the program increase likelihood of success while highlighting what another program within a different field or enterprise might require that is different.

In 2014, we were asked to create a specific program to educate and train all students at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU)—the nation's only federal health university—to become effective leaders as well as physicians, nurses, dentists, mental health and public health professionals, scientists, and others to serve in the Armed Forces or the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). USU was chartered by Congress in 1972, opened its doors in the late 1970s, and has always provided some leader training in its curriculum. As directed by the Department of Defense (DoD):

“The mission of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences is to educate, train, and comprehensively prepare uniformed services health professionals, officers, scientists, and leaders to support the Military and Public Health Systems, the National Security and National Defense Strategies of the United States, and the readiness of our Uniformed Services.” (Department of Defense, 2013)

Consistent with this mission statement, leader training has long been an important part of the USU education and experience. In light of the substantial demands of health profession training, however, leader training has sometimes received less emphasis and focus than did other parts of the curriculum. Additionally, the graduates of the university were headed for work within distinctive DoD service environments and the USPHS. Each of these agencies was presumed to have its own service-specific leader and leadership development program, although not always easily understood or clearly articulated.

In 2014, USU faculty, staff, and students engaged in a rigorous self-study, including consideration of how best to fulfill its mission in the twenty-first century. The USU Strategic Framework (2014–2018) identified five mission domains: education and training; research and scholarship; leadership development and thought leadership; national security and global health engagement; and service. With “leadership” reinforced as one of a key mission domains, reexamination of USU's contributions to leader development and support of the DoD and USPHS leadership cultures became a priority. Our institution uses the phrases “leadership development” and “thought leadership” in a broad sense to include the individuals (i.e., the leaders) and the organizational culture (i.e., leadership). Our mission, therefore, focuses both on leader and leadership education and development.

This chapter offers seven steps used to establish the USU Leader and Leadership Education and Development (USU LEAD) program. Initial efforts were directed at the F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine and physicians-in-training. In keeping with the focus of the present volume, we emphasize leader development and mention leadership development. We currently are working to expand the USU LEAD program to educate and develop leaders among advanced-practice nurses, psychologists, biomedical and behavioral scientists, and dentists. We hope that this

approach, including challenges encountered and solutions to these challenges, will help guide the creation and long-term success of similar programs focused on leader development. The seven steps are:

1. Ensure institutional commitment.
2. Identify or develop a conceptual framework and institutional goals.
3. Recruit program team.
4. Establish within a supportive environment.
5. Create the program.
6. Integrate program activities into broader curriculum and institution.
7. Assess program, faculty, and outcomes and revise as necessary.

Each of the seven steps is described along with challenges relevant to each step and suggestions for how to surmount these potential barriers.

## 13.2 Step 1: Ensure Institutional Commitment

Too often, an institutional administrator, program chief, supervisor, manager, coach, or other individual or group of individuals proclaims “we need to identify our leaders”—presuming that leaders are born and not made, or that the leaders somehow come to be and the challenge is to find these leaders and give them responsibility and authority within the group, organization, or institution. Others in that group, organization, or institution may counter with “leaders will emerge or step up when we need them; we don’t need to identify or develop leaders”—so any efforts to identify leaders or any leader development program would be a waste of time, energy, and resources. Still others within that group may argue, “leaders can and should be educated and developed, and we better do that for our institution to endure and to thrive.”

The first step to establish a Leader and Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program is to ensure institutional commitment to the resolve that:

- The program is relevant to the goals, mission, and needs of the particular institution/organization.
- Leaders can and should be developed.
- The education and development of leaders require resources—personnel with appropriate knowledge and skills, funds, space, and time (including time in the curriculum).

Institutional commitment to these important conditions and communicating this commitment both in words and actions—notably with the investment of key resources—will go a long way to ensure that the program is clearly supported by the institution and will succeed. Without institutional support (with regard to the philosophy of leader development and resources to develop leaders) the prospects of establishing a meaningful program are dim and the prospect of building and maintaining a meaningful program is negligible. With institutional commitment and

support, a LEAD program has a much higher prospect to succeed but requires the steps presented below.

To establish our program, we were fortunate to have strong institutional commitment from our entire administrative chain, including the Dean of our School of Medicine (in which our program is housed), President of our University, Board of Regents, and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs—the highest-ranking civilian position in the Military Health System (MHS). We also were fortunate that our institutional mission clearly includes education, training, and preparation of leaders and that the institution’s mission holds that all USU students are to become leaders because these roles are integral to a graduate’s career in uniform and critical to the institutional success of DoD medicine and the USPHS.

Institutional support is vital because, as discussed below, the establishment of the program involves several steps and the execution of the program requires commitment and contributions of faculty, staff, and students. The institutional support offers real material and political support that is essential to program success. Initial institutional support, albeit necessary, is not sufficient for a program to be successful. That support must be sustained and reinforced by creating and delivering an effective program and by infusing the program into the institution to contribute to the mission and activities of the institution at all levels and with value to all members of the institution and its stakeholders.

*Challenges.* The administrative chain within your institution might require substantial details about the program before committing to support a leader or leadership program. Yet, it often is difficult to provide details until the program’s team is established and that team has put time and effort into figuring out just what they hope to do.

*Solutions.* Similar to any project, grant, or contract proposal, the champions of a new program must be willing to expend significant time and energy to be able to articulate the purpose and rationale for creating or expanding a program within a given institution. It likely will require more than a “letter of intent” but, hopefully, less than a full-blown, detailed proposal. The seven steps described in this chapter are intended to help program developers and also can be used to guide the outline for a proposal of such a program. In addition to “selling” the program to the administrators, it is important to “socialize” faculty, students, staff, and stakeholders as early and often in the program’s development as possible. This inclusion provides valuable and relevant perspectives and increases the likelihood of buy-in and program success.

### **13.3 Step 2: Identify or Develop a Conceptual Framework and Institutional Goals**

When tasked with creating our leader and leadership education and development program, we realized that it was important to identify a conceptual framework based on institutional goals as the foundation for our nascent program. We began by

searching in books, articles, Internet sites, business schools, military academies, consulting groups, and countless other resources. We studied the principles and models of leaders and leadership discussed in Bass (1985), Zander and Cartwright (1968), Collins (2001), Day and Antonakis (2012a), Fiedler (1964), Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002), Northouse (2013), Sinek (2009), Sonnenfeld and Ward (2006), and other sources. We studied the leader development programs and practices at four uniformed service academies to learn from their content and methods and to ensure alignment with the educational foundation that some of our students received earlier in their schooling: U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Military Academy (West Point), U.S. Naval Academy (Annapolis), and U.S. Coast Guard Academy. We read business school journals (e.g., Harvard Business Review) and web sites describing various university-based and corporate leader development programs. We consulted with faculty who direct leader and leadership programs, including the Presidential Leadership Scholars Program that is co-sponsored by four presidential libraries (Lyndon B. Johnson, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush) and involves academic, military, and government leaders (e.g., US presidents, former cabinet members, uniformed and civilian leaders from nongovernment organizations [NGOs], community organizations, business, and academia). Because our goal was to find a conceptual framework that best suited our particular needs (i.e., to educate and train health and healthcare leaders for the uniformed services), we also sought a leader and leadership development framework that was comprehensive but understandable.

Although we learned a great deal about many different frameworks, models, and approaches, we found many of them to be incomplete. To some extent, consideration of various models reminded us of the parable of a number of different blind people touching parts of an elephant and describing it confidently as either a “snake” (trunk), a “boulder” (body), a “rope” (tail), a “tree trunk” (leg), and so on. Each part was correctly described but the whole was grossly mischaracterized by extrapolation.

As part of the search for an ideal leader training model, we studied various leader types and how best to educate and develop leaders. We considered about the classic types of leaders—authoritarian, democratic, and laissez faire (Lewin & Lippitt, 1938)—and found them useful, but also focused on “who” the leader is, rather than what the leader does. We studied adaptive, authentic, resonant, transactional, transformational, and other leadership styles (Antonakis, 2012; Bass, 1985; Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Covey, 1991; Day & Antonakis, 2012b; Downton, 1973; Heifetz, 2000; Kilburg, 2012; Kolditz, 2007; Northouse, 2013), and found value in all of them. We read and evaluated countless definitions of leadership and the history of leadership, searching for a definition, approach, and model of leader and leadership education that fit our goals.

To our surprise, despite the vast library of leader and leadership definitions, frameworks, literature, and models, we could not find a single construct that captured all of what we needed. We could, of course, find a lot of valuable information in many different models and definitions. We realized that we had to first solidify our goal for the leaders we desired to develop in the context of leadership challenges we are striving

to address, and then find or develop a definition of leadership consistent with our goal, before finding or developing a conceptual model or framework upon which to build and assess our program. These steps had to be taken before we built our program. In conventional military strategic planning terms, we had to apply means (resources) and ways (processes) to achieve ends (goals and objectives).

The leaders we desire to develop and context within which they operate are adaptive leaders who can operate effectively within volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (“VUCA”) environments (Berinato, 2014). Based on our study of many “designs” (i.e., leadership definitions and models), we determined that we needed to take what we considered to be the best parts of various approaches because our goal is to develop leaders who respond, adapt, and learn from their experiences. (See Chap. 2 for a detailed description of ideal effective leaders.) That is, we believe that effective leaders draw from the many different leadership styles to succeed. We also realized that we must lay out our definition of leadership and then craft a conceptual framework to use to educate and develop leaders.

We define leadership as “the enhancement of behaviors (actions), cognitions (thoughts and beliefs), and motivations (reasons for actions and thoughts) to achieve goals that benefit individuals and groups” (Callahan & Grunberg, *in press*; Eklund, Barry, & Grunberg, 2017). This particular definition is intended to focus on the relationships and actions of the leader with regard to the individuals and groups served and influenced by the leader. This definition explicitly includes the three major aspects of psychology—behaviors, cognitions, and motivations/emotions—to highlight the breadth and depth of the leader’s influence and the importance of all three elements of psychology. Further, we differentiate “leaders” from “managers” in that leaders practice leadership as they set goals and inspire others, and are aspirational, innovative, and creative, whereas managers operate within organizations as they follow goals and emphasize administration, oversight, efficiency, and productivity.

In addition to crafting a definition of effective leadership to share with the adaptive leaders we seek to educate and develop, we decided that it was important to have a conceptual framework to guide our program. The term “conceptual framework” has been described as:

“a group of concepts that are broadly defined and systematically organized to provide a focus, a rationale, and a tool for the integration and interpretation of information ... Conceptual frameworks also provide a foundation and organization for the educational plan ...” (Mosby’s Medical Dictionary, 2009)

We believe that a conceptual framework is essential to guide, organize, deliver, and evaluate programs designed to educate and develop leaders and leadership (see Grunberg, Barry, Kleber, McManigle, and Schoomaker, *under review* for a more detailed discussion of conceptual frameworks as applied to Leader and Leadership Education and Development programs).

The USU LEAD program relies upon the FourCe-PITO Conceptual Framework developed by Drs. Callahan and Grunberg in 2014 (see Callahan and Grunberg, *in press*; Eklund et al., 2017) based on a comprehensive review and consideration of the leadership and leader education literatures described above. The FourCe-PITO

framework includes elements of various leader and leadership models. It is intended to help understand, develop, and evaluate leader knowledge, skills, attitudes, and attributes. It provides a rubric for leader education and development and includes psychological (intrapersonal) and social (interpersonal) elements to bridge leader and leadership constructs. The Four Cs—Character, Competence, Context, Communication—address “Who, What, When and Where, How,” respectively. The four levels of PITO—Personal, Interpersonal, Team, Organizational—address intrapersonal and social interactions and awareness.

*Character* (“Who” the leader is) refers to all aspects of the individual, including demographics, attributes, personality, attitudes, values, and physical characteristics. “Character” includes but also goes beyond the popular notion of character as someone with a positive “moral compass” who has high integrity, accountability, and trustworthiness. The FourCe-PITO framework holds that character involves every aspect of who we are demographically, physically, and psychologically. In the context of USU, character includes service identity because each military service and the USPHS have overlapping but distinct service ethos and values.

*Competence* (“What” the leader knows and does) within this framework refers to both role-specific knowledge and skills and transcendent leadership knowledge and skills. Transcendent competence knowledge and skills for leaders include critical thinking, decision-making, problem solving, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution.

*Context* (“When” and “Where” leadership occurs) is critical to become an effective adaptive leader, rather than a leader who has only one approach or who succeeds in only one context. Within the FourCe-PITO Framework, “context” includes physical (e.g., night/day; different climates and geographic locations; nutrition, sleep, and other aspects of well-being), psychological (including mental health status, attention, personality of leader and followers), social (size of group, relationships among members of the group with the leader), and cultural environments (including values, practices, attitudes, and belief systems). Context also includes effects of physical and mental stress that may affect leaders’ performance.

*Communication* (“How” leaders interact with others) is separated as one of the Four Cs in this framework to emphasize its importance. Communication within this framework includes both sending and receiving information, verbally (oral and written words) and nonverbally (nonverbal elements of oral communication, body language, and facial expressions).

Although the Four Cs (or FourCe) represent individual leadership domains, they do not operate in isolation. Therefore, they must be considered together, including interactions among two, three, or all four of these domains. They also operate across several psychological levels: personal, interpersonal, team, and organizational. These levels, known as PITO, were borrowed and adapted from the United States Air Force Academy (Department of the Air Force, 2011; Jackson, Lindsay, & Coyne, 2010; Price, 2004; United States Air Force Academy, n.d.).

*Personal* (the individual leader) focuses on psychological and biological aspects of the individual across the Four C domains. For example, personal aspects of character include phenotype and genotype, attitudes and values, personality, and self-awareness

of personal characteristics. Personal aspects of competence refer to the individual's role-specific and transcendent leadership knowledge and skills. Personal aspects of context include the physical, psychosocial, cultural, and situational environments in which the individual exists. Personal aspects of communication emphasize the individual's communication "receiving" and "sending" abilities, such as abilities to take in information (e.g., reading, understanding) and to provide information (e.g., writing) that is done without interacting with other people.

*Interpersonal* (dyadic relationships and interactions between the leader and others) refers to operation across the Four C domains with another individual. Interpersonal aspects of character, for example, include how one is perceived by other individuals, self-awareness of how one is perceived by other individuals, and how one perceives other individuals. Interpersonal aspects of competence refer to how skills and knowledge are shared with or applied to other individuals. Interpersonal aspects of context refer to physical, psychosocial, cultural, and situational environments relevant to each dyadic, interpersonal interaction. Interpersonal communication focuses on sending and receiving information (verbally and nonverbally) with other individuals in dyadic interactions.

*Team* (interactions of the leader with more than one other person) refers to operation across the Four C domains with more than one other person (i.e., beyond the interpersonal level of interaction) but with relatively small groups of people. This level of interaction predominantly involves principles of social psychology and group dynamics across the Four C domains, such as affiliation, reference groups, field theory, social comparison, and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1954, 1962; Lewin, 1936; Newcomb, 1943; Schachter, 1959; Singer, 1980).

*Organizational* (interactions at the institutional, large group, systems, and strategic levels) considers the Four C domains at a large group level. This level of interaction relies on sociological, systems analytic, and strategic principles.

Just as several of the Four C (or FourCe) domains usually operate simultaneously, several of the four psychological or psychosocial levels of PITO often operate simultaneously. The combination and overlapping of elements (domains and levels of interaction) create the conceptual framework of the FourCe-PITO used by USU LEAD. This conceptualization, therefore, applies to leader and leadership education and development. Our approach begins with leader development as the Four Cs are emphasized at the personal level. Leader development continues to be the focus as we apply the Four Cs in interpersonal dyads. Relationships and social factors are introduced in consideration of teams. Leadership becomes the theme when we segue to the organizational level.

Figure 13.1 presents the FourCe-PITO Framework. Key elements within each of the four domains are listed. The four quadrants outside the FourCe-PITO provide examples of what the USU LEAD program focuses on to educate and develop leaders within each of the four psychological levels of PITO across the FourCe domains.

*Challenges.* Finding/developing a conceptual framework that fits your program's needs and institutional goals.

*Solutions.* There are many different models, typologies, and approaches to leader development and education (see Northouse, 2013 for an excellent review).





Fig. 13.1 FourCe-PITO framework with examples of lessons

We believe that it is wisest to identify the type of leader which your program needs to develop and then to identify a conceptual framework that builds the desired leader and captures all of the critical leader elements. Input from stakeholders, alumni, faculty, and university administrators helped us determine that we were to develop adaptive leaders for VUCA environments. Further, we determined that we should focus on leader development and to introduce and set up our future leaders to operate and succeed in leadership cultures. Each program should consider their goals and level of instruction when choosing or creating an appropriate conceptual framework.

### 13.4 Step 3: Recruit Program Team

Once steps 1 and 2 are attained, it is important to recruit the right LEAD core team. The individuals must have the knowledge, skills, motivation, energy, persistence, and resilience to establish and “sell” the LEAD program to stakeholders, including participants, faculty, supporting staff, and clients/customers. In our case, it is essential that the LEAD program is “sold” to students as they are the main consumers of the program and its curriculum.

For our program needs at USU, it was important that members of the program team include individuals who have the knowledge, experience, and skills to support the three major aspects of our program:

1. Vision, mission, and goals: What role does leadership play in the organization and what types of leaders are desired to operate in various environments?
2. Relevant scholarship and research: What research and scholarship are needed to provide the foundation upon which the curriculum is based and the appropriate program assessments?
3. Curriculum development, integration, execution, and assessment: What pedagogical styles, experiences, and training will be most effective for the participants in the particular program?

We use the word “team” of relevant individuals purposely to convey our conviction that the core personnel must work as a true team—that is, a group of people (who bring different skills or abilities) who work together and interdependently with a common purpose. We strongly believe that because education in leadership must include substantial direct exposure to leader and leadership models, our team must reflect essential elements of an optimal team fashioned for its purpose. A true team focuses on team goals; team members are committed to each other; all members desire to serve the team; members communicate to build trust, commitment, and teamwork; members work interdependently to achieve collective outcomes (Hackman, 2002).

For our program, we chose to recruit a core program team that included individuals with relevant and extensive experience to work as partners in the roles of director; director of research and development; and director of curriculum. Finding individuals for these three roles was essential to meet our program’s and institution’s goals.

Our director has extensive knowledge and experience about the roles that leaders who our university seeks to develop will play once they graduated from USU, the needs and perspective of our institutional stakeholders (including the Surgeons General of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Public Health Service), and the needs of the MHS and the nation’s public health system. Our LEAD Director is knowledgeable about what kind of leader our program needs to produce and the leadership environments in which these leaders will perform. This knowledge and perspective are essential for our program based on the mission and goals of our university. The director focuses on the “Why” of our program.

Our director of research and development (R&D) has extensive knowledge and experience about the leader and leadership literatures, the psychology and social psychology of group dynamics and leader-follower interactions, and psychosocial research and education. Our R&D Director ensures that our program is based on solid principles and evidence, keeps our program current with new ideas in the field, and designs ways to assess the program, participants, and instructors. This knowledge and experience are vital for our program to be evidence based, to adjust based on new information, and to include quantitative and qualitative assessment of our program’s effectiveness. The R&D Director focuses on the “What” of our program.

Our director of curriculum has extensive knowledge and experience about educational theory and practice, optimal ways to educate our students, perspectives of and demands on our students, backgrounds of our students, the overall curriculum in which we need to integrate our program, and the faculty with whom we need to part-

ner in order to integrate leader development into the curriculum seamlessly and effectively. Our 4-year curriculum is complex and occurs at many educational sites (including lecture halls, flipped classroom and online settings, traditional classrooms, laboratories, patient simulation center, national hospitals and clinics, and military field settings). Therefore, our director of curriculum must understand the broader curriculum and determine exactly where the sessions of our program are best presented to students. The director of curriculum focuses on the “How” of our program.

We also included in our core group a scientist with experience in scholarly literature reviews, research methods and design, and statistical analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, and an administrative assistant/education specialist with experience in curriculum development, educational technology, and educational administration. We have found that each of these roles with the right people in them are essential to establish our program.

In addition to recruiting program core members with necessary expertise, it also is important that these core members have the openness and willingness to work together; to share and critique ideas, curriculum, and curriculum delivery in a frank and supportive manner; and to work effectively with diverse administrators, faculty, staff, and students for the good of the program. In accordance with the requisite requirement of our own students to a career of lifetime learning, the faculty and members of our team have made a strong commitment to continuous inquiry and learning. Our core personnel are in the middle of a virtual spider web of connections among related educational efforts or occupy nodes of a network that needs to spread and touch every aspect of the institution. Therefore, strong interpersonal skills are a must for the core members who represent the program in this never-ending outreach.

The exact makeup of a program’s core team depends, of course, on the program and its goals. As discussed above, our particular program requires personnel with extensive knowledge in diverse areas in order to achieve our goals. If instead a given program has one primary focus (e.g., the development of character; the development of communication skills), then a smaller core team or an individual with the appropriate knowledge and skills might suffice. We believe, however, that the inclusion of a critical mass of several people in the core team is valuable and perhaps essential because of the breadth and depth of information necessary to educate and develop effective leaders.

We also should note that the core team members are not the only individuals who should develop, deliver, assess, and revise the program. The core members should partner with faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders to keep the program vibrant, relevant, and effective.

*Challenges.* As with all personnel selections, it is important to find the right people who are knowledgeable, skilled, and willing to work independently on the requisite individual tasks and who can work interdependently as a supportive and cohesive unit together. It also is important that the personnel (including the core team members and others who participate in the program) have the necessary dedicated time to devote to the program.

*Solutions.* The recruitment and selection of the right personnel depend on frank and up-front descriptions of the knowledge, skills, roles, and relationships expected of the program members. The program team will need to model “horizontal leadership” (i.e., each individual leading colleagues depending on the individual tasks, skills, and knowledge of each program member), so the style of team interactions should be explained and discussed during the recruitment and selection process.

### **13.5 Step 4: Establish Within a Supportive Environment**

It is important to organizationally establish and maintain the team and program within a supportive environment. This suggested step may seem odd, especially if the institution has committed (step 1) to the program. However, the initial institutional commitment, although necessary to begin, maintain, and potentially grow the program, does not affect the program’s daily operations or even its operations, success, and morale for months at a time. It is vital that the education and development program is within a day-to-day supportive environment for the program to succeed and contribute meaningfully to the institution; the program cannot be an “island.”

By “environment” we mean to include the physical, psychological, social, economic, cultural, and psychobiological aspects of environment. By “supportive environment” we refer to a physical plant that includes appropriate offices, conference rooms, other work spaces, and places to interact comfortably; psychological and social environments that are positive and respectful in interactions among program team members and with others in the institution with whom program members interact; appropriate financial support for salaries, supplies, equipment, travel, conference participation, guest speakers, and consultants; and a psychobiological environment that minimizes stress on and among program team members while rewarding productivity, mutual support, innovation, and collaboration.

One of the most important aspects of a supportive environment is the group, department, division, or other organizational unit within which the program is assigned and the administrator or supervisor of that unit. Many of the program team members may be drawn from other administrative or organizational elements in a “matrixed” fashion. While this may result in harnessing the most effective and talented members of the community—not unlike a multi-sited research and development team in academia or industry—there must be a critical mass of administrative support to sustain the program. This unit leader must understand and support the program for it to succeed and to help remove barriers to success that may exist “up” the chain, across units/departments, or as a result of operational procedures of which the team is unaware or which create barriers for the program’s success. This unit leader also should be an advocate for the program to help explain its purpose to and gain support from other members within the broader organization, and to gain support from other unit leaders outside the unit to which the program is assigned. The unit leader’s positive relationships up the chain and with peer unit leaders are particularly important because leader and leadership education and development

programs can only succeed and reach their goals if they can contribute to and partner with other organizational activities with shared goals or expertise. Unlike subgroups within a department or individual faculty members and their individual research groups, the leader and leadership program only succeeds when it contributes to the broader institutional mission, philosophy, and curriculum. When the program is strategically aligned with the institution's mission, it also can provide leader and leadership development to the faculty, staff, and administrators, and bolster a leadership culture of cohesiveness, cooperation, mutual support, and mission focus. Leader and leadership programs fail if they remain self-contained and self-absorbed or at best generate siloed efforts that may collide with or fail to synchronize with similar efforts elsewhere within the organization.

The USU LEAD program is administratively and strategically accountable to the Department of Military and Emergency Medicine (MEM) within the School of Medicine. This organization was established because MEM has the task of providing leader education and development to the School of Medicine and University writ large. In addition, MEM operates as a model of leadership culture. Fortunately, the Chair of MEM has been and continues to be actively supportive of our program. The Chair provides necessary resources within his control; regularly reviews the goals and progress on activities to achieve these goals with program core members; attends and teaches in the program; provides feedback about sessions, activities, and scholarly works; and takes every opportunity to express support for the program with other department heads, deans, and university administrators.

*Challenges.* Where to assign or “house” the program to facilitate leader development while also promoting quality leadership within the organization.

*Solutions.* A supportive environment is so important to the program's success and morale of personnel that careful thought should be given to where the program is assigned, the management and leadership structure of the unit/department/division in which the program is assigned, and how the program will be perceived by other members of that unit. Frank discussions are necessary to determine the unit/department/division where the program should be “housed” to receive optimal support.

## **13.6 Step 5: Create the Program**

With steps 1–4 complete, the next objective is determining what the particular program should entail and how to create that program in detail. The USU LEAD program, for example, includes outreach, scholarship and research, and curriculum that address leader and leadership education and development. For our program, outreach is ongoing with our stakeholders, scholarship and research are central to our approach and values, and curriculum is the delivery and dissemination of our education and development concepts.

Many programs of which we are aware have created curriculum without a conceptual framework. That certainly can be done, but we believe it is unlikely to be

cohesive, comprehensive, or coherent to the students or faculty involved in the program. Scholarship is needed to evaluate and maintain consideration of concepts relevant to leader education and development. Input from stakeholders and ongoing assessments of the curriculum's content and relevance, student performance and reactions, and faculty clarity and effectiveness all are necessary to maintain and improve the program's quality.

An essential realization for effective leader and leadership education and development programs is that leaders should constantly grow. Learning for even the most experienced leader must be continuous and no single encounter with an educational opportunity will be the definitive experience or encounter in this lifelong career journey. As much as possible, the didactic sessions for our program focus on exercises and workshops based on principles, findings, and application of concepts from psychology and social psychology (e.g., social facilitation, group dynamics, informal social communication, social comparison, affiliation, deindividuation and individuation, persuasive communication, social and cognitive biases, personality, emotional intelligence) relevant to real-world situations (e.g., effective communication, difficult conversations, performance under stress, team building; see, for example, Festinger, 1950, 1954; Festinger, Schachter, and Back, 1950; Goleman, 1995; Schachter, 1959; Singer, 1980; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). In addition, it is important to present curriculum with effective pedagogical techniques, including adult learning strategies, peer-led sessions, as well as innovative up-to-date education technologies, such as flipped classrooms and discussion boards. Students must be included in discussions and offer feedback on how best to present curriculum. Even the three directors of our program, with decades of leader and leadership experience in diverse environments, experience new insights and revelations about the complexity of leader and leadership challenges as we interact with and learn from our students. It is essential that leaders remain open to learning how to overcome these educational challenges by using the lessons taught and feedback from students and colleagues to assess and adapt the program's specific needs and desired outcomes.

The FourCe-PITO Framework—which was developed based on our goal to develop leaders who could draw from various leader styles as the situation demands—guides the creation of our curriculum. We begin our first session with definitions of leadership, a brief history of the study of leaders and leadership, and the components and rationale for our conceptual framework. We explain that the conceptual framework guides the curriculum, how to assess performance, and how to evaluate leaders and leadership of subordinates, peers, supervisors, and ourselves.

Initially, our curriculum focuses on the personal and interpersonal aspects of each of the Four Cs in our curriculum, with exercises and discussions designed to emphasize relevance of each of the Four C domains. With regard to character, we begin by emphasizing self-awareness of personality, demographics, physical appearance, values, attitudes, attributes, and all other aspects of character. For competence, we highlight that the School of Medicine courses focus on the development of role-specific competencies, whereas the application of course material in laboratories

and with patients teaches transcendent leadership knowledge and skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution. With regard to context, we point out that context includes physical, psychological, and social environments; cultural differences; and stress. We emphasize how stress affects decision making and performance because it is particularly relevant in military medicine that is practiced under duress in VUCA environments. For communication, we emphasize that communication involves sending and receiving, verbally and nonverbally.

Over the course of our 4-year curriculum, we focus on leader education and development and gradually incorporate leadership education and development. We continue to point out how personal and interpersonal aspects of the Four Cs are relevant as we introduce and incorporate team and organizational aspects of each of the Four Cs. By the third year of our curriculum, the emphasis is on the team and how personal and interpersonal levels of awareness and interaction affect the team. Organizational levels of interaction and perspective are mentioned in the early years of training and become more salient by the end of the 4-year curriculum to prepare our future leaders to perform in the leadership cultures of the uniformed services.

USU LEAD sessions involve plenary introductions to the topic followed by small group exercises and then discussions of main points, lessons learned, observations, questions, and comments from participants. We provide as much experiential learning as possible in applied and field settings to reinforce the lessons of our program and to underscore their relevance to real-life and professional settings. For example, students learn about and discuss implications and applications of personality types, emotional and social intelligence, and cultural differences to difficult conversations (e.g., medical and supervisor-subordinate scenarios), crisis situations (e.g., medical emergencies with limited resources), and challenging tasks (e.g., obstacle courses that require teamwork). Students practice effective communication skills as individuals, pairs, and small groups. We also conduct military medical field exercises that involve simulated patients and environmental stressors (e.g., darkness, noise, enemy combatants) to practice and assess leader and team performance.

In addition, we work in concert with faculty members who are responsible for other courses and sessions in the medical school curriculum to reinforce concepts and applications relevant to leader development. For example, our medical students engage in courses focusing on reflective practice and introduction to clinical skills. Each of these courses involves aspects of leader development within our conceptual FourCe-PITO Framework (e.g., self-awareness of personality, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, problem solving, effective communication). We partner to ensure common language and to underscore common themes.

Of the various topics within the FourCe domains, we find that communication is a good way to begin with experiential sessions. We provide sessions focused on effective communication as individuals and in small groups, difficult conversations (delivering and receiving medically difficult and performance critiques), communicating under stress (crisis communication), and communicating various types of briefings (we have students prepare military informational and decision briefings that are delivered to and evaluated by fellow students and faculty). Students understand

that communication is important and the sessions can be designed in ways that are interesting and entertaining.

Character is addressed in our discussions and exercises regarding personality types, personal biases (explicit and implicit), and aspects of self that contribute to who we are and how we react to situations and interact with other people. We also coordinate with colleagues teaching medical ethics and reflective practice. We are actively planning to incorporate our leader development and leadership orientation with concurrent teaching on medical ethics, military and uniformed officership, reflective practice and identity formation, and clinical communication into a comprehensive “professionalism” curriculum.

Competence (role-specific and transcendent leadership skills and knowledge) is taught and evaluated throughout the 4 years of instruction. Faculty who instruct students in basic medical sciences and clinical practice emphasize knowledge and skill competence in the classroom, laboratories, discussion groups, and clinical settings (i.e., role-specific competence as a healthcare professional). In addition, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making involving diagnoses and treatments as well as interactions with patients, families, colleagues, and staff (i.e., transcendent leader skills and knowledge) are practiced and discussed in clinical and military medical training situations. We believe that it is important to draw the distinction for our students between role-specific and transcendent leader competencies. Students engaged in intensive education and training about their roles as physicians may wrongly infer that success as a leader in a professional setting relies solely upon technical skills as a physician. The failure of many leaders may be attributed to their success in specific roles that cannot be expanded into their roles as leaders of more complex, multidisciplinary teams and organizations.

Context is emphasized in exercises that create moderate stress and in military medical simulations. For example, students learn about effects of stress on performance (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908) and effects of stress on dominant performance (Zajonc, 1965) and practice tactical combat casualty care (e.g., stopping bleeding, treating wounds, safeguarding patients) in stressful situations (e.g., limited time, enemy combatants, darkness of night). Cultural differences and intercultural communication also are discussed as part of context.

Perhaps the most challenging part of our curriculum is not what we ask of the students, but what we ask of the faculty. We strive to use pedagogical styles and educational techniques that encourage every student to participate and for students to work together in dyads and in small groups. This approach begins during the first year of medical school, continues throughout the 4 years of education, and culminates in a 72-h realistic military medical field exercise which challenges leader and team performance of small and large groups of students performing military and medical tasks while being evaluated by faculty. The challenge for faculty is to maintain quality control of the leaders and leadership experience with minimal interference and to monitor leader and team performance.

As mentioned above, scholarship and outreach are critical elements of our program. We believe that it is essential to consider, study, and apply principles and concepts of leadership that have been offered and evaluated by various scholars and to conduct our own scholarship and research to contribute to this literature.



Our research “arm” also is tasked with evaluating the effectiveness of our program and the performance and reactions of our students, faculty, and staff to elements of the program. Outreach also is a critical element of our program that we conduct to keep our program relevant and to use as a source of assessment along with our other research activities to quality control and to improve our curriculum.

*Challenges.* What to teach; how to teach; focusing on lifelong learning tools and experiential workshops; getting feedback from the program team; getting feedback from outside the team (to include students, other faculty, etc.); making changes in how you teach based on feedback. Also, what research and outreach to conduct that is relevant to the particular program.

*Solutions.* Teaching effectively requires constant self-assessment, openness to feedback, and the endless search for new and better ways to reach students. The “solution” is to decide which activities (e.g., teaching, scholarship, outreach) are a high priority that requires continuous effort and to set up ways to monitor and improve these activities.

### **13.7 Step 6: Integrate Program Activities into Broader Curriculum and Institution**

The stovepiping of individual academic topics fences off information that is relevant to other topics and fails to teach application and integration. Therefore, we have come to realize that it is best to integrate basic information with application. In addition, we have found that experiential learning in small groups is well accepted by students and, therefore, is most effective.

The development of leaders and curriculum and experiences designed to develop leaders requires integration into the broader curriculum to be effectively learned and applicable to real-world situations. The challenge is how to do that.

We have found that it is important to “inventory” the broader curriculum in which the leader and leadership program must be integrated. This inventory should identify content that is relevant to the leader and leadership program curriculum to be sure that everyone is on the same page and does not provide contradictory information. Then it is necessary to align the program curriculum with the broader curriculum to present information at opportune times that will be most effective. Ideally, the principles covered in a particular session should be reinforced in other sessions and similar terms should be used to help students understand the application and relevance of the program sessions.

Because curriculum time is precious, it is especially important to form meaningful partnerships with faculty who are teaching similar and related information. Key concepts and points should be repeated enough to emphasize and support, but not so much as to waste valuable student time. Reinforcing a principle by experiential learning, small group discussions, and reflective writing is ideal. Taking the pulse of the students in a regular but non-intrusive manner provides valuable information to adjust the delivery of key concepts.

To solidify and grow institutional support, it is useful to find ways to provide the program curriculum developed for one particular school (e.g., School of Medicine) to other schools within the university or institution (e.g., graduate programs, nursing school, dental school). In addition, it is important to figure out how to integrate the program activities (including curriculum, scholarship, and outreach) with the institution's mission and goals to maintain institutional support and to emphasize the leadership program's relevance.

*Challenges.* Stovepiped academic courses, topics, and professional development that fence off relevant information critical to teaching application and integration are continual challenges. Partnering effectively with non-program faculty to include and refer to program principles within their sessions can also be a challenge.

*Solutions.* Communication among faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders among all relevant programs is key to getting buy-in for the integration of leader and leadership information into the broader curriculum. Cross-program and inter-school working groups may be useful as well as inclusion of administrators who oversee the broad curriculum, including deans, provosts, and vice presidents for education. It is essential to partner with faculty, administrators, staff, students, and stakeholders for optimal impact.

### **13.8 Step 7: Assess Program, Faculty, and Outcomes and Revise as Necessary**

The creation of a leader and leadership education and development program is, itself, a difficult task. But the ultimate test is whether or not the program is effective. To determine efficacy requires continued assessment of the program, its faculty, and its outcomes.

To assess the program requires clear identification of its goals. For us, the goals are to develop outstanding health leaders (practitioners, scientists, and policy makers) for the uniformed services. So how do we determine if our program is effective?

We evaluate students' knowledge and understanding of the major domains identified as essential to develop effective leaders. The FourCe domains at each of the four PITO levels of interaction provide a framework both for what to include in our program and for what to assess with regard to students' knowledge and skills. We give quizzes to students following classroom sessions, discussions, and group exercises. We also assess and provide feedback to students about their leader and team performance in military medical field settings. In addition, we are working to assess whether the outcomes associated with our program are effective. We are partnering with colleagues who have spent years following the performances of our students from the first day of medical school, throughout pre-clerkship and clerkship training, and for years after graduation. The USU Long-Term Career Outcome Study (LTCOS) has been a valuable way to evaluate our selection process and educational programs. Now we are adding performance in our curriculum, including classroom performance and leadership performance in military medical simulated field set-

tings, to the LTCOS study. We also are assessing personality and individual differences as they might relate to leader and leadership performance.

Development and assessment of faculty is another important aspect of effective programs. Like many schools, we offer faculty development workshops and individual mentoring to help faculty develop their skills as educators, scholars, and practitioners. With regard to our program, we provide extensive training to faculty who participate in our military medical field training exercises to help them become more effective educators and leaders themselves. We also partner with faculty whose activities are relevant to our program to learn from them and to share lessons that we have learned to optimize performance.

It also is important to assess other aspects of the program's activities. For example, if scholarship is an element or goal of the program, then the quality and influence of the scholarship should be assessed. Reactions of colleagues outside our university, impact of our publications as reflected by citations, and unsolicited invitations for our program members to address and visit other institutions and groups all provide useful feedback about our contributions to leader and leadership education scholarship. If outreach is a key program goal, then it too should be assessed. For us, outreach is evaluated by gathering input from military treatment facility and public health personnel where our students and alumni practice medicine. The bottom line is that program assessment should be continuous and the information gained should be used to improve the program's activities. In a fashion analogous to outreach to the service academies and other educational program sources for our students, we plan to partner with institutions and programs that continue leader and leadership development beyond the period at USU, such as the military staff colleges and senior service colleges that graduates may attend later in their careers. This approach ensures a continuity of themes and efforts across the career span of our students and graduates.

*Challenges.* Determining what you want to get out of an assessment (e.g., assessment of program's effectiveness, perception of program by students and faculty, assessment of faculty knowledge or teaching style, assessment by students of the faculty, assessment of students by faculty, peer assessment of students and of faculty).

*Solutions.* It is important to determine what is to be assessed and by whom, and how it can be meaningfully assessed. We are developing assessment tools as part of our scholarly work and hope to identify valid and reliable instruments and techniques. The assessment approach and tools should be consistent with the assessment practices in the institution/university as a whole.

## 13.9 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter describes seven steps to establish a Leader and Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program that we have used at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences:

1. Ensure institutional commitment.
2. Identify or develop a conceptual framework and institutional goals.
3. Recruit program team.
4. Establish within a supportive environment.
5. Create the program.
6. Integrate program activities into broader curriculum and institution.
7. Assess program, faculty, and outcomes and revise as necessary.

Each step is described along with challenges and potential solutions. We hope that our lessons learned will assist with the establishment, development, implementation, and refinement of other leadership education programs. We realize that mission, goals, needs, resources, and challenges at each institution will determine which of these (and perhaps other) steps will be of value.

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# Chapter 14

## Frameworks of Police Leadership: Evolution of Change

Jay P. Poitras

When we discuss ideal leadership within the law enforcement community everyone may have their own stereotypes. These stereotypes are often driven not from personal experience, but from a constant conventional and social media-informed bombardment. To process the ideal qualities and characteristics for members of law enforcement it may be difficult to appreciate where to begin. We need to look at how these organizations develop leaders when they have limited personnel and limited interactions with others in a hierarchical and seemingly structured organization. Autonomy is a large part of this profession and we have to consider how this affects the development of these leaders in both positive and negative ways. Looking at some of these practices through the lens of the leadership-as-practice (L-A-P) movement may help view and support leadership development of officers and future leaders. After looking at much of this research, it is unlikely that police leadership would ever totally embrace L-A-P as the way to manage, but it could develop the individual officers and harness the skillsets of the individuals to create better dialogue and identify best practices and policies within their own agencies.

### 14.1 Police Leaders and Leadership Today: Operating in a Stovepipe

The majority of police agencies are still designed using a stovepipe leadership model from the top down where understanding comes from what the individuals themselves believe is important. Learning behavior traits of their leaders is a good place to start. Many authors refer to patrol officers as the “backbone” of police work. Police leaders recognize that volatile situations exist and the street officer must make split-second decisions to take control of dangerous circumstances

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(Haberfeld, 2006). Haberdeld (2006) suggests that the real leaders are the officers on the streets, consistently using their skills with community members, their peers, and the various criminal elements with whom they deal. However, many police executives tend to lose sight of this concept. Police work necessitates copious amounts of discretion on the part of the individual officer on the street and the tension that arises from the control of that discretion by police organizations (Engel and Worden, 2003). Police executives are held responsible for the perceptions of their agencies expressed by the media and the public. The top executives may be quick to judge because of a high degree of media attention and political pressure. Obviously, you cannot put a law enforcement executive in every police car or expect one to respond to every situation. There is a structure in place that should allow the regular use of discretion by the patrol officer to work effectively.

The average agency whether small or large consists of top management, middle management such as lieutenants (if larger), street supervisors (such as sergeants if in a larger department), and the patrol level. The top management is generally concerned with policy, a mission statement, direction and delegation, and the overall politics of the agency. A large enough agency to support a middle management can coordinate, plan, and adhere to the mission statement passed down from the top. Middle management tasks the street-level supervisor and is usually responsible for discipline. Street-level supervision is there to lead by example, and make sure that policy is adhered to on a moment-by-moment basis. Patrol-level employees make decisions on their own very often on every traffic stop, interact with the public, or call for protection and service.

## **14.2 Leadership-as-Practice: A New Approach for Police Leadership and Leader Development**

The leadership-as-practice (L-A-P) model of leadership is a newer concept that has emerged as a social construct, but it is not one that is broadly accepted by the law enforcement community. This is a broad leadership model and not necessarily designed as a model for leadership development. However, the concept, if utilized and applied accordingly, could inevitably serve as a stronger leadership development model over time and if applied to law enforcement.

The idea is that we can learn more and accomplish more as a group using L-A-P and then from the traditional centrist or stovepiped approach of the individual in charge or a “great man” theory. Where we see the value is in the democratic outcomes that can be created by focusing on the social interactions and behavioral changes within an organization, which L-A-P can provide. The idea is not to derail the central leader, but to enhance the group’s ability to think as a unit and generate productivity by inclusiveness.

The L-A-P framework, “focuses on the everyday practice of leadership including its moral, emotional, and relational aspects, rather than its rational, objective, and technical aspects” (Raelin, 2016). Where the L-A-P model is useful to law enforcement is that it concentrates on the where, why, and how leadership decisions are being

accomplished and then on who is creating the work to be done. This could be essential for developing quality police leaders who would become just as comfortable in the role as a patrolman or a Chief of Police. Historically, the hierarchal structure of law enforcement did not allow for the practice of L-A-P to be the normative process in these agencies. I would suggest that the agencies could change through this type of leadership development, if it were applied as a leader development process. If applied, this model would encourage a democratic stance within the agencies, empowering young officers early with a true buy-in to their profession to hopefully maintain a sense of accomplishment. This sense of accomplishment would be the building blocks upon all aspects of leadership and would help them learn as they grow as more active participants in the leadership community.

If you apply L-A-P to the organizational framework of most police departments you could develop leaders based on the day-to-day experiences shared by these individuals. Each officer develops his/her own problem-solving and coping skills that may be comparable to the shared community with whom they work. This insight, if shared correctly, could be an integral part of the leadership and growth capabilities and potential of the members involved. This would be a culture shift and evolution of change that is necessary for law enforcement to have a positive impact in leadership. Weaving, stabilizing, inviting, unleashing, and reflecting are not normative behavior within most police departments, but are common traits associated with the L-A-P model. This change alone would create the culture shift in leadership and leader development within law enforcement, but will not be a rapid change. This could create a bottom-up effect on leadership. Meaning that if better street-level, decision-making, leaders are being created from the bottom up, then ultimately higher political and positive changes may result. If the end goal is to develop leaders from the bottom up, what are the perceptions from the actual law enforcement community?

### 14.3 Exploring L-A-P for Police

The following study looks at the expectation of police leadership characteristics from a management-follower perspective. Andreescu and Vito (2010) analyzed 126 police managers from 23 US states from the perspective of followers. This research was novel because most of the research around police leadership style involves a leader-centric approach. The focus tends to be on the managers' characteristics, styles, and decisions associated with the individual leaders. Looking from a different point of view this study looked at the perspective of the followers on preferred leadership styles as a function of the workers' individual characteristics (Andreescu and Vito, 2010).

In that study the participants were attending the Administrative Officer's Course at the Southern Police Institute in 2007. The participants all held management positions, but were asked to complete a survey from the perspective of a subordinate. The survey employed was the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) and was created by a panel at Ohio State University. They compiled 150 examples of leader behavioral characteristics that appeared to be the most relevant. This led to



a distinction in two leadership styles, worker-centered leadership and task-centered leadership (Andreescu and Vito, 2010). Andreescu defined worker-centered leadership more on the socio-emotional orientation. That is, the leaders tended to worry more about morale and the well-being of the employees. The attempt seemed to create a friendly atmosphere which created a mutual environment of faith between the leaders and the followers. If applying the L-A-P model here, one could assume that this orientation of management could be pushed a little harder to develop these mutual trust relationships and foster better dialogue and opinions of the followers to influence the agency they serve. The officers would practice a cooperative leadership effort where the group chooses their own rules to achieve distinctive outcomes. The results would create more of the atmosphere of what the agency could accomplish together rather than of the individual leader dictating what should be done.

Additionally, Andreescu and Vito (2010) defined task-centered leadership as following a strong course of policies and procedures. In other words, rank and file officers did not have any autonomy. Direct tasking and less discretion were allowed by the patrol officer. The followers were expected to “toe the line,” and expectations of performance of tasks were generally seen as black and white. The leaders here were concerned more with completing the tasks and focused on agency efficiency rather than the morale or welfare of the subordinates. Applying this approach Andreescu attempted to explain the characteristics of the ideal police leader. This approach continued to be based on the central leadership figure (a “great man” theory) and not on any type of collaborative leadership model. They begin to unravel what they feel are the best characteristics for this ideal police leader construct. As a result of this unraveling of behaviors there continues to be a lack of understanding of how to achieve development for managers in a task-centered leader environment.

Therefore, Andreescu and Vito (2010) attempted to understand and explain the importance and typology of police leadership characteristics based on subordinates’ perceptions and a preferred category or leadership style. He was able to label and identify the preferred leadership styles as transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire along lines similar to those identified in the transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978). Transformational leaders impact value systems and ways of thinking. Change occurs from vision and goals (Burns, 1978). Burns (1978) further identifies transactional leaders as ones who reward or punish their subordinates based on their performance. Laissez-faire leadership is identified as a style that lets subordinates do what they want and learn from their mistakes. Mistakes are tolerated, but there is no real guidance associated with the laissez-faire style. Effectively, with laissez-faire, there is no real leadership. This style is more concerned with the personal welfare of the members than of punishment for a poor performance when applied to the law enforcement community. From the police managers who participated in the survey they described that ideal leaders should be capable of dealing with conflicting demands, be persuasive, be convincing, and create vision for the future while accomplishing the agency’s mission statement. In short, Andreescu effectively argues that police need transformational leadership instead of laissez-faire (non-leaders) or transactional leaders. When dealing with subordinates, ideal leaders should clearly define subordinate roles, set the example, listen to the concerns

of the rank and file, and provide solutions for problems, while promoting morale and welfare should also be important.

Alternatively, they found metrics based on production numbers by officers to be the least important metrics of officer capability. The overall results expressed that they want efficient effective leaders to take charge, but mostly to take care of their employees. They also found that joint leadership is not really discussed and that collaborative decision making does not even make the cut as viable criteria.

A critical assessment suggests that the survey may have failed from the beginning as well. Knowing that all the participants in the survey were already in a management role the researchers asked participants to pretend as if they were looking through the lens of a subordinate as they answered the questions. Assumptions could be made that the respondents could not truthfully answer the questions without their management biases getting in the way or that they may have overcompensated when answering the questions. Evidence of this conclusion is that the leaders within these agencies were not asked how they developed in the first place.

The key finding is that most of the respondents did not like the idea of leadership with a production emphasis. It was further interesting that there was a lack of uniformity on how to gauge the performance of police officers. Does making more arrests or writing the most tickets truly demonstrate the productivity of individual officers? Is this metric the best one used to promote an officer to higher positions of leadership? Is this indicative of the true characteristics of police “leadership” or “potential”? The difficult part in looking at these leadership models and associated research was understanding what determined how the individuals acquired leadership skills. Much of the research study by Andreescu dictates what is important in a leader.

Additional research looks at poor leadership and views it only through that lens, which may be a challenge. The street officer spends most of his time interacting with the public. Only a small number of those encounters can be observed by a superior officer, who have little information on the actual climate of those events or how other officers respond to them (Prottas, 1978). This all creates challenges for leader development in police organizations where most officers offer autonomously and only have limited interactions with leadership.

Looking at Massachusetts as a model of how promotions are processed there are 157 civil service police departments out of 312 towns and cities (State of Massachusetts, 2017). Civil service requires that officers take a written exam and be placed on a list for promotion. The top three highest scores are candidates for an open Sergeants position and can be picked for promotion. If promotions are not made immediately they can keep this list for a period of 3 years (including all others who passed the exam). Generally, one of the top three will be promoted on that list and that is the standard criteria. This process continues as the individual progresses through the ranks. In the other roughly 50% of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, each municipality or Chief of Police can promote leaders through whatever process they want. With some, it is a union agreement. With others, it is the discretion of the Chief of Police. The civil service process is stagnant and difficult to change. With these municipalities the L-A-P process could be beneficial as a tool for leader development. Looking at these agencies and turning their central leadership upside-down by turning the focus towards participation and engagement, a

better understanding of new ways of leading and developing could generate the leaders needed for the law enforcement environment of the future (Raelin, 2016).

Police departments exist and we know they function. Assumptions lead us to believe that leadership can be and has been successful within many agencies as lower crime rates have been shown over the last two decades (Roeder, 2015). It is a job that regularly involves life-or-death decisions (Chaney and Robertson, 2015). The responsibility of successful leadership is a burden with which the normal American citizen would have a difficult time empathizing. A bad decision in law enforcement can mean the end of a lifelong career or even the possibility of incarceration (Chaney and Robertson, 2013). Civil Rights movements develop like “Black Lives Matters” that scrutinize the police (Andrea and Abigail, 2008). Perceptions when deaths occur by police may include misconduct, police state accusations, racism, poor training, and many other personal sensitivities (Weitzer and Tuch, 1999). Ultimately, what this all boils down to is the development of the law enforcement officer as a leader is essential for all and it is important how effectively they work within their agency.

Chiefs of police across the nation agree that street-level supervision is a critical factor of successful organizational performance and change (Mastrofski, 2011). Mastrofski (2011) found that the assessments vary, but saw that there is considerable room for improvement and that process is difficult. Being “disgruntled” or “burned out” is a common theme in much of the research around these issues. It is used to explain the reasons why some subordinates do little to no work and the tensions that arise from the lower ranks to the higher echelons of the agency. Thus, developing a commonality in the progression of leadership qualities is important. If the internal tensions hinder officer development, then change is needed.

If the average officer is alone for most of his or her daily encounters, who should he model for leading and leadership? Who is his or her mentor? One could make assumptions that in smaller agencies this is limited to personal experiences and trial and error. In many communities there may only be one police officer on duty at a time. Looking through the L-A-P lens likely could help with this relationship. Taking a proactive approach by enriching dialogic practices in how the agency is organized can only improve leadership in police organizations (Raelin, 2016). Because we know that the officers are always in a learning process, the majority of how they learn may be from a peer-to-peer standpoint. Looking at a study of the transition from an entry-level patrol to Sergeant showed that leader development takes on many shapes including formal training. However, there is an informal set of interactions that foster leadership (Campbell, 2011). Harnessing that process of peer perception and imparting that knowledge to the hierarchal leadership structure appears to be a problem. This informal process needs to be institutionalized in order to create the leader and professional competencies needed for quality officers. This challenges the existing leadership model and its owners to think differently and learn a different language of communication, one that is sorely missing in police organizations today. Research has shown that organizations that had good relationships with their subordinates functioned better than ones that do not. This common-sense idea of effective social relationships appears to work well (Mastrofski, 2011). Using the L-A-P model, agencies may be able to bolster the talents and inclinations

of their leadership by increasing and developing this social support system. While this is a seemingly simple suggestion and approach, it is dramatically different from the usual leader development model that exists in departments and agencies today that are more likely to be run through *laissez-faire* (non-leadership) or management-by-exception in the best of circumstances.

Going forward, certain risk taking will always need to take place when attempting to reorganize any leadership or leader model to change. Resistance to that change is inevitable from both leaders and subordinates. What is important to affect transformation is strong bonds of trust within the agency, from the top down (Yardley, 2007). Taking the institutional knowledge of how officers learn leadership characteristics, and then applying how they need to adapt to new methods of communication, team building, and decision making, a true change could occur for the better in these organizations. Doing this could help create a high degree of trust and make all officers part of the vision-setting process for the agency. This will create the commitment needed for agency success and for promoting public confidence in police. Developing shared knowledge is a difficult leadership change in an individual-centric or “great person” management model. The success of this change is dependent on leaders being capable of sharing knowledge, mentoring, facilitation away from counterproductive group think, articulated expectations of shared needs and goals, and fair processes for all employees (Kolb, 1995). Chiefs of Police should not be afraid to set goals that are risky for the good of the department. The National Chiefs of Police Association recommended a leadership style to be utilized that is inclusive and pursues support of all members of the agency (Isenberg, 2010). The L-A-P model is one such approach that is missing in police organizations today.

## 14.4 Conclusion

With heavy scrutiny on law enforcement today it has never been more important that we have strong competent leadership running these agencies so the public has faith and trust in them (Hall et al., 2016). It is not enough that violent crime rates have steadily dropped over the past two decades. This should not be the only metric in which we judge and evaluate our nation’s law enforcement. What we have is a system of leadership training that is not standardized nationally or even required to be the same within the same state. The tasks assigned to law enforcement have never been broader. Crimes that used to be only relevant to federal officials are now becoming a local problem. The federal government has been relying on local law enforcement to be the eyes and ears of the Department of Homeland Security and understand terrorism and counter-terrorism. Expertise on child abuse, pedophile crimes, cybercrimes, human trafficking, immigration, and identity theft are only some of the emerging specialties required. For many of the agencies the basic educational requirement remains only a high school diploma. However, we expect our police to handle more complex assignments every day. Therefore, the requirements for police today equate to telling our school systems that teachers do not need a college education. Imagine if

we entrusted our children to a teaching staff who only was required to attend a 3-month training program. The public would be outraged. The police profession tasks men and women to do a job that may involve the decision to take a human life. We need to create a standard for every member of law enforcement to receive intensive leadership education and training at every rank in every agency in the United States. Think of the junior officers in law enforcement as high school children. All of them grow up to be the future decision makers in law enforcement. For this profession to be taken seriously a quality leader development approach is needed and will be crucial to its development, survival, and ultimately its success.

Recently I was able to have a conversation with the commander of one the newest ships being built for the U.S. Navy. He spoke of some of the problems of leadership within the Navy that seemed to be comparable to the fundamental problems in law enforcement. His explanation was that, "... all of the old white guys ..." were in charge (Smith, 2017). These leaders had a difficult time understanding their own biases based on years of experience and a generational separation of culture shifts within society itself. Change becomes difficult because of this situation. Another Navy Captain wrote (Abrashoff, 2004) that he was more interested in results than he was in salutes. He was charged with enforcing 225 years of accumulated Navy policies and rules, but believed that if the sailor could come up with a better solution any rule was up for negotiation. If a new procedure proved effective he passed it up the chain of command and hoped that his superiors would share it with other ships. Ultimately, his crew would develop an amazing degree of trust for one another and be successful. Effectively, this example in the Navy is a clear demonstration of the L-A-P model in action. If the L-A-P model can be successful in a military environment, then it could be successful if applied to law enforcement.

The challenge is that law enforcement organizations continue to be rigid in their hierarchal leadership and oversight. A shift needs to occur for true change. Treating all ranks as if they matter is the most fundamental part of a shift that needs to happen and aligns itself with the practices of the L-A-P model. Any person knows from their own experience that this characteristic alone encourages constructive relationships that likely will pay huge dividends in any work environment. Civility, thoughtfulness, and poise are sophisticated leadership skills that facilitate trust, pride, purpose, self-respect, and a desire to do well for the community and agency. Leaders must show a willingness to explore the issues surrounding modernization, experimentation, and creativity within the agency. Leaders need to show that they are serious about innovation and commit to it to make it effective. The L-A-P model may never fully be accepted by law enforcement professionals, but if a few brave leaders are willing to take a leap of faith and explore its concepts, especially a model for leader development, it may be possible to reshape an entire culture.

Most importantly, the L-A-P framework can be used as a developmental approach and not just an operational perspective for senior leaders. The L-A-P framework has all the elements for effective use in developing others. Practice as a design is an acceptable place to learn to lead. Learning is the key to developing leaders if we view leadership as a process and a practice. The flexible nature of L-A-P allows for this. This perspective allows for leadership to become self-correcting. Police would be able to learn from one another as they learn to listen to one another and themselves.

Leadership would be developed and done by the officers doing the work rather than the individual at the top. All this is based on the idea that leadership is directly tied to the practices that these officers are dedicated to each day. Learning to accomplish the mission and goals to create a common outcome will teach each member leadership through collaboration. Each member grows as an active participant in the process of leadership by acting, talking, and thinking together.

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