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International Leadership Journal

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Volume 9, Issue 1, Winter 2017

From the Editor

February 2017

Welcome to the 26th issue of the *International Leadership Journal,* an online, peer-reviewed journal. This issue contains three articles, one essay, and one practice piece.

In the first article, Harrell-Cook, Levitt, and Grimm find a series of contradictions in their review of employee engagement literature. They suggest that researchers switch their focus from the notion of *employee engagement* to that of *employee commitment,* thus placing the responsibility on the employer to create the conditions that lead to engaged employees. They introduce a conceptual model that embraces moderating influences such as job structure and design.

Williamson, Buchard, Winner, and Winston's phenomenological study explores the internal factors that enable positive deviance—how leaders and organizations go above and beyond normal expectations in positive ways—to occur in leaders. The results of their study of six leaders and eight followers revealed a number of specified values, behaviors, and attitudes that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders.

Harter and Downs examine former U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's aptitude for "presencing"—reflecting and allowing inner knowledge to emerge—by concentrating on a proposal to change the judiciary that appears to have failed. Taken in context, the failure of his court-packing plan exemplifies his spirit and, paradoxically, helps explain his successes.

Baynard's essay investigates the career of Winston Churchill using the five-factor strategic LEADS model. Balancing his successes with his failures, Churchill's facility with strategy is evaluated through the lens of his legacy as a statesman and immeasurable contribution to the nation he served.

Finally, Kerns, focusing on individual differences as a core dimension of leadership, offers a stepwise approach to understanding and optimizing a leader's personality profile. The practical six-step approach, typically facilitated by an executive coach or trusted advisor, systematically presents how a leader can more fully understand personality and leverage relevant behaviors for greater impact.

Please let us know your thoughts and feel free to submit articles for review. Enjoy!

Joseph C. Santora, EdD
Editor

ARTICLES

From Engagement to Commitment: A New Perspective on the Employee Attitude–Firm Performance Relationship[*]

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A review of the employee engagement literature reveals a series of contradictions that could be triggered by cloudy conceptualizations of the construct itself. Moreover, there appears to be applied and theoretical momentum driving this construct as its use is widespread in many applied and scholarly arenas. This article offers a provocative conceptual argument that the intellectual foundation of employee engagement may just be misplaced or misguided. Elevating our stand with a nod to the nomological network, we suggest that employee commitment oftentimes captures the conceptual space of employee engagement. Thus, in a controversial manner, we question the supremacy of employee engagement as a construct within the organizational theory and behavior literature. Rather, we claim there are significant differences between employee commitment and employee engagement, and for reasons of parsimony alone, scholars and practitioners should abandon the notion of employee engagement as a penultimate employee attitude, and, instead, should redouble efforts to best understand employee commitment. Moreover, we offer a conceptual model that embraces moderating influences such as job structure and design that should further inform both theory and practice. The primary goal of this article is to switch the focus from employee engagement to organizational commitment, thus placing the responsibility on the employer to create the conditions that lead to engaged employees.

Key words: discretionary effort, employee commitment, engagement, firm performance

The concept of *employee engagement* has received much attention from both the executive and academic communities for decades. In both arenas, the focus has been on the antecedents of engagement, as well as on individual and organizational level outcomes. Academics have hypothesized, and business executives have speculated, that employee engagement results from individual feelings such as happiness at work, employee morale, and job satisfaction. Moreover, it is assumed that engaged employees will contribute positively to

overall organizational performance. The results of empirical work in this area have been, at best, mixed—ranging from no correlation between engagement and individual and organizational outcomes to findings that showed a significant impact of engagement on both employee behavior and firm performance (e.g., Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Fournet, Distefano, & Pryer, 1966; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002; Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001)

The purpose of the current work is to examine the literature on employment engagement to identify commonalities and deficiencies in previous works. We believe that there are several important variables that should have a significant impact on employee behaviors, and consequently, on organizational outcomes, and while some of these constructs have been mentioned in this body of work, their potential roles as antecedents, mediators, and moderators have been somewhat ignored. Drawing from the extant literature, we propose a new model that we believe reflects a more comprehensive representation of this much-researched concept. More specifically, we examine more intensively the variables covered by the literature, and move from the notion of *engagement,* to that of *employee commitment.* We also consider several new variables, including the reciprocal nature of commitment and its impact on employee contribution of discretionary effort and the potential role of job structure and its impact on intrinsic motivation, and investigate how these variables might contribute to enhanced individual and organizational performance.

Questioning the Current Trend in Thought

The concept of *employee engagement* has been a topic of discussion and empirical work in the academic world for nearly a century. It originated as the concept of *employee attitudes,* then evolved into similarly titled concepts such as *job satisfaction* (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955), *morale* (Guion, 1958; Katzell, 1958; Stagner, 1958), *happiness at wor*k (Fisher, 2010), and eventually, the term commonly understood today as *employee engagement* (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Ketter, 2008; Welbourne, 2007).

For executives and managers, this concept is touted as an extremely important factor for consideration in their work environments. In fact, the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance has even been described as the "holy grail" for industrial psychology (Landy, 1989). Bersin (2015) asserts that "'engagement' and 'culture' will likely become central to everything HR does" in the future (34). The ability to actively involve and engage a company's workforce would theoretically assist with the prevention of rework, safety issues, turnover and turnover substitutes (e.g., absenteeism and slacking), and low productivity in general. These issues undoubtedly cost a company money in all their forms. In addition, unhappy or disengaged employees are unlikely to perform at the high levels desired by management. In other words, these individuals would not be inclined to contribute the discretionary effort that would boost productivity to such a level as to make employee contributions a source of competitive advantage. Indeed, recent research has concluded that companies actively participating in engaging their employees were more likely to have higher profits than companies with lower levels of engagement (Harter et al., 2002). If it were possible to conclusively tie the engagement of an employee and his or her respective work performance to a company's financial performance, executives worldwide might begin paying more than lip service to the concept and actively seek the processes, actions, and cultural changes required to realistically and significantly enhance employee attitudes.

Early studies performed on this topic concluded that there was no statistically significant relationship between satisfied or engaged employees and a company's financial performance (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985). These findings are puzzling and counterintuitive, in that it seems only logical that the more engaged employees are with their jobs and their organization's goals, the more likely are they to be high performers. Indeed, as mentioned above, more recent studies have supported this contention, and concluded the exact opposite of earlier studies; that is, these works have clearly indicated a link between the performance of a company and its finances to that of

its employees' general satisfaction and engagement (Fisher, 2010; Judge et al., 2001; Harter et al., 2002; Riketta, 2008).

However, despite a number of works that suggest an enhancing impact of positive employee attitudes on company performance, the studies are still somewhat problematic in terms of having convincing enough outcomes to grab the attention of executives. The reasons for this lackluster effect are numerous. There has been no consistent and definitive explication of the notion of *engagement* that clearly explains what that means in terms of employee attitudes. In addition, the operationalization of the concept varies widely between the various theoretical and empirical works, as do the variables chosen as potential outcomes. Further, there has been little exploration as to how and under what conditions employee work attitudes might boost firm outcomes.

We reviewed the extant studies to identify commonalities and trends and to discuss additional and potentially pertinent theories and variables. From this investigation, we developed a new, more comprehensive model that illustrates not only the link between employee engagement and firm outcomes, but also mechanisms through which, and conditions under which, employee attitudes may impact organizational performance. That is, we argue that the ultimate goal of firms in terms of desirable employee attitudes is not truly engagement, but rather *commitment*. Based on that argument, we propose that organizational commitment to employees and employee commitment to an organization is a reciprocal relationship. We also theorize, drawing from extant works, that employee commitment to an organization will elicit the discretionary effort of employees that ultimately will enhance organizational performance. Further, we posit that this commitment–effort relationship will be moderated by jobs that are structured in a manner that will positively affect the intrinsic motivation of employees, and that the higher the number of such jobs in an organization exist, the higher the level of discretionary effort will be.

The Evolution of Employee Engagement

The term *employee engagement* originated in the 1980s (Welbourne, 2007) and has been a topic of much interest to academics and practitioners worldwide. Definitions and descriptions of the phenomena vary between authors and articles, as well as between scholars and executives. For example, Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004) define *employee engagement* as "a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organisation and its values. An engaged employee is aware of business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organisation" ("What Is Employee Engagement," para. 3). Another example from Bakker and Bal (2010) defines *work engagement* as a "positive, fulfilling, and work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (190). As recently as 2007, it was suggested that a consistent and comprehensive definition widely accepted by both, and within each, the academic and the executive communities does not exist (Welbourne, 2007).

In a review of the fundamental conceptualizations of employee engagement in past works, common themes appear. Chief among those conceptualizations is the notion of *job satisfaction.* Job satisfaction is said to be highly important, as when employees are not satisfied with either their company or *any* aspect of their jobs (e.g., supervision, pay, benefits, or culture), it becomes likely they will engage with less effort in their jobs and other citizenship behaviors than if the opposite were the case. Morale also appears frequently in the literature as a variable inherent in the concept of engagement, as employees who do not have at least some positive measure of morale are unlikely to fully engage in their work. Further, some authors have suggested that the ability of an organization to provide room for personal and professional growth is also critical, as it provides individuals with the perception that their positions and presence within a company are both valued by management (Soyars & Brusino, 2009). It has also been suggested that if employees are to be engaged, trust must be established between the employees and their employer, with the foundation of trust being most important between the worker and their immediate supervisor or manager

(Macey & Schneider, 2008). This notion also suggests that a sense of fairness is crucial to engagement. Finally, the ultimate measure of employee engagement is overall job performance, as engaged employees are more inclined to make strong contributions to firm outcomes through higher productivity, innovation, and other desirable employee inputs (Harter et al., 2002). It is important to our arguments to note that each of these several conceptualizations indirectly assert that employee discretionary effort is a direct or implied result of employee engagement.

Overview of Literature

It is interesting to note that an overview of the literature shows that studies perceive and incorporate the variables of job satisfaction, morale, engagement, and performance into the work in various combinations, conceptualizations, and operationalization with varying expectations for outcomes. Brayfield and Crockett (1955) performed the pioneering study of the effect of job satisfaction on job performance. The study was developed and performed in an attempt to determine if such a link existed and, if so, how strongly the two concepts were related. At the time, it was reasoned that the two ideas must be related, as common belief held it to be true. Contrary to both academic opinion and common belief, the study determined that there was no measurable relationship between the performance of an employee at work and the satisfaction the employee had with their job as a whole (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955).

   The results of the study demonstrated that (a) the satisfaction that an individual possesses in a given web of relationships did not imply motivation was present and (b) overall productivity may only be slightly related to the daily goals of the average worker (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955). Overall, Brayfield and Crockett (1955) concluded that satisfaction and performance would only be slightly related, if there was any connection at all. In certain instances, this finding makes perfect sense. If an unmotivated (lazy) worker is in a job where slacking could go undetected, that worker would be totally satisfied with their job, since they don't have to work hard. Consequently, even though that worker would exhibit high

levels of satisfaction, the relationship between that satisfaction and productivity would be diametric. In addition, it should be noted that Brayfield and Crockett (1955) did not attempt to define and operationalize other potentially pertinent variables (such as morale, engagement, etc.) as part of their scope.

A few years later, Stagner (1958) observed that, in some cases, job satisfaction was "determined by the relative importance, as perceived by the employee, of the satisfactions achieved and those not achieved or perceived as unattainable" (69). Thus, if a leader or manager sets goals that are viewed as important and achievable to both the company and the employee, job satisfaction will mirror morale, and both would be relatively high. However, if the company set unobtainable goals or set a course for a project the employee did not perceive as important, both job satisfaction and morale would be relatively low. Interestingly, these findings are in agreement with later works that state both goal setting (Locke & Latham, 1990) and job characteristics theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1975) have implications for employee satisfaction, and in turn, engagement, as Locke and Latham's (1990) contention that goals should be high but attainable is validated. In addition, employee perceptions of the importance (impact) of their work are critical to employee satisfaction and intrinsic motivation as delineated by Hackman and Oldham (1975).

Guion (1958) defines *morale* as "the extent to which an individual's needs are satisfied and the extent to which the individual perceives that satisfaction as stemming from his total job situation" (62). Thus, even in this early review of morale, job satisfaction is introduced as a contributing factor. Others reviewing the issue of morale substituted the word "morale" for job satisfaction entirely (e.g., Katz, Maccoby, Gurin, & Floor, 1951; Straka, 1993; Uhrbrock, 1961).

Concurrent work by Katzell (1958) described several factors he considered essential to morale, including job satisfaction. However, Katzell found that job satisfaction, either high or low, does not necessarily correspond to high morale. He contended that while individual workers may have goals that are met by the work being performed, the company's or group's goals may not converge with those of the individual, and may be disregarded or ignored completely.

A review of job satisfaction by Fournet et al. (1966) found that favorable employee attitudes and employee-centered supervision of personnel (in our view, equating to commitment to employees) had an increased effect on production. The study also defined two major factors associated with job satisfaction: characteristics of the individual and characteristics of the job. Of interest to the current study are those job characteristics that contribute significantly to job satisfaction and morale. These authors and others have reported that those factors include the nature of the task itself; cohesiveness of workgroups; job security; supportive supervision style; working conditions; and extrinsic rewards such as salary, promotions, and fringe benefits (Fournet et al., 1966; Gruenberg, 1980). These findings strongly suggest that employees consider the overall characteristics of the job, including factors and benefits that emanate from the top level of the organization. In other words, if management and executives believe in the value of employee contributions to the point that they are willing to address all facets of employee needs and desires, they are more likely to be rewarded with highly satisfied (and, we contend, highly contributing) employees.

Judge et al. (2001) propose six hypotheses in their study:

- job satisfaction causes job performance;
- job performance causes job satisfaction;
- job satisfaction and job performance are reciprocally related;
- the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance is spurious;
- the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance is moderated by other variables; and
- there is no relationship between job satisfaction and job performance.

The study was performed despite decades of discussions regarding the weak, if existent, relation between job satisfaction and performance documented by studies performed in 1955 by Brayfield and Crockett, and in 1985 by Iaffaldano and Muchinsky. Judge et al. even state that in the realm of current studies at the time of their report, their first four hypotheses were considered archaic, and that the work would be revisiting theories that had long-been considered resolved. However, their results gave evidence that, for most high-complexity jobs, there is

a measurable correlation between job satisfaction and job performance. Thus, the debate thought long settled was reopened.

A 2002 study performed by Harter et al. appears to be the first substantial attempt to connect the satisfaction and engagement of workers to business outcomes. After a meta-analysis of 42 studies of 37 different companies, the authors wrote that *employee engagement* "refers to the individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work" (269) and included the job satisfaction of the employees being evaluated. They also proposed that employees who were engaged were also more emotionally invested in their work, the antecedents of such investment being the perception that their work was important and appreciated (suggesting again, that job characteristics theory plays a role in the relationship). Their findings support their contention that higher levels of both employee satisfaction and employee engagement were correlated with enhanced business outcomes, such as greater customer satisfaction, productivity, and profits; decreased turnover; and fewer accidents.

In 2004, the Institute for Employment Studies surveyed HR representatives on their understanding of employee engagement (Robinson et al., 2004). Positive responses included belief in the organization, the desire to work for improvement, a fundamental understanding of the business and the bigger picture that the company faces, being respectful and helpful to coworkers, a desire to put forth extra effort, and the ability and willingness to stay up to date with current developments within their respective field. This again implies that a major employee behavioral outcome is the contribution of discretionary effort. Robinson et al. (2004) also note that while the employers surveyed wanted their personnel to give more, this would require the company to give more to the employees. Without this give-and-take relationship, employees would not be willing to give more of themselves to the company and would be less engaged, if engaged at all. This contention supports our theory that the organizational commitment to employees and employee commitment to the firm is reciprocal in nature.

Finally, Robinson et al. (2004) also propose general drivers of engagement. These include the belief that employees have at least some decision-making

involvement, the perception that employees are able to voice their opinions and ideas without fear of retribution, the belief that supervisors are listening, the ability of employees to develop their jobs and grow professionally, and a general view of how much the company is concerned about their employees' well-being and health. These drivers suggest, once again, that job structure and intrinsic motivation play roles in the engagement–performance relationship, and that reciprocity is involved in commitment.

In 2008, Riketta investigated whether job satisfaction was related to job performance. In his article, he identifies job satisfaction and organizational commitment as the two most investigated concepts in organizational psychology and is among the first to suggest commitment as the optimal employee attitude, rather than engagement. The results of this study showed a statistically significant relationship between employees' job satisfaction, commitment to their employer, and overall performance.

In 2008, Macey and Schneider conducted a study to attempt to define employee engagement. At the time of the study, the measurement of employee engagement had yet to be established, and consisted of an amalgamation of ideas and theories including: "job satisfaction, organizational commitment, psychological empowerment, and job involvement" (7). The authors assert that the fact that employees were expending extra effort did not mean that they were engaged, as that level of effort may be involved in doing their normal job. Instead, they suggest that to truly witness an employee who is engaged, an employer should look for someone who is doing something different, as that person may have invested the extra effort to find another way that is more efficient or more effective than the current process. However, we believe that there was some confusion between somewhat high levels of exertion required by the job, and the exhibition of extraordinary or discretionary effort, in that discretionary effort are those contributions above and beyond what are typically required. We suggest that discretionary effort is not only willingness to contribute the performance required by the job at an extraordinary level in order to boost productivity, but also a willingness to engage in those behaviors that would

promote innovation and improvement when such contributions are not a part of the job description. Further, we contend that each facet of discretionary effort has a positive impact on firm performance. An additional and important finding of the Macey and Schneider study was that trust is a critical element of engagement.

Finally, TowersWatson (2009) conducted a survey between 2002 and 2006 that indicated that companies with higher levels of employee engagement had "significantly better" financial returns than companies with lower levels of engagement. The survey established that there were two factors that had a noticeably strong influence on engagement: management's interest in the well-being of their employees and an employee's opportunities for his or her own professional development, again offering support for the reciprocal relationship we propose.

Engagement: Moving Forward

In developing this new conceptualization of the employee attitude–organizational performance relationship, we move from engagement to the notion of *employee commitment,* which we believe to be the attitude most likely to result in higher firm performance. We also theorize that employee commitment to the organization and organizational commitment to employees is a reciprocal relationship. Further, it is employee commitment that will elicit the discretionary effort of employees that will result in increased productivity, innovation, and quality; decreased costs; and consequently, enhanced firm performance. In addition, we propose that structuring jobs in such a manner as to effect intrinsic motivation will moderate the commitment–discretionary effort relationship. Figure 1 presents the proposed commitment–firm performance model, followed by an explication of the theoretical underpinnings for the model.

Commitment – Firm Performance Model

Job Structure

Intrinsic Motivation

Organizational Commitment → Employee Commitment → Discretionary Effort → Enhanced Firm Performance

Figure 1. Commitment–firm performance model

Commitment vs. Engagement

In the foregoing review of the literature, many, if not most, of the definitions of *employee engagement* mirror, if not explicitly contain, the term *commitment.* In our view, the notion of *engagement* denotes interest and involvement, and, in studies, is usually an attitude that is directed toward the job itself and/or the immediate environment of the job (e.g., supervisor, working conditions). As such, engagement would seem to be a somewhat tentative state in that it is dependent on factors that can, and are likely to, change over time. However, commitment, for our purposes, is purported to be not only directed at the job and its accompanying factors, but rather to the organization and its goals, such that the goals of the organization become the ambitions of the employee. That is to say, that there is a definitive and significant alignment of organizational and employee goals. It has been asserted in previous works that it is the sharing of these collective and overarching goals that will have a positive effect on firm performance (Locke & Latham, 1990; Offstein, Harrell-Cook, Childers, & McClellan, 2012). It is intuitive, then, that such commitment is a much more permanent state than that of the engagement referenced in previous works. In addition, this alignment of employee goals with the job *and* the strategic initiatives of the firm is much more likely to manifest itself in improved performance from the work level all the way through to organizational outcomes.

It is this more heavily consequential nature of commitment that we have chosen as our focus.

Further, we strongly believe that the term *engagement* has become such a "buzzword" in academic and popular business works, as well as among executives and consultants, that it is clung to tenaciously in spite its limitations and shortcomings. As stated earlier, there has been no definitive explication of exactly what constitutes engagement, nor has there been clarity or consensus among researchers as to its antecedents or outcomes at the individual or organizational level. Further, *engagement,* as we define it, may or may not be a component of the more holistic state of commitment. For example, workers in mundane, workaday jobs, may not be engaged in their work, per se, but may still be committed to the organization and its goals. In short, we believe that it is because of the vagaries and ambiguities of engagement—both as a concept and an employee attitude—that its attainment has proven to be so elusive. On the this basis, we advocate that the persistent and ubiquitous use of this equivocal term be abandoned and even expunged from human resources management (HRM) language, in favor of the more well-founded and encompassing concept of commitment. From this point forward, we adhere to that precept.

Employee Commitment and Discretionary Effort

A common contention in HRM studies is that, based on the resource-based view of the firm (Barney, 1986, 1991, 1995), employees of the firm may be the only resource from which the organization derives sustainable competitive advantage. According to this theory, if a resource is to provide value resulting in sustainable competitive advantage, the resource, and the manner in which it is deployed, must meet four criteria. It must be valuable, rare, non-imitable, and non-substitutable. Barney (1986, 1991, 1995) and others (e.g., Snell, Youndt, & Wright, 1996; Wright & McMahan, 1992) assert that the resources upon which firms have traditionally depended to provide competitive advantage (e.g., technology, capital, and inputs) are now readily and rapidly imitated and therefore cannot offer that long-term advantage over competitors. These authors argue that the intricacies and complexities involved in HRM are difficult, if not

impossible, to imitate in that they are causally ambiguous and path dependent. That is, the value produced by the people of the firm is embedded in both a contextual and historical environment that makes the sources of, and manner in which, that value is derived almost impossible to comprehend, much less imitate.

Bailey (1993) argues that organizations may not realize the full value of employee contributions if those employees are not performing to their fullest potential. He suggests that a firm, through their HRM, should strive to maximize that potential (knowledge, skills, and abilities) and to motivate employees to devote discretionary effort. We assume discretionary effort to be more than just going above and beyond the norm in the normal course of work, but also that employees will grow their value to the firm and be willing to contribute that value through innovation, quality improvements, and efficiency enhancements. In short, if an organization can hire individuals with the highest levels of strategic skills, knowledge, and abilities, enhance the growth of skills and abilities, and induce employees to contribute that discretionary effort on a regular basis, that firm will hold a sustainable competitive advantage over other firms through enhanced productivity, innovation, quality, and efficiency. In other words, the efforts of these employees illustrate a commitment not only to their job, but a superordinate commitment on the part of the employees to the achievement of organizational goals. Such commitment has implications for organizational performance above that of those outcomes proposed by studies on engagement.

The Reciprocal Nature of Commitment

A few of the reviewed studies referenced commitment, both at the employee level, and implicitly employees at the management level. While these studies failed to expound on it, we feel that both aspects of commitment are critical factors for consideration. It is highly unlikely that organizations could structure a system of HR policies and practices that, on its merits alone, could elicit the kind of employee commitment and contribution described in the foregoing section (Offstein et al., 2012). Employees are not prone to develop commitment to the organization based on systems of practices, the intent of which is to solely manage behavior. In fact, the controversy over the benefits of control versus

commitment management/HR systems has been ongoing since the advent of organizational science as a field of study. In general, HRM is the process through which organizations seek to manage the behaviors and contributions of their employees, either through control- or commitment-oriented practices. Arthur (1994) delineates the difference between these two categories. He posits that control systems are directed toward improving organizational efficiency, whereas commitment systems have the purpose of aligning the goals of employees with those of the organization at large. Such alignment would require that organizational management illustrate not only a concern with efficiency and productivity, but that these leaders create a culture within which that superordinate commitment would emerge and flourish.

Offstein et al. (2012) argue that contention, asserting that the HRM process alone is unlikely to have a significant positive impact on organization-level outcomes. Rather, that sort of commitment is more aptly founded on employee perceptions that management at all levels honestly values their potential and contributions. Offstein et al. hold that it is only when management illustrates this value through the investment of time, attention, and resources in its people—indicative of higher management commitment to employees—that employees will move beyond self-interest to organizational commitment. In other words, when employees believe that organizational leaders are committed to their welfare, growth, and other best interests, norms of reciprocity would dictate that that commitment be returned in kind. In addition, research suggests that management support and recognition, indicative of organizational commitment to employees, may neutralize the effects of negative work characteristics to the point that individuals demonstrate commitment to the organization in spite of such characteristics (Kiewitz, Hochwarter, Ferris, & Castro, 2002).

Executives and other firm leaders, then, who hold a philosophy of value for the organization's people, may create a culture of, and illustrate their values through, numerous and varying avenues. Opportunities for employee growth and provision of generous benefits are signals of a management commitment philosophy that employees will readily recognize and respond to through

reciprocation of that commitment, and a contributing performance commensurate with that commitment. Leaders must develop a culture in which mutual commitment is a visible and believable component, if they are to attract, develop, retain, and reap the rewards of high-performing employees. Bersin (2015) refers to this reputation as "employment branding" (33) and states that the concepts of "branding and employee engagement have merged" (33). In addition, his commentary makes it explicitly clear that it is not only the employees within the firm who will be impacted by such a culture, but those individuals outside the firm whom management seeks to recruit. It follows, then, that this concept of mutual commitment is crucial to current and future organizational success.

Commitment–Effort–Enhanced Firm Performance

We contend, that through the mutual nature of commitment between the organization and its employees, and employee contribution of discretionary effort, a firm will recognize substantial organizational performance benefits. To recap our assertions, when employees perceive that organizational leaders value their potential and contributions, and that these leaders are managing in a way that illustrates commitment to employee welfare (e.g., benefits or provision of development and growth opportunities), employees will reciprocate this commitment. As such, employees will put aside more spurious self-interests and engage in endeavors directed toward achievement of organizational goals. These behaviors include extraordinary effort towards work, as well as a dedication to innovation, efficiency, and improvement. This discretionary effort, taken as a whole, will positively impact organizational-level outcomes to include enhanced productivity, flexibility, quality, and financial outcomes. An additional benefit of employee commitment is that it may mitigate the impact of negative work circumstances and environments on employee attitudes and intentions. For example, Hochwarter, Perrewé, Ferris, and Guiercio (1999) found that job tension and turnover intent resulting from employee perceptions of organizational politics decreased as employee commitment increased. This being the case, not only would the organization accrue gains from the contributions of discretionary effort, but it would also profit by reducing or avoiding costly employee behaviors.

Job Structure and Intrinsic Motivation

The literature has focused on the nature of job structure and how that structure may impact work outcomes. Most notable is the work of Hackman and Oldham (1975), who developed the job characteristics model for job design and redesign. They also designed the Job Diagnosis Survey to measure the job characteristics they propose to be most effective in having a positive effect on work outcomes. In this work, it is proposed that there are five core dimensions to effective job design:

- *skill variety:* the extent to which the job requires a variety of activities, and consequently, the contribution of substantial skills, knowledge, and abilities;
- *task identity:* the degree to which the worker completes an entire, identifiable piece of work;
- *task significance:* the amount of impact work has on others;
- *autonomy:* the degree to which the work is at the discretion of the employee; and
- *feedback:* the extent to which the employee is made aware, or recognizes, the effectiveness of performance.

Hackman and Oldham contend that the first three job dimensions contribute to the employee's perceived meaningfulness of the work, autonomy effects worker responsibility for work and work outcomes, and feedback provides the worker with knowledge of their performance level. The model asserts that structuring jobs with high levels of each characteristic results in high levels of work outcomes, including intrinsic motivation, performance quality, and job satisfaction, and would also decrease absenteeism and turnover.

It stands to reason, then, that organizational leaders who are seeking to elicit superlative performances from their employees would not only seek to motivate them through commitment, but would also structure jobs in such a manner as to enhance the intrinsic motivation of workers. In so doing, the potential level of effort expended by employees would be even greater than if either of these motivational methods were used individually. Consequently, we propose that firms who purposefully structure jobs to include these intrinsically motivating

factors will recognize even greater levels of discretionary effort, and in turn, maximal organizational outcomes. In other words, we contend that job structure and the resultant intrinsic motivation of employees will moderate the commitment–discretionary effort relationship such that discretionary effort increases concomitant with the extent to which jobs are so structured.

Therefore, our proposition is that (a) commitment is reciprocal in nature; (b) employee commitment will contribute to high levels of discretionary effort; (c) the commitment–discretionary effort relationship will be moderated by job structure and intrinsic motivation; and (d) discretionary effort will impact organizational performance positively. Finally, we assert that the organizational performance outcome will lead back to increased organizational commitment to employees. That is, when organizational leaders realize superior firm outcomes are resulting from their investment in employees, they will experience a reaffirmed proclivity to continue, or even increase that investment.

Discussion and Conclusion

For more than three decades, questions surrounding theoretical clarity have swirled around the notion of organizational and employee commitment (Bergman, 2006; Cohen, 2007; Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Also running parallel on the theoretical HR agenda has been the notion of *employee engagement*—a popular concept that is gaining more than a toehold in both applied and scholarly spheres. Good theory building requires precise definitions, boundary conditions, and full specifications (Pedhazur & Pedhazur Schmelkin, 1991). A major contribution of this article speaks to this very charge— engagement is at best subsumed under the construct of employee commitment. More to the point, we feel and offer a theoretic logic that employee engagement is not theoretically, or practically, the ultimate employee characteristic that will produce higher firm performance.

Although recent theory speaks to the antecedents of engagement, it fails to sufficiently address the role of employee commitment in leading to discretionary effort, and ultimately improved firm performance. This theory, referred to as the

job demands–resources model, proposes that job burnout and employee engagement are opposites of each other, and that the factors that lead to engagement and burnout can be grouped into the broad categories of either job demands or job resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti & Bakker, 2011; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001). The theory proposes that job resources, such as appropriate job structure, autonomy, and feedback, lead to increased motivation, and this has been supported by several studies (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002).

However, the focus of the job resources in this model is mainly on the job structural changes proposed by Hackman and Oldham (1975) in their job characteristics model. Based on our literature review, we propose that employee commitment plays a larger role than the job demands–resources model would predict. As such, our model separates the influence of organizational commitment and job resources and states that organizational commitment to employees is the primary driver of employee commitment and superlative job performance through the contribution of discretionary effort. The key implication is to switch the focus from employee engagement to organizational commitment, thus placing the responsibility on the employer to create the conditions that lead to committed employees.

Of course, the notion that employee engagement is not theoretically or practically the *most* desirable employee characteristic that organizations should strive to achieve is provocative and should be open to a spirited scholarly debate. Accordingly, this may be the appropriate launch point to discuss implications for future research. The idea that employee commitment supersedes employee engagement is, in fact, an empirical question. As such, a "full court press" that involves theoretical, methodological, and statistical efforts is warranted. Notably, theoretical debate and further inquiry should be encouraged. Toward that end, a more nuanced understanding could surface. For instance, there are several conceptualizations of organizational commitment (OC) and employee commitment. Specifically, OC has been conceptualized along many different

lines to include employee commitment aimed at the job, at the organization, or workgroup (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003; Cohen, 2007; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Morrow, 1993). OC, contrary to our contentions, has also been conceptualized as a fluid trait that has temporal markers involving employee commitment before, during, and after an employee enters an organization (Cohen, 2007). Most OC scholars also identify varying levels of attachment within the OC literature to include instrumental, affective, and normative lenses of commitment (Cohen, 2007; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). Perhaps connecting employee engagement to one of these dimensions will inform the conceptual debate with which the construct is surrounded. This is clearly beyond the scope of this article, but a more thorough understanding is warranted as we try to more appropriately locate employee engagement within the employee and organizational commitment literature. In other words, we offer that employee engagement is compatible with and may be subsumed under employee and organizational commitment. However, we leave it to future research and scholarly inquiry to ascertain exactly where within the larger construct of employee commitment employee engagement should actually sit.

Whether one embraces employee engagement, or preferably, employee commitment, the notion of discretionary effort is front and center. As a major conceptual thrust of this article, we offer what we believe is a more attractive refinement of the concept. It is impossible to disentangle management theories from management history and its managerial context. In particular, the launch point and earnest trajectory of the OC research agenda spans at least four decades (Cohen, 2007; Keating & Heslin, 2015; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). During that time, at least in Western economies, a shift has occurred from manufacturing to service to knowledge industries. Whereas the "old" conceptualization of discretionary effort may have sufficed in manufacturing and service contexts, we offer a more suitable and contemporary definition of discretionary effort given our time. Specifically, we propose that discretionary effort, to truly unlock value, must have an innovation or knowledge improvement commitment. Since knowledge creation

is a source of competitive advantage (Nonaka, 1994), employee commitment, in contemporary Western economies, must involve effort toward innovation and knowledge creation. In fact, we suggest that the recent weak link between discretionary effort and firm financial performance is based on poor conceptualization of discretionary effort. Rather, not all discretionary effort is created equal; it is the innovative and knowledge-centered discretionary effort that is more likely to drive results. Future scholarly inquiry should test and support or refute this important proposition.

The implications to practice are commonsensical and straightforward. Employee engagement suffers a host of maladies that likely prevent practitioners from acting upon it or benefiting from it. Practitioners can only capture and manipulate what they fully understand. Whereas HRM has made considerable and widely accepted advances in recruiting, selection, and compensation, to name a few, the gains regarding employee engagement have just been too elusive. The reason, we believe, that the construct, itself, is imprecise and conflated with other, better-received constructs such as employee and organizational commitment. For that reason, we recommend that practitioners refocus their efforts to understand the notion of employee engagement and work on understanding its relationship to employee commitment. One specific and actionable recommendation is for HR leaders and managers to place considerably more emphasis on the oft-ignored HR function of job design—and, perhaps, job analysis—to fully understand and appreciate how current jobs are falling short in driving employee commitment.

It is in this spirit that we put forth a rather meaningful assertion—the current conceptualization of employee engagement may lack merit relative to commitment as the most desirable of employee characteristics. Its conceptual distinction from and relationship to employee and organizational commitment may offer utility above and beyond the more well-received theories of organizational commitment. Accordingly, we suggest that constrained resources should instead focus on commitment as opposed to engagement. We also advance a model that embeds the notion of job structure and job design with an

enhanced orientation toward discretionary effort to fully specify and explicate the relationship between commitment and firm financial performance. Of course, the efficacy of our claims deserves the same critical, and maybe unpopular, inquiry orientation that we offer here. We believe that this can be done without "sharp elbows" as both HR theory and practice, and ultimately, organizational performance, depends on upon our collective, critical inquiry.

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Internal Factors That Enable Positive Deviance to Occur in Leaders: A Phenomenological Description[*]

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In recent years, leadership scholars have investigated positive deviance—how leaders and organizations go above and beyond normal expectations in positive ways. While a strong conceptual foundation exists, little has been done to date to build upon this initial work. The current phenomenological study explored the internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders. In-depth interviews captured the lived experience of six leaders who were deemed positively deviant by a referent group of eight followers. Data were explicated and resulted in the following internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders: values (prioritization and care for others, values-driven, growth and reproduction mindset, sense of meaning, courageous action, shared approach to leadership, emotional intelligence, and integrity); behaviors (connection and care for others, growth and reproduction mindset, learning and improvement mindset, courageous action, creativity, shared approach to leadership, and emotional intelligence); and attitudes (positivity, humility, abundance, visionary, courage, and gratitude). Research and practitioner reflections are presented along with limitations and recommendations for future research.

Key words: abundance, courage, gratitude, humility, positive deviance, qualitative phenomenological research, visionary

The focus of deviance research has most often been negative (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001; Cameron & Caza, 2004) with Robinson, and Bennett (1995) defining *negative deviance* as occurring when "an organization's customs, policies, or internal regulations are violated by an individual or a group that may jeopardize the well-being of the organization or its citizens" (556). While recognizing the value of exploring dysfunctional and negative behaviors, Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2004) wisely opine that the result has been unnecessarily narrow, noting that developing the construct of *positive*

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deviance would provide "a language for identifying positive, norm-departing behaviors" (829). While not ignoring the "negative, challenging, or contrary aspects of organizations" (731), Cameron and Caza (2004) note that positive organizational scholarship (POS) research seeks to understand what represents the best of the human condition in organizations by investigating "the extraordinary positive outcomes and the processes that produce them" (732). The POS movement has provided the challenge to move beyond negative deviance and to seek to learn from positive deviance. According to Cameron and Caza (2004), POS "investigates positive deviance, or the ways in which organizations and members flourish and prosper in especially favorable ways" (731) and also serves to "identify the dynamics leading to exceptional individual and organizational performance" (731). Lavine (2012) articulates the need for research on the factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders. According to Lavine, as well as Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2004), there exists a need to conduct qualitative research to deepen the understanding of positive deviance. Dutton and Quinn (2003) and Lavine both suggest that there is as much to be learned from favorable outcomes as failed outcomes.

Positive Deviance

A positively deviant leader is someone who displays uncommon behaviors that do not conform to expected norms. Their actions do not represent "business as usual" (Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2004, 842). The departure from norms could be in relation to work values and behaviors, or the way a specific industry or practice is normally run. Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2004) define *positive deviance* as "intentional behaviors that significantly depart from the norms of a referent group in honorable ways" (841). Lavine (2012), responding to Spreitzer and Sonenshein's call for more rigorous theoretical development, defines *positive deviance* as "uncommon behavior that does not conform to expected norms, but would be deemed positive by a referent group" (1023). Given the case made by Lavine in altering Spreitzer and Sonenshein's construct definition, the current study uses Lavine's definition.

Lavine (2012) called for research on what internal factors should be considered. Given this recommendation, the grand tour question is: What are the internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders? The primary research question for the leader is: What are the values, behaviors, and attitudes that enable you to go above and beyond normal expectations? We derived the interview questions using Lavine's construct definition, as well as the five psychological factors (sense of meaning, other focus, self-determination, personal efficacy, and courage) and item pool suggested by Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2004).

Method

A qualitative phenomenological methodology was utilized to frame this study. Both leaders and followers were surveyed on the internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur. Given the accepted norms of a phenomenological research sample size using in-depth interviews (Boyd, 2001; Creswell, 1998), we anticipated a sample size of five to ten leaders. We reached saturation at four participants; however, we continued interviewing until we had six participants to satisfy research norms and confirm saturation.

Research Design

Capturing the lived experiences of leaders deemed positively deviant by a referent group is best accomplished through the qualitative research, given that there is little known about the internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders and the reality that, to date, there has not been sufficient inquiry on the existing construct (see Lavine, 2012).

Phenomenology provides a data-rich textual description of the lived experiences of the research subjects and seeks to reveal the essence of the shared experience of a phenomenon across a group of individuals (Greene, 1997; Maypole & Davies, 2001; Patton, 2015). *Transcendental phenomenology* demands that the researcher set aside personal experiences and focus on the research subjects' lived experiences, which allows for a holistic perspective on the phenomena being explored (Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental

phenomenology was utilized for this study as it is essential that research subjects have had lived experiences with the phenomenon of positive deviance in order to understand the internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur.

Purposive Sampling

Participants were selected using purposive sampling of those evidencing positively deviant behaviors. The data collection procedures were followed, and all participants, representing a variety of organizational sizes and industries within the United States, gave verbal consent to participate in the study. At the time of the interview, every leader was actively leading in his or her respective organization. Every follower was also employed by and actively relating to the leader being interviewed. Of the fourteen research participants, six were leaders and eight were followers. Five were female, and nine were male. Multiple followers were interviewed for two of the leaders. Demographic information for the leaders is provided in Table 1 and the followers in Table 2.

Table 1: Leader Demographic Information

Number	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Location
1	Josh	M	37	Midwest
2	Sally	F	55	Midwest
3	Todd	M	44	South Central
4	Conrad	M	58	Midwest
5	Jackie	F	44	Western
6	Kevin	M	52	Southeast

Table 2: Follower Demographic Information

Number	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Location
1	Josh Follower 1	M	31	Midwest
2	Josh Follower 2	M	36	Midwest
3	Sally Follower 1	F	43	Midwest
4	Sally Follower 2	F	42	Midwest
5	Todd Follower	M	41	South Central
6	Conrad Follower	M	52	Midwest
7	Jackie Follower	F	34	Western
8	Kevin Follower	M	51	Southeast

Data Collection

As Creswell (2007) and Morris (2015) suggest, an interview guide was developed to focus the research and detail the main themes. We used in-depth interviews and personal memos to collect data. Personal memos were taken with a Livescribe recording device, enabling notes to be directly uploaded in a digital form for secure storage. The lead author conducted all the Midwest interviews and the Southeast interview face-to-face at the locations chosen by the participants. The remaining interviews were conducted through a GoToMeeting conference call.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were scheduled for one hour; however, all leader interviews were in the 45- to 70-minute range, and follower interviews were in the 20- to 30-minute range. The interviews were transcribed and stored securely under a participant pseudonym.

Interview Questions for Leaders

- Question 1: What values enable you to go above and beyond normal expectations?
- Question 2: What behaviors enable you to go above and beyond normal expectations?
- Question 3: What attitudes enable you to go above and beyond normal expectations?
- Question 4: Is there anything else that you can think of that enables you to go above and beyond normal expectations?
- Question 5: Would you consider yourself to be a positively deviant leader?

Follow-up Sub-questions for the Above Questions

- How does this (value/behavior/attitude) enable you to go above and beyond normal expectations?
- What motivates you to practice that value/behavior/attitude?
- What do you feel when you practice that value/behavior/attitude?

Sub-questions for Leaders

These sub-questions were asked if the interviewee mentioned any of the five psychological factors anticipated by Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2004).

Sense of Meaning. Please provide an example of an action you took when there was something of deep meaning to you.

- What specifically motivated you to take action?
- How did taking the action make you feel?
- Did taking action and making a difference impact your intention to continue behaving in similar ways or not?

Other-Focus. Please provide an example of when you took on the perspective of another person for their benefit.

- What specifically motivated you to take on their perspective?
- How did taking on their perspective make you feel?
- How did taking on the perspective of others and helping others result in personal change?

Self-Determination. Please provide an example of when you freely chose to go above and beyond normal expectations. How did your freedom to choose to act in norm-defying ways impact you?

Personal Efficacy. Please provide an example of how you set goals and persevered to attain your full potential. How did this process impact you?

Courage. Please provide an example of how courage enabled you to break free from routine and go above and beyond norms. How did acting courageously make you feel?

Followers were presented with a description of positively deviant leaders and asked: In light of this description, would you consider your leader to be a positive deviant? In keeping with Lavine's (2012) call for research regarding internal factors and Spreitzer and Sonenshein's (2004) descriptions regarding internal factors, followers were asked: In your opinion, what values, behaviors, or attitudes enable this leader to go above and beyond normal expectations? We

probed for deeper insight and data—a key strength of the phenomenological approach—using follow-up question with both leaders and followers.

Interview Questions for Followers

Followers were told that a positively deviant leader is someone who displays uncommon behaviors that do not conform to expected norms. Their actions do not represent "business as usual." The departure from norms could be in relation to work values and behaviors, or the way a specific industry or practice is normally run. They act in unexpected ways. In light of this description, followers were then asked if they considered their respective leaders to be positive deviants and above what norms does their leader rose. They were then asked a series of four parallel questions to those asked of the leaders.

- Question 1: In your opinion, what values enable this leader to go above and beyond normal expectations?
- Question 2: In your opinion, what behaviors enable this leader to go above and beyond normal expectations?
- Question 3: In your opinion, what attitudes enable this leader to go above and beyond normal expectations?
- Question 4: Is there anything else that you can think of that enables this leader to go above and beyond normal expectations?

Sub-Questions for Followers

These sub-questions were asked if the interviewee mentioned any of the five psychological factors anticipated by Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2004).

Sense of Meaning. What behaviors or statements did you observe in the leader that demonstrated to you the leader's sense of meaning?

Other-Focus. What behaviors or statements did you observe in the leader that demonstrated the leader's focus on others?

Self-Determination. What behaviors or statements did you observe in the leader that demonstrated the leader's choice to act in norm-defying ways?

Personal Efficacy. What behaviors or statements did you observe in the leader that demonstrated the leader's goal setting and perseverance to achieve their potential?

Courage. What behaviors or statements did you observe in the leader that demonstrated courage enabling them to break free from routine and go above and beyond norms?

Explication of Data

Hycner (1999) preferred the term *explication* over *analysis* for phenomenology, as the word *analysis* "usually means a breaking into parts and therefore often means a loss of the whole phenomenon . . . [whereas *explication* implies an] investigation of the constituents of a phenomenon while keeping the context of the whole" (161). Data explication began after the interviews were transcribed. We used the following five-step process described by Hycner (1985, 1999) and simplified and demonstrated by Groenewald (2004):

- Step 1: Bracketing and Phenomenological Reduction
- Step 2: Delineating Units of Meaning
- Step 3: Clustering Units of Meaning to Form Themes
- Step 4: Summarize, Validate, and Modify Interviews
- Step 5: Extract General and Unique Themes

Step 1 is bracketing and phenomenological reduction. According to Hycner (1985), *bracketing* describes "the procedure which [is] to be followed in listening to the recordings of the interviews and in reading the transcripts. The research data . . . are approached with an openness to whatever meanings emerged" (280).

Step 2 is delineating units of meaning. In this step, the statements that "are seen to illuminate the researched phenomenon are extracted or 'isolated'" (Groenewald, 2004, 18).

Step 3 is clustering units of meaning to form themes. Once the final list of units of meaning was complete, we examined it to "elicit the essence of meaning of units within the holistic context" (Groenewald, 2004, 19).

Step 4 involves summarizing each interview, validating it, and, where necessary, modifying it. Here, the summary of the interview themes was written with the aim of giving a sense of the whole and providing context for the themes

that emerged from the study (Hycner, 1985). Participant-specific summaries were given via e-mail to each participant as a validity check to confirm that the summary captured the essence of the interview. No changes were suggested by the participants.

Finally, Step 5 is extracting general and unique themes from all the interviews and making a composite summary. We followed Hycner's (1985) instruction and looked for themes common to all interviews as well as any variations. A composite summary of all interviews was written to "capture the essence of the phenomenon being investigated. Such a composite summary describes the 'world' in general, as experienced by the participants" (Hycner, 1985, 294).

Validation and Credibility

Creswell (2003) notes that validating qualitative research should focus on "determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account" (198). Researcher bias was addressed through bracketing. Lincoln and Guba (1999) note that member check is the most critical credibility technique given that qualitative research is dependent on participant views for credibility. Therefore, as described in Step 4 of the explication process, each participant was given access to his or her interview and summary and asked to read them to confirm accuracy.

Krefting (2001) describes *triangulation* as "a powerful strategy for enhancing the quality of research, particularly credibility" (219). For the current study, the combination of member checking and the triangulation of data sources (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1989), wherein the range of data is expanded as different groupings of people—in this instance, leaders and followers—contribute to a holistic and accurate understanding of the internal factors that enable positive deviance.

Results

When given the description of positively deviant leaders, all eight followers answered yes to Follower Question 1, affirming that his or her respective leader

is a positively deviant leader per Lavine (2012). A complete summation of comments is available from the corresponding author if desired.

Themes and Frequencies Derived From Coding Process

The themes and frequency codes derived from the coding process are presented in this section. The numbers in parentheses after each category represent the sum of the codes related to that category. The numbers in parentheses after each code represent the frequency of that particular code. The categories derived from each code are:

- prioritization and care for others,
- shared approach to leadership,
- courageous action,
- growth and reproduction mindset, and
- emotional intelligence.

The first category—prioritization and care for others (39)—was broken down into the following codes: other-focus (18), generosity (4), impact beyond transaction (4), commitment to long-term relationship (3), supportive (4), (sacrifice (3), example to be imitated (2), and outside-of-the-norm thinking (1). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that followers perceived their leaders going above and beyond with regard to how these leaders prioritized and sacrificed for other people. Most participants' (75%) first responses to the question regarding norms was their perception of how the leader treated other people, whether employees or customers, indicating that these positively deviant leaders rise above organizational norms, as described by Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003). As Spreitzer and Sonenshein anticipated, other foci emerged as facilitators of positive deviance.

The second category—shared approach to leadership (20)—was composed of the following codes: shared leadership (5), team focus (4), team investment (4), humility (3), not top down (3), and not micromanaging (1). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that followers perceived their leaders as demonstrating uncommon behavior with regard to their leadership style. Of note

is that both of Sally's followers focused the entirety of their responses to this question around Sally's shared leadership style and team investment. Prioritization of team emerged as a significant theme.

The third category—courageous action (21)—was composed of the following codes: challenging (13), courage (6), and risk taking (2). The codes of challenging and courage are synthesized here into the category of courageous action. As Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003) anticipated, courage emerged as a facilitator of positive deviance. Followers reported that leaders demonstrated the courage to challenge the status quo and take initiative to confront people and systems.

The fourth category—growth and reproduction mindset (17)—was composed of the following codes: desire for improvement (5), reproduction mindset (5), sets expectations (5), and feedback (2). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that followers perceived leaders to rise above norms based on a desire for growth and reproduction. Followers perceived that leaders were intentional about investing in them, with the aim being that the care shown or investment made would be experienced by the customer.

The fifth category—emotional intelligence (6)—was composed of the following codes: managing emotions (3) and consistent (3). The codes synthesized into this category emerged from Conrad Follower's response only. Conrad Follower perceived that Conrad was positively deviant due to his capacity to manage emotions in the midst of challenging situations. Conrad Follower perceived that Conrad's consistency and his capacity to not overreact set him apart.

Question 1: Values

The first area of inquiry regarding the internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders was that of values.

Leader Themes. Based on the leader responses, seven themes emerged from the coding process with regard to the values that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders. The first theme—prioritization and care for others (63)—was composed of the following codes: other-focus (38), risk taking (7), humility (6), supportive (4), outside-of-the-norm thinking (3), impact beyond transaction (3),

and generosity (2). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that the most significant value that enables positive deviance to occur is how leaders perceive and interact with other people. Five of the six leaders responded with other-focus as the first value that came to their mind. Three of the six respondents made a specific point to indicate that this value supersedes their other values with Josh stating "first and foremost"; Jackie stating, "the primary, the reason"; and Kevin stating the macro-perspective that "it starts with a value of humanity, the value of other people," indicating the foundational nature of this value. All participants indicated a concern for the well-being of others as a significant value throughout the interview.

The second theme—values-driven (17)—had one code: values-driven (17). Although there is only a single code representing this theme, it emerged as a significant value for participants. Valuing values themselves and practicing those values was a priority for three of the six leaders. Based on Sally's responses, values provided an important filter for decision making and team alignment.

The third theme—growth and reproduction mindset (16)—had the following codes: desire for improvement (6), achievement orientation (5), creativity (3), sets expectations (1), and reproduction mindset (1). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that leaders value a growth and reproduction mindset. All six of the desire-for-improvement codes were in relation to the people aspect of organization—desiring the people to improve. Four of the five desire-for-improvement codes, all in Sally's response, were not attached to a bigger focus on business results but instead limited to the development of the team. This provides greater weight to the first theme—prioritization and care for others. As observed by followers, the leaders expressed a desire to improve, to set expectations as demonstrated by accountability, and to focus on their team so that the values they experience are also experienced by the customer; hence, they have a reproduction mindset.

The fourth theme—sense of meaning (13)—was composed of the following codes: sense of meaning (10) and moral (3). As Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003) expected, leaders were guided by a sense of meaning, as "meaning gives

individuals a reason to risk departing the norms of a referent group" (212). The sense of meaning was expressed as a desire to make a difference, being driven by spiritual meaning (religion/yoga) and a desire to do the right thing.

The fifth theme—shared approach to leadership (8)—had the following codes: team focus (6) and shared leadership (2). The codes synthesized into this category indicated that leaders value a shared approach to leadership. Two out of the six leaders indicated that this was a value for them. Specifically, the team focus code and one of the shared leadership codes describe with the way the team is treated and valued. The remaining shared leadership code indicates that the leader had a value of working through issues with other leaders.

The sixth theme—courageous action (11)—was composed of the following codes: courage (5), challenging (2), personal efficacy (2), and self-determination (2). The codes synthesized into this theme indicated that leaders valued freely initiating courageous actions. As Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003) anticipated, the qualities of personal efficacy (Kevin) and self-determination (Todd) were present and included in the courageous action theme, as these qualities enable such actions to take place. Challenge was articulated by Kevin as good aggression when utilized for the goodness of others.

The seventh theme—emotional intelligence (2)—had the following codes: awareness of personality differences (1) and self-awareness (1). Sally expressed the value of allowing her team to bring their unique personalities to the workplace. Todd expressed a value of being free to be himself, which assumes a level of self-awareness.

Follower Themes. Based on the follower responses, seven themes emerged from the coding process with regard to the values that followers perceive to enable positive deviance to occur in leaders. The first theme—prioritization and care for others (36)—was composed of the following codes: other-focus (23), generosity (6), impact beyond transaction (5), and sacrifice (2). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that followers perceive leaders as having a value of prioritization and care for other people. The presence and prominence of this value is consistent with the leader responses. Followers articulated that

this care for others was genuinely for the benefit of other people, with Todd Follower noting that this value was the "cornerstone" of who Todd is, providing another attestation to the foundational nature of this value.

The second theme—growth and reproduction mindset (28)—was composed of the following codes: desire for improvement (6), reproduction mindset (6), achievement orientation (5), sets expectations (5), strategic thinking (2), continuous learning (2), feedback (1), and pragmatic (1). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that followers perceived their leaders as having a growth and reproduction mindset. "Getting better," "not staying stagnant," and "being the best," both personally and organizationally, are components of this particular theme. Sally Follower 2's comment regarding Sally's value on continual learning is noteworthy, as it reflects a reproduction of this value in the follower: "Another one of her values, continuing to grow. . . . We don't stay stagnant long . . . she values that you're going to learn more as you grow and change."

The third theme—courageous action (12)—was composed of the following codes: challenging (5), self-determination (3), and personal efficacy (4). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that followers perceive leaders as acting in courageous ways. Followers indicated that leaders challenged themselves and the organization as a means toward being the best and focusing toward task accomplishment. Followers perceived leaders as acting in free, autonomous ways, choosing to go above and beyond normal expectations.

The fourth theme—sense of meaning (9)—was composed of the following codes: sense of meaning (8) and moral (1). The codes synthesized into this category indicate that followers perceived that leaders had a sense of meaning. The code of moral was also included in this theme since Sally Follower 2's comment was connected to Sally being driven by the cause of a suffering child. Josh Follower 2 noticed that Josh's investment in his people went beyond job accomplishment and continued with the employees' well-being into the future. This sense of meaning was directly attested to by five of the eight followers.

The fifth theme—integrity (7)—was composed of one code: integrity (7). Five of the eight followers identified the presence of integrity in the leader as a value.

Both Josh Follower 1 and Sally Follower 1 stated this as the first value they perceived in their leader and did so with language indicating that this was quite notable. Josh Follower 1 stated: "I think his integrity is way aboveboard," and Sally Follower 1 noted that integrity "is huge for her." Additionally, for Sally Follower 2, the integrity value was connected to the way the quality was reproduced in those around her.

The sixth theme—values-driven (6)—was composed of one code: values-driven (6). Three of the followers utilized language and examples that indicated that leaders were driven by particular values or sets of values. Josh Follower 1 utilized the language of embodying values, Sally Follower 1 utilized the language of living the value of integrity, and Kevin Follower noted how Kevin embodied the collective values of the organization. Kevin Follower indicated that values are one means by which Kevin "raises the game" for others.

The seventh theme—shared approach to leadership (5)—was composed of the following codes: team focus (4) and shared leadership (1). The codes synthesized into this category are consistent with the leaders' statements that followers perceive that leaders value a shared approach to leadership. The team focus was demonstrated in caring for the career development of the employees, as well as Jackie Follower's statement that Jackie values a healthy team. Sally Follower 2 directly stated that Sally values shared leadership.

Question 2: Behaviors

The second area of inquiry regarding the internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders was that of behaviors

Leader Themes. Based on the leader responses, six themes emerged from the coding process as the behaviors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders. The first theme—connection and care for others (57)—was composed of the following codes: other-focus (22), relational connectivity (13), love (6), humor (4), build trust (3), impact beyond transaction (3), generosity (3), encouraging (1), positivity (1), and neoteny—a trait that Heskett (2002) describes as making leaders "'addicted to life'" and able to recruit protectors, nurturers, and believers through a long and productive leadership career" (1). The codes

synthesized into this category indicate that leaders behave in ways that demonstrate a desire to connect with and care for others. This theme changed from the previous articulation of "prioritization and care for others" to "connection and care for others" in light of the frequency with which leaders expressed—directly or indirectly—the behavior of relational connectivity. This behavior is consistent with the aforementioned value theme that emerged from both leaders and followers.

The second theme—courageous action (14)—was composed of the following codes: courage (7), personal efficacy (3), challenging (2), vision (1), and self-determination (1). The codes synthesized into this category indicated that leaders behave in ways that demonstrate courageous action. This behavior is consistent with the aforementioned value theme that emerged from both leaders and followers. Sally directly stated the behavior of courage, whereas Kevin described the behavior of courage as resulting from his behaviors of happy persistence and continuous learning.

The third theme—growth and reproduction mindset (14)—was composed of the following codes: continuous learning (6), desire for improvement (4), vulnerability (2), reproduction mindset (1), and asking good questions (1). The codes synthesized into this theme indicate that leaders behave in ways that evidence a growth and reproduction mindset. Josh noted that being vulnerable enabled him to seek out problems in the organization. A desire to take initiative to detect problems and deeper issues that may be going on, as well as finding better ways to perform, were also identified as important.

The fourth theme—creativity (11)—was composed of one code: creativity (11). Based on the frequency of this code, the behavior of creativity is significant enough to state as a theme. Sally stated that being creative enables her to increase her effectiveness and find new ways to conduct her business.

The fifth theme—shared approach to leadership (10)—was composed of the following codes: shared leadership (5), collaboration (3), and team focus (2). The codes synthesized into this theme indicate that leaders behave in ways that demonstrate a shared approach to leadership. Conrad noted that he intentionally

seeks to share decision making and sees others as having as much to contribute as he does. Collaborating with others was a behavior demonstrated by Sally as a means to engage her team.

The sixth theme—emotional intelligence (8)—was composed of the following codes: managing emotions (6) and self-awareness (2). The codes synthesized into this theme indicate that leaders behave with emotional intelligence. Sally noted the importance of managing emotions, especially when things were difficult, and that managing emotions enabled her to maintain authenticity.

Follower Themes. Based on the follower responses, five themes emerged from the coding process of what followers perceive to be the behaviors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders.

The first theme—connection and care for others (34)—was composed of the following codes: other-focus (14), managing emotions (5), relational connectivity (4), humor (4), vulnerability (3), generosity (2), and humility (2). The codes synthesized into this theme indicate that followers perceive leaders as behaving in ways that demonstrate connection and care. Four followers attested to the behavior of other-focus as demonstrated by asking questions, understanding and managing in light of personality differences, demonstrating care, and stepping in to help employees in generous ways. The code of managing emotions, specifically identified as a behavior by Conrad Follower, is included here due to the emphasis on the way in which this behavior impacts others. Conrad Follower's comments indicate that managing emotions puts others at ease and fosters relational connectivity. Humor was identified by two followers as a behavior.

The second theme—learning and improvement mindset (13)—was composed of the following codes: asking questions (7), continuous learning (3), and desire for improvement (3). The codes synthesized into this theme indicate that followers perceive leaders as behaving in ways that demonstrate a learning and improvement mindset. Three followers directly attested to the behavior of question asking. Two followers stated that leaders demonstrated continuous learning as a behavior that enabled them to excel.

The third theme—shared approach to leadership (13)—was composed of two codes: collaborative (9) and team focus (4). The codes synthesized into this theme indicate that followers perceived their leaders as behaving in ways that demonstrate a shared approach to leadership. Kevin Follower directly stated that Kevin behaves in collaborative ways irrespective of rank.

The fourth theme—courageous action (11)—was composed of the following codes: challenging (5), courage (3), self-determination (2), and personal efficacy (1). The codes synthesized into this theme indicate that followers perceive leaders as acting in courageous ways. Challenging the status quo was demonstrated by asking questions for both Josh Follower 1 and Conrad Follower. Followers described leaders with qualities that indicate the presence of self-determination and personal efficacy, which was expected by Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003).

The fifth theme—communicate and model vision (9)—was composed of two codes: communicates clear vision (6) and leads by example (3). The codes synthesized into this theme indicate that followers perceive leaders as demonstrating behaviors that involve communicating and modeling vision. The clarity of vision was attested to by Sally Follower 2, who recognized that Sally "knows what she wants" and "knows where she is going." Kevin Follower also said that Kevin "definitely knows what he wants to do." Additionally, Sally Follower 2 noted that Sally led the way by example.

Question 3: Attitudes

The third area of inquiry regarding the internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders was that of attitudes.

Leader Themes. Based on the leader responses, three themes emerged from the coding process as the attitudes that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders. The first theme was positivity (24). Three of the six leaders directly articulated the attitude of positivity as the primary attitude that enables them to go above and beyond normal expectations.

The second theme was humility (9). Jackie and Kevin articulated humility as the primary attitude that enables them to go above and beyond normal expectations.

Jackie named the attitude of humility directly; however, she described the way humility displayed itself in reliance upon other people. Kevin noted how humility was primarily demonstrated by the willingness to admit that one is wrong.

The third theme was abundance (3). Todd articulated that his primary attitude was that of abundance versus scarcity. This abundance attitude displayed itself in seeking to help competitors by understanding their purpose and helping them with their needs.

Follower Themes. Based on the follower responses, five themes emerged from the coding process as the attitudes that followers perceive to enable positive deviance to occur in leaders. The first was positivity (24). Consistent with the dominant attitude as attested to by the leaders, six of the eight followers responded by directly mentioning that their leaders had positive attitudes. This positivity was described as daily optimism, finding opportunities in the midst of problems, and generally as an attitude in contrast with a negative attitude.

The second theme was visionary (6). Sally Follower 1 articulated the forward-thinking aspect of Sally's attitude as "not stuck in the day to day."

The third theme was courage (5). Sally Follower 2 and Kevin Follower both described their leaders as having the attitude of courage. Courage was described as "tenacity," "a little bit of an edge," "not being afraid," and "audacity."

The fourth theme was gratitude (3). Sally Follower 1 described the attitude of gratitude in Sally.

The fifth theme was humility (2). Josh Follower 1 attested to the attitude of humility in Josh as "assuming the best" and describing his willingness to "be wrong." This attitude is consistent with what the leaders expressed.

Question 4: Other Factors

The fourth question gave leaders and followers the opportunity to express anything else that they could think of that enabled them (or their leaders, in the case of the followers) to go above and beyond normal expectations. Two of the six leaders and three of the eight followers had additional contributions relevant to the internal factors that enable positive deviance.

Leader Themes. Two themes emerged from the leader responses: continuous learning (4) and building trust (4). Consistent with the aforementioned code in the behavior question, Kevin articulated the priority of building trust, describing trust as necessary for impact. Kevin stated that trust is essential in order to garner acceptance of one's ideas.

Follower Themes. Four themes emerged from the follower responses. The first theme—connection and care for others (16)—was composed of two codes: other-focus (15) and relational connectivity (1).

The second theme—growth and reproduction mindset (6)—was composed of the following codes: self-determination (2), personal efficacy (2), and desire for improvement (2). Consistent with the aforementioned values and behaviors, the codes synthesized into this category indicate that followers perceive leaders as behaving in ways that demonstrate a growth and reproduction mindset.

The third theme—emotional intelligence (4)—was composed of the following codes: managing emotions (2), self-awareness (1), and awareness of personality differences (1). Consistent with the previously stated behavior, the fourth theme—shared approach to leadership (3)—was composed of one code: team investment (3).

Question 5: Positive Deviance

The final question, for leaders only, was whether or not they considered themselves to be positively deviant. Three of the six leaders (Josh, Conrad, Kevin) paused reflectively for a moment, appearing to give significant thought to the response. Four of the six responses were a clear affirmation that leaders perceived themselves to be positively deviant based on their understanding of the concept from the interview.

Josh responded:

> Yes, I would. When I think about what I see in other leaders in our industry and when I sit down to talk with leaders, there are leaders who come with a lot of different strengths who are especially comparing themselves to business benchmarks and metrics, and those things are very, very powerful. But we say, there's a culture, there's a team we want to build here that's different than what we see out in the marketplace.

Sally responded:

Yes. Yes, without a doubt, and I don't take it for granted. I don't say that in the full sense of the ego sense; I look at what my team has been able to create, and I think that we are, as a group, leaders.

Conrad's response indicated a level of humility in his self-concept as a positively deviant leader. Kevin's response was open-ended; however, he stated that being a positively deviant leader was an aspiration.

Discussion

The most prominent internal factors that enable positive deviance to occur in leaders are the prioritization of, care for, and desire to connect with followers, employees, and customers. These factors were stated as a value and demonstrated as behavior by every leader and were observed and confirmed by all followers as well. Positively deviant leaders value and demonstrate in their behavior a growth, learning, and reproduction mindset. This growth and reproduction mindset is second in frequency of codes in the leader and follower responses and was stated by all leaders and followers. Positively deviant leaders value and demonstrate courageous action in both their behavior and attitude. Positively deviant leaders also value and demonstrate in their behavior a shared approach to leadership, evidenced in the absence of micromanaging and top-down leadership.

Positively deviant leaders are values-driven. Having a collective set of values impacts hiring decisions and allows for taking risks that might normally be intimidating. The embodying of values is a means by which leaders set a higher standard for their followers. Positively deviant leaders value a sense of meaning.

Positively deviant leaders express the importance of creativity as a value and behavior. Creativity enables leaders to look at things differently and to ask questions that could enable growth. Creativity is a key driver for getting at core issues as well as organizational improvement for positively deviant leaders. Positively deviant leaders communicate and model vision. Leaders were perceived by followers as communicating clear vision and providing an example of the vision in the way that they lived. Positively deviant leaders are concerned

with demonstrating integrity, described as the desire to do the right thing, being honest, and embodying values.

Attitudinally, positively deviant leaders also demonstrate humility, abundance, and gratitude. Humility produces an awareness of not having all the answers and dependence upon others and their strengths. Humility also leads leaders to step into roles outside of their responsibility, within the organization. An abundance attitude is triggered by helping others in the same industry. Leaders show gratitude by not taking their experiences for granted.

Limitations of the Study

There are two limitations to note regarding this research. First, researcher bias is a common limitation in phenomenological research. We did follow the bracketing process and did not consciously impose our assumptions or biases into the interview process or analysis procedure. Nevertheless, given that we initially selected the participants, the possibility of unconscious participant preference in the selection process exists. Second, phenomenology affords the opportunity to provide a description of participants' experiences as positively deviant leaders; however, the research does not provide an explanation and, therefore, cannot be definitively generalized to the construct of positive deviance and applied to all positively deviant leaders.

Recommendations for Future Research

We recommend that this study be replicated utilizing a different group of positively deviant leaders to ensure that there is consistency across another group. Second, a quantitative study wherein follower satisfaction, engagement, and performance are measured in followers of positively deviant leaders and other leadership styles such as servant or transformational leaders would provide new data regarding the impact of positively deviant leaders and provide further differentiation of the construct. Third, the recommendations for further research made by Lavine (2012) and Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003, 2004) should continue to be pursued. Specifically, in addition to the question regarding internal factors, Lavine raised the question of what contextual factors enable positive

deviance to occur. This would be an appropriate next step for qualitative research and provide additional data regarding the phenomena of positive deviance. Finally, the development of an instrument, as suggested by Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2003), seems appropriate at this stage.

Concluding Reflections

The intent of this study was to answer the question: What internal factors enable positive deviance to occur in leaders? A phenomenological methodology was employed across participants that included both leaders and followers. Followers provided both confirmation that the leaders were indeed positively deviant and validation and differentiation regarding the internal factors described by leaders. The research results indicate that the most significant factor enabling positive deviance to occur is in regard to the high value on and practice of care and connecting with followers, employees, and customers. Finally, factors included a growth and reproduction mindset, courageous action, attention to values, a shared approach to leadership, sense of meaning, creativity, emotional intelligence, positivity, humility, abundance, integrity, communication and modeling of vision, emotional intelligence, and gratitude.

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Franklin D. Roosevelt, Presencing, and the Court-Packing Plan of 1937[*]

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"You have no right to despise the present."
—*Charles Baudelaire,* The Mirror of Art, *1955*

History often provides evidence of many types of leadership. Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers's (2004) work on *presence,* for example, can be used to understand the presidential success of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. This article examines Roosevelt's aptitude for "presencing"—reflecting and allowing inner knowledge to emerge—by concentrating on a proposal to change the judiciary that appears to have failed. The Judicial Procedures Reform Bill of 1937, known as FDR's court-packing plan, was defeated in the U.S. Senate, yet taken in context, it exemplifies his spirit and, paradoxically, helps explain his successes.

Key words: bricolage, Court-Packing Plan of 1937, Franklin D. Roosevelt, presencing, social action

Leadership is a forward-thinking, future-oriented activity. At the heart of definitions of leadership, there is some idea that the leader intends to realize later—an idea that goes by many names, such as mission, vision, aim, goal, objective, or purpose (Rost, 1993). Leadership begins *here* in order to get us *there.* In this sense, leadership has a final cause awaiting us sometime in the future. Asking "leadership for what?" is one way of trying to evaluate the aim or purpose toward which we are striving. If the function of leadership is to get us from point A to point B, then let's take a hard look at point B.

Because of this future orientation, leadership scholars might be forgiven if they fail to recognize the value in considering what Senge et al. (2004) refer to as "presence." In ordinary conversation, the present appears to be that which leadership intends to escape or revise. It is, at best, the condition for leadership, in the same way that Earth's gravity is a condition for launching a moon rocket. The main point is to leave the present. To be sure, a shrewd leader will be sufficiently aware of the present as the situation to be remedied, as well as the

reality to be overcome, but that is about it. From a strictly chronological view of leadership, time is a linear path from point A to point B. Leaders are thought to help their followers cast their eyes on a distant horizon. Except as a utilitarian measure, then, of what use is "presence"?

Wood (2008) recently advised leadership scholars to consider "process theory" as a different way of thinking. In the tradition of Heraclitus, Whitehead, and Bergson, Wood presents time as a continuous flow, a never-ending process of *becoming* rather than *being.* For a leader to single out a point A from which the journey begins or a point B at which the journey ends is artificial as well as potentially misleading.

Arendt (1958) defines *work* as labor in pursuit of a final object, such as a poem or a chair. The craftsman assembles the raw materials and transforms them into something from his or her imagination (possibly depicted in a blueprint), so that at the conclusion of work, he or she can assess the product by comparing it to the prototype or the mental model in his or her head. Does the Italian sonnet have 14 lines in iambic pentameter and the proper rhyme scheme? Do the joints in the chair meet at 90 degrees? Arendt then contrasts this notion of *work* with what she called "action," in which multiple participants develop their purposes together in a kind of partnership, in turbulent reaction to one another, so that the outcome is inherently unpredictable. Leadership as a practice belongs more to action than to work, even though we in leadership studies frequently regard it more as work.

Arendt's (1958) alternative characterization of "social action"—as opposed to work—fits an emerging paradigm of leadership known as *bricolage* (Grint, 2010, 24, citing the philosopher Immanuel Kant), which is the adaptive ingenuity of the handyman who makes do with the resources at hand to keep things moving forward—or what Mintzberg admitted might aptly be referred to as *ad hoc* emergent strategy (as cited in Witzel, 2003) Today, we often resist characterizations of leadership similar to those presented by former U.S. President Woodrow Wilson (1952), explaining leadership as the shaping of a homogenous mass. He wrote that "men are as clay in the hands of the

consummate leader" (26). For him, the question of leadership is simple: "There are men to be moved: how shall he move them?" (25). This type of leader is the leader of a mass, i.e., an organic whole. Such leadership, therefore, resembles work. By comparison, the follower is not some raw material, and the vision is not a detailed blueprint, and the techniques of leadership do not resemble the mastery and control exerted by a craftsman.

   Part of the advantage to adopting Arendt's (1958) alternative imagery of social action is its congruity with the increasing awareness of social life as permanent whitewater (Vaill, 1989) or liquid times (Bauman, 2007), and not so much the quiet workshop of a craftsman who conducts a project from start to finish and then takes credit for having rendered something new. However, the possibilities divide not into two competing visions of leadership (work and social action), but into the following three visions: going from A to B; there is no B; and direction rather than destination.

Going from A to B

Bauman (2003) regarded this first vision of leadership as work as outdated, a product of utopian modernity that has been evaporating lately. At one time, he wrote, precursors of social engineering (e.g., Sir Thomas More), subscribed to a view that the goal or objective was to envision—and then strive toward—finality. This would have been the basis for the first vision of leadership as work, as we have been describing it. However, we believe that such a metaphor for work impoverishes the study of leadership (see Ladkin, 2010).

There Is No B

Few people continue to believe finality is even possible, in education, business, politics, and just about any other human activity (Bauman, 2010); but even if it were possible, certainly we have reached an era of diminishing returns, in which strenuous efforts to control that which remains uncertain will cost a fortune in exertion, wealth, and liberty. Securing much of anything in such volatile times is either beyond our powers or cost-prohibitive. Since there really is no point B somewhere out there in the future, we are not really sure what our purpose

should be today. Leadership would appear to be meaningless. Technology and bureaucracy have seemingly made it unnecessary, anyway. So, the second vision of leadership is as participation in haphazard turbulence.

Direction Rather than Destination

Unfortunately, this second vision is not what leadership as bricolage intends. On the contrary, bricolage immerses the leader in a concrete, emergent process with actual partners in a third vision of leadership. Educators and scholars ask themselves "leadership for what?" Perhaps they are asking the wrong question. Perhaps there is no "there" there—that is, no destination, no vista from the mountaintop. Let us suppose that to be true. Perhaps leadership is less about approximating a vision of a good society and more about learning to abide in uncertainty—less about that Newtonian image of leadership as a kind of drawing toward some fulfillment and more about an *autopoietic* image of leadership— capable of reproducing and maintaining itself—as Wheatley (1992) foretold. Perhaps, then, leadership can be understood to be more about the direction than the destination.

The Relevance of Presence

In a series of unpublished essays and lectures from 1978 to 1984, Foucault (2007) examined the present. He wrote about "the desire to guess what is hidden under this exact, floating, mysterious and absolutely simple word: 'Today'" (122). Prior to the Enlightenment, many people wanted to understand the present as an outcome of the past or a harbinger of the future, with a focus on its relationship to other times. Foucault interpreted Kant's 1784 essay on the Enlightenment as the first time anyone really tried to answer the question, "What is the present?"

   We largely accept existing systems and hardly give them a second thought: "It is what it is." But should we do so? Existing systems can be traced back in time to circumstances and choices, revealing that things today could have been otherwise. Kant (1784/2007) was not simply asking the reader to go back in time to detect the process by which today became the way that it is. Instead, for

Foucault, Kant was asking the reader to consider what might be happening now, in the present.

Foucault's (2007) observations are interesting in that "identities are defined by trajectories" (125). Today, we are radically free to alter that trajectory, though we first have to see our choices. Seeing them, we have to notice what is emerging now. Looking at the present in this fashion reveals just how fragile everything is. In this moment, then, and in every subsequent moment, we are *constituting* our selves. Leadership contributes to this never-ending process of bringing to presence.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR): A Case Study

Removing any leader from his or her context violates the very principle this article was designed to uphold, namely that isolating phenomena from their circumstances is fallacious. Presuming to pluck from the flow of history one person's contributions risks distorting our understanding of what actually happened. Nevertheless, we cannot make any headway without doing so provisionally, loosely, as a kind of necessary evil—all the while being prepared to acknowledge the context—of which we will describe three: the historical, the contemporary, and the immediate (see Wren & Swatez, 1995).

Beginnings

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's story began in 1882, when he was born to an affluent New York family. He was worshipped by his mother, who reportedly took to "bathing and dressing him herself until he was eight years old" (Brinkley, 2010, 4). After attending Harvard University and then Columbia Law School, Roosevelt first became involved in politics when he won a state senate seat in Dutchess County, New York. He was not readily accepted by his colleagues, who regarded him as overly privileged and a political lightweight. He struggled, yet eventually succeeded, in making a name for himself separate from the perceptions that accompanied his family name. After a term as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Roosevelt took time off from active politics. It was also during this time he suffered a great personal setback: in the summer of 1921, Roosevelt contracted

poliomyelitis, commonly known as polio. This disease would paralyze his legs and confine him to a wheelchair for the remainder of his life. However, his disability did not keep him from success: over his unprecedented four terms as president of the United States, he was and is remembered for his leadership, determination, and compassion during some of the darkest periods in American history (Brinkley, 2010).

Conflict with the Supreme Court

Even before Roosevelt was elected to his first term as president, the stage was already set for the events that would result in the preparation of the Judicial Procedures Reform Bill of 1937, better known as the "court-packing plan." Beginning with the 1929 stock market crash, the effects of the Great Depression were already being felt in the United States by the time Roosevelt was elected for his first term in 1932. Carson and Kleinerman (2002) conclude that "the hallmark of Roosevelt's first term as president was his far-reaching attempt through the New Deal to bring the country out of the Depression" (305). After having campaigned for the presidency without setting any clear vision, he openly confessed during his famous first 100 days that his administration was experimenting with the best way to respond to the economic crisis. During his initial years in office, Roosevelt proposed a number of bills to catalyze a reaction that would give the economy enough momentum to work its way out of the Depression (Carson & Kleinerman, 2002). That characterization is important: he was not so much trying to fix things by fiat as to spur the system to repair itself.

   Unfortunately, by 1935, many New Deal measures had been struck down by the conservative majority in the U.S. Supreme Court, which strictly interpreted the U.S. Constitution. These anti-New Deal jurists declared that many of the New Deal programs were outside the jurisdiction of the Constitution. Roosevelt soon realized that to sustain momentum, he would need to bypass the court's adverse decisions. Some of his advisors suggested that he wait out the impasse or conventionally pursue an amendment that would give him more authority in these types of decisions (Carson & Kleinerman, 2002). But Roosevelt had other ideas.

A Declining Society: Contemporary Context

The need for societal aid pressured Roosevelt to act quicker. As a result of the stock market crash, the gross domestic product (GDP) of the United States had fallen by more than 25 percent, erasing the economic growth of the previous 25 years. In addition, industrial production was hit especially hard and fell nearly 50 percent. Although it is difficult to estimate the actual unemployment rate because of a lack of statistical evidence, some experts believe it peaked above 25 percent in 1933 (Szostak, 2003). While these figures are striking, they still may underestimate the true hardships of the times: "those who became too discouraged to seek work would not have been counted as unemployed. Likewise, those who moved from the cities to the countryside in order to feed their families would not have been counted" (Szostak, 2003, 44). The United States, not unlike other countries such as Germany at the time, was spiraling out of control.

The Threads Converge

With these external factors in mind, Roosevelt began to display his ability to "sense," the first step in Scharmer's Theory U (Senge et al., 2004). This theory mirrors the learning process and explains the ability of a person to suspend prior thoughts and norms, and especially those beliefs that are presently taken for granted, in order to recognize emergent alternatives. Sensing (deeply observing a situation and becoming one with the world) is the first of three basic steps: presencing (reflecting and allowing inner knowledge to emerge) is second, and realizing (acting swiftly, with a natural flow) is third (Senge et al., 2004).

Through sensing, Roosevelt was able to appreciate the different threads of the Great Depression as an economic event, to be sure, but he also sensed a mélange of societal feelings of despair and restiveness as well as political transitions away from corruption and toward the Democratic Party's progressive wing. This ability to empathize with the nation and see the predicament as an interconnected whole helped him realize the need for a shift in the government's system of public aid and involvement in the lives of its citizens. This

understanding allowed him to shift into the presencing stage begun during his first term in office; however, the rulings of the Supreme Court stood in his way.

Roosevelt's Personal Battle: Immediate Context

These external forces were not the only factors influencing Roosevelt. Many of his contemporaries (e.g., his predecessor, state governors, and Congress) were faced with similar challenges. Unlike Roosevelt, they failed to "see" these trends the way he did, leading them to impose past schemas on new realities. Indeed, Arthur (as cited in Senge et al., 2004) acknowledges that much of one's experience and view of the present and future "depends on where you're coming from and who you are as a person" (84). From Roosevelt's perspective, there was one compelling reason why he risked such unconventional actions as the court-packing proposal. He was constantly striving to overcome his family name and its stereotyped identity. When Theodore Roosevelt, his cousin, was elected president in 1901, the wealthy Roosevelt family name became familiar in every American household. This meant when FDR first entered politics in 1910 as the New York state senator for Dutchess County, so did a stereotype. He struggled to make a name for himself throughout much of his early career, and he finally became successful by making tough decisions that resulted in positive outcomes. Yet, the connection between FDR and his wealthy upper-class family status would follow him to the American presidency. After FDR was elected president in 1932, columnist Walter Lippmann (YEAR) noted drily that he was "a pleasant man who, without any important qualifications for the office, would very much like to be president" (as cited in Brinkley, 2010, 28). Such assumptions led FDR to have a unique view as a leader motivated by these personal pressures to rid himself of negative presumptions about his intentions as president and as an effete, aristocratic dilettante. His ability to think outside the box allowed him to recognize trends in society and react to them in a fresh and creative way.

Taking Action

After his 1936 reelection, Roosevelt exhibited *realizing,* the final step in Scharmer's Theory U, which is the ability to act in order to aid in bringing a new

reality into being (Senge et al., 2004). On February 5, 1937, Roosevelt revealed the Judicial Procedures Reform Bill of 1937, better known as the "court-packing plan." According to Batten (2010):

> [T]he plan . . . would have given the president the power to add one justice for every Supreme Court justice over age 70, up to a total of six. The older justices were not able to handle the increasing workload, FDR explained, so the additional justices would improve the Court's efficiency. (429)

Despite Roosevelt's "explanations," it was abundantly clear the real motive of the bill was to increase the number of justices to create a pro-New Deal majority and dilute the influence of the older conservative justices (Batten, 2010, 429).

Without a doubt, Roosevelt's plan was extremely controversial. Although the Constitution never specified the number of justices, people had assumed there were always to be nine. Opponents to Roosevelt's plan claimed that he "was trying to destroy the independence of the judiciary to gain political advantage. Roosevelt, however, pushed hard for Congress to pass his bill, and it seemed that he had the votes needed to do so" (Leuchtenburg, 1996, 159).

The Result of a Risk

In the midst of this political struggle (and possibly because of it), two of the more conservative justices began to shift their view on Roosevelt's New Deal stance and supported several of his measures, including the Social Security Act and National Labor Relations Act (Kyvig, 2010). The court's shift was on display in its ruling on *West Coast Hotel v. Parrish*, which upheld a Washington state minimum wage law. This decision reversed a previous ruling that had declared the minimum wage law unconstitutional only 10 months earlier in a virtually identical case in New York. In the same manner as this new interpretation of the Constitution, other "decisions sanctioned vital New Deal measures and brought a conclusive end to a series of belligerently anti-New Deal rulings" (Kyvig, 2010, 1228). After these new decisions, Roosevelt's need for the court-packing plan diminished significantly. On July 22, 1937, Roosevelt's court-packing plan was voted down by the Senate (Leuchtenburg, 1996, which appeared to be a repudiation of the president.

While this result of this plan has been considered a failure in the short run, "Roosevelt was able to have continuing electoral success because of it and the episode eventually affirmed his constitutional posture" (Kyvig, 2010, 1229). In other words, Roosevelt was not ultimately engaged in trying to reorganize the judiciary; he was simply trying to act as president. If he could persist with the existing judiciary, that was fine by him.

Analysis

Carson and Kleinerman (2002) echo the sentiments of many experts in describing this episode as "a plan that . . . could have undermined the integrity of our constitutional system" (301). They also note that the court-packing plan could also have been seen as "the surest sign that [Roosevelt] had dictatorial ambitions" (301). Even if the goal were to praise Roosevelt, his actions could also easily be seen through the lens of the "Great Man" theory (Carlyle, 1841/2011), which results in a somewhat limiting characterization of what exactly had happened.

Roosevelt's court-packing plan could be viewed as a self-serving ploy for power and a plan that could have jeopardized the independence of the judicial structure of the United States. However, this criticism overlooks a distinction between (a) the traditional idea of a leader's presence as some kind of emanation of his greatness and (b) the active "presencing" (Senge et al., 2004).

The traditional view of "having presence" usually relates to an individual trait, synonymous with charisma. However, the ability to be present in a situation is not about some personal attribute, but instead is characterized by a person's ability to recognize a trend or need in society and then recognize a nascent path toward a remedy. According to Senge et al. (2004):

> You observe and observe and let this experience well up into something appropriate. In a sense, there is no decision making. . . . All you can do is position yourself according to your unfolding vision of what is coming. (84)

Although it may have seemed Roosevelt was on a selfish quest for power, in reality, he was responding in a new way to outdated nostrums—less like the craftsman making a chair out of wood and more like a participant in the

turbulence of uncertainty, enacting or embodying a leadership the times seemed to require. If he could achieve his purpose without the court-packing plan, then so be it.

Roosevelt should not be considered solely as a savior of sorts who made fateful decisions to benefit Americans (he lost this particular initiative). Rather, he was a cultivator, a moving part in a complex system, who realized by example (if nothing else) some growing societal trends, i.e., a new role for the federal government (foreshadowed during World War I), an emerging method of constitutional interpretation, and a holistic or integrated understanding of the nation as a series of interconnected systems requiring systemic intervention.

Critics may still assert that Roosevelt ultimately failed in the execution of his plan. To most, the inability of a leader to complete an intended plan would result in him or her being held accountable for such a failure. Failure would appear to be blameworthy. However, in this episode and concerning the topic of presence, this judgment does not quite fit. A plan should not overwhelm its purpose. In other words, a leader must not let his or her hubris and need to "win" interfere in the broader development: a leader may exist to recognize a trend or need in society and then help to chart a new course. While the successful fulfillment of a plan may be the most beneficial solution, it is not the only option. With regard to the court-packing episode, Roosevelt was discouraged neither by the original rulings of the Supreme Court during his first term nor by the rejection of his proposal in the Senate to "pack" the court during his second term. His leadership was not about winning; it was about attempting to bring about positive change.

Roosevelt's action in the court-packing episode was not an isolated instance of his presencing. In the years that followed, Roosevelt continued to try different methods to work toward satisfying society's need for more public support programs and for his vision of a more prosperous America. Roosevelt had an underlying understanding that no single program or policy could lift the United States out of the depression. Therefore, he was required to live moment by moment to see which area(s) of the country or sector(s) of the government could be altered in order to help facilitate change. He was participating in an ongoing

process and not simply enacting a vision. Knowing this, Roosevelt worked to satisfy the needs of the country with a wide range of programs and policy changes. He would propose several programs, including the National Recovery Administration (NRA), the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), to bring the country forward and create jobs doing so (Brinkley, 2010). These programs enacted such changes as restoring farmland destroyed by the Dust Bowl of the 1930s and creating work for young men to build dams and other facilities to generate power (Brinkley, 2010). Similar to the court-packing plan, many New Deal plans were not approved by Roosevelt's peers or were not as beneficial as originally intended; nevertheless, he did not consider these setbacks as a repudiation. Rather, Roosevelt celebrated what successes he could and was dedicated to moving toward an emerging vision for the United State and later the world: "If we cannot do this one way, we will do it another. Do it, we will" (Eggertsson, 2008, 1477).

Conclusion

According to Winter (2006), "moments of possibility" are those small-scale opportunities to defy injustice, not so much to overthrow a regime and realize some utopian vision as to inject a taste of a better world, to turn if only by one degree toward goodness (209). In response to the objection that such a gesture amounts to little more than a drop in the ocean, a character in Mitchell's (2004) *Cloud Atlas* replies, "Yet what is any ocean but a multitude of drops?" (509)

In response to vast and seemingly ineluctable economic, political, and then military forces, Franklin Delano Roosevelt grasped his "moments of possibility" as a leader and decided against both blind conformity to the status quo on the one hand and complete upheaval on the other. His presidency was, in effect, a multitude of drops. In this sense, he understood, perhaps intuitively, the ongoing power of presence.

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ESSAY

Winston Churchill: Through a LEADS Lens[*]

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This essay investigates the career of Winston Churchill using the five-factor strategic LEADS model. As a leader, Churchill noted how his unpatrolled optimism catapulted his esteem among his subordinates while his duels with the "black dog" threaten to derail his professional life. From a decision-making perspective, this essay presents a balanced treatment of this controversial figure's involvement with triumph with the victory in the World War II and his earlier tragedy in the Dardanelles defeat. His masterful facility with strategy that so characterized his "war years" is evaluated through the lens of his legacy as a statesman and immeasurable contribution to the nation he served.

Key words: decision making, ethics, history, strategy

In Shakespeare's (1601–1602/1997) *Twelfth Night, Or What You Will*, Malvolio said, "Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them" (Act 2, Scene 5). Winston Spencer Churchill encapsulates all three, and great he was. In the current culture, revisionists recast his reputation. Right-wing reactionaries indict him a warmonger. Left-leaning liberals tattoo him as the embodiment of imperialist, sexist, and racist political incorrectness. A more balanced assessment of this stalwart naturally understands the eccentric personality behind his magnanimous achievements. The parable of his life focuses on the moral of courage. Churchill dared utter into a microphone—for all the world to hear—things that today's politicians would not venture even to whisper. He dared actions in battle, in Parliament, and in life that would fossilize milquetoast men of this century.

Moreover, his legacy is everywhere in the modern world. Economically, he introduced social protection programs, forging universal unemployment insurance and pioneering the modern welfare state. Geopolitically, his influence was instrumental in nation making; Ireland, Israel and many Middle Eastern states owe their independence to his inspiration. Yet Churchill's was a life

checkered with catastrophic setbacks, failures, and mistakes. The disasters of his life, however, evidence his characteristics of determination and boldness to stick to his plans and run the courses he set, even when the majority was telling him he was wrong.

No doubt, Churchill was a monolithic figure, but what kind of leader was he? Although "leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (Burns, 1978, 14), it is, nonetheless, a vital lens through which individuals can be appraised. Accordingly, Churchill will be evaluated using the LEADS model, which consists of five factors: leadership, ethics, analysis amid intelligence, decision making, and strategy (Blumentritt, 2013). Throughout his career, Churchill displayed very visible positive and negative examples of these different aspects of leadership.

Leadership: Positive and Negative Characteristics

Churchill was an institutional leader of the United Kingdom by virtue of his appointment by the king to the position of prime minister in 1945. However, he also exhibited natural characterological leadership qualities. For example, organizational theory and organizational behavior pioneer Mary Parker Follett postulated that optimism was a key ingredient in successful leaders (Klenke, 2008, 312). Churchill brimmed with optimism throughout his half century of public service to his native land, both militarily as well as politically. His optimism is demonstrated through one of his favorite proverbial aphorisms: "All will come right" (Churchill, 1940, 3). He repeated it publicly and often throughout the darkest days of World War II. Rare was it that he did not end a wartime speech without such a ringing note of optimism, usually drawn or adapted from a famous English poet. On one such occasion in 1941, he ended an oratory on an optimistic note with a lyric by famed British poet Arthur Hugh Clough: "westward look the land is bright" (as cited in Kemper, 1995, 123).

Churchill's persistent optimism is also demonstrated by his denouncing negative thinking in all endeavors. For example, during a 1916 speech to his officers amid a combative episode of trench warfare in France, Churchill insisted

that they "laugh a little, and teach your men to laugh. . . . If you can't smile, grin. If you can't grin, keep out of the way till you can" (as cited in Gilbert, 2012, 118). His comments reveal that one of the keys to his courage was his perpetual optimism. Scholars agree that optimism is a critical factor in effective leadership. As Sauchuk (2014) points out, "a team will not follow a leader who doesn't have a sense of optimism, or who easily loses faith when things go wrong" (para. 2). Churchill's optimism and ability to communicate this to comrades and countrymen alike characterized his positive leadership style.

However, his optimism was balanced with a healthy dose of reality. A negative leadership characteristic that plagued Churchill throughout his life was his struggles with depression, which he called his battle with the "black dog." He experienced recurrent severe depressive episodes, during many of which he was suicidal; by today's standards he might be diagnosed with severe mental illness as a manic depressive (Ghaemi, 2012). It was Aristotle who was the first to link madness and genius, including in his assessment political leaders as well as poets and artists (Simonton, 2005).

An additional negative leadership characteristic that Churchill was known to possess was his unquenchable belligerence. For example, during the pre-World War I period, when he championed the dangers of German armament from his seat on the back benches of the House of Commons, he badgered his fellow members of Parliament with his insistence that "Germany is arming—she is rapidly arming—and no one will stop her" (Churchill, 1948/1986, 48). Though he persisted in this siren song, Churchill was viewed as an alarmist distraction by the coalition government, which was intensely focused primarily on domestic issues at the time. However, he would not be silenced, regardless of how unpopular his sentiments were or the extent to which he was marginalized by his colleagues. In the end, history proved him correct.

His personality was combative, particularly in intimate relationships and he was openly exultant about war. For example, he seemed to take pleasure in describing WWI as "this glorious, delicious war" and stated that "war is the normal occupation of man" (as cited in Gilbert, 1991, 294). In person, many

found Churchill sarcastic and overbearing, characteristic of an individual suffering from mania and not that of a good leader (Tost, Gino, & Larrick, 2011). Thus, no matter how effective Churchill was as a genius-level statesman, his moodiness and temperament hindered his ultimate effectiveness, which played out through his ouster from politics for nearly all of the 1930s.

Ethics: Positive and Negative Instances

During Churchill's life, he had occasion to triumph by demonstrating commitment to positive ethics as well as to trail morally by exhibiting a tincture of negative ethics. An example of Churchill's questionable ethical stand was his advocacy of the use of chemical weapons, particularly against the Kurds and the Afghans. British troops occupied Iraq, where the United Kingdom had established a colonial government in 1917, following the conquest of the Ottoman Empire. The people living in the region resisted the British occupation which, by 1920, had erupted into a widespread revolt, which was expensive for the British. As the resistance movement gained strength, the British sought to deploy progressively repressive measures, including the use of poison gas. Churchill supported the position that gas could be profitably employed against the Kurds and Iraqis. In an inner office memorandum, Churchill stated: "I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favor of using poison gas against uncivilized tribes" (as cited in Gilbert, 1975). Churchill justified his position publicly by insisting that such gases would only cause discomfort or illness, but not permanent damage or death. However, based on medical and scientific research available after the close of WWI, he knew this to be untested and theoretical. Instead, experts at the time circulated the counter-notion that poison gas would, in most instances, permanently damage the eyesight of civilians as well as kill children and sickly persons. Churchill's advocacy of using this type of weaponry without adequate disclosures concerning its expected results is an example of his negative ethics.

However, Churchill did not always hide in the shadows ethically. At times, he exemplified extraordinary positive normative standards. One ethical high mark

that Churchill attempted to embrace most often was honesty. His life was, in great measure, a testimony to truthfulness. Churchill held to the notion that "to shrink from stating the true facts to the public" was a fault (Heyward, 1997, 128). Perhaps he learned early in his career that without transparency, trust cannot exist. He embodied the ability to pursue and hold on to the truth. His commitment to speaking plainly earned him the dedication of the British people. Churchill also understood that "this truth is incontrovertible. Panic may resent it, ignorance may deride it, malice may distort it, but there it is" (Churchill, 1916, col. 1578). An example of his pursuit of honesty came during the first part of 1942. With the war in Europe raging, he began to be criticized for the United Kingdom's poor progress. Instead of ducking the issue or pretending he was not embroiled in controversy, Churchill abruptly demanded a vote of confidence in an effort to force the issue. He realized that although bleakness had characterized the first part of the decade for the country, the situation was going to get worse and the people needed to understand that. By bringing a healthy dose of reality to the forefront, Churchill prevailed in the House of Commons by a margin of 464 to 1 (Wilson, 2012, 1). For Churchill and other great leaders, the goal is to do the right thing and to seek truth, not popularity.

Analysis Amid Intelligence: Positive and Negative Examples

Churchill proved to be a pivotal protagonist at the dawn of the Secret Service Bureau, the precursors of the "home'" and the '"foreign'" divisions that were transformed into the Security Service (MI5) and the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6). From Churchill's first experience in the Admiralty during the World War I through his daily reading of intercepted Enigma reports during the World War II, he was a staunch intelligence enthusiast with a vast appetite for intelligence and curiosity for clandestine operations.

   However, he experienced a crushing loss early in his career that threatened his future as a public figure: the Dardanelles defeat. The downfall of the campaign can be traced in part to Churchill's inattentiveness or dismissal of counsel from his commanders, who themselves were relying on intelligence, as the planning of

the campaign advanced. Not long after Britain and Turkey declared war on each other in 1914, the British War Council purposed an attack on the Dardanelles Strait. Churchill, as the First Lord of the Admiralty, initially suggested a combined sea and land operation. Although Lord Kitchener, the central voice in the British War Council, thought the idea had merit, he nonetheless felt ground troops could not be allocated to support such a bellicosity. Upon learning the news, Churchill was assured by Admiral Carden, commander of the British East Mediterranean Squadron, that triumph by a navy-only offensive was feasible. However, as the planning and preparation for the Dardanelles operation advanced and intelligence about Turkey's military readiness began trickling in, Admiral Fisher, the First Sea Lord, started to express reservations about the success of the navy-only plan. He shared his concerns with Churchill and the prime minister, but Churchill discouraged him from sharing his insight with the War Council. Churchill pressed ahead, only to experience a disastrous campaign with about 200,000 Allied casualties. The failure to heed adequate warning to accurately analyze the intelligence provided from a holistic perspective, led not only to a decimating naval defeat but moreover to the downfall of the entire government of Prime Minister Asquith. Churchill was forced to resign his post, and suffered both political and public derision (Schroden, 2011). But such was not his undoing; rather, it became part of his learning curve.

Despite the Dardanelles fiasco, Churchill showed affinity for analyzing amid intelligence early in his career. In Cuba's war with Spain in 1895 and in the imperial wars fought in Afghanistan, the Sudan, and South Africa, young Churchill first learned to appreciate the importance of good intelligence and the value of guerrilla warfare. The import of intelligence became a supreme priority for his administration as the following example of Churchill's analysis amid intelligence highlights.

The raids on Norway's Lofoten islands in the spring of 1941 were, until years after 1945, thought to have been launched for the purpose of destroying valuable fish oil processing plants located there. However, the raids were secretly designed to wrest an Enigma machine used by the German navy. Churchill knew

the value such intelligence brought to Britain. The Enigma codes used by the German navy were changed in late 1940, causing a surge and continuous increase in U-boats sinking Canadian and American ships (Gilbert, 2011). The Lofoten incursions were emblematic of the lengths and extent to which Churchill's administration would go in order to secure the upper hand in the information war.

Decision Making: Positive and Negative Cases

Looking at Churchill as a strategic decision maker is an exercise in observing critical analysis and assessing alternative courses of action in strategy and policy. One example of Churchill's ability to make good decisions under enormous pressure came in the summer of 1940. By June, the French army had been decimated by the Germans, but the French navy was very much intact. Although Churchill had received assurances from Admiral Darlan that the fleet would be scuttled rather than handed over to the invading Germans, Churchill was unconvinced. It was devastating enough to lose Britain's last pugnacious ally in the European war, but permitting that ally's armada to fall into enemy hands would have been shattering. Churchill's concern was not that that the French would side with their conquerors and assist them in deploying the fleet; the more sinister concern was that of German sailors taking command of the French flotilla. Initially, Churchill could not persuade his own cabinet to attack the French navy. However, after the French signed an armistice with Germany, Churchill received the authority to order a bout at Oran, Algeria. Once surrounded, Churchill's message to the encircled French ships was succinct: sail to Britain or the United States, or scuttle the ships within six hours. After the French attempted to send reinforcements, Churchill ordered the ships sunk, and within 10 minutes, three battleships were sunk (Lamb, 1991).

Some call his decision a turning point in the war. Others view this decision an appalling betrayal. Still others, mostly French, label it a war crime. Yet Churchill faced a dilemma, one of the most difficult, heart-wrenching choices in his political career. To attack his former French allies was certainly not a decision that he

made lightly. Historians speculate that Admiral Darlan would have intentionally sunk the French fleet before turning it over to German control, as he told Churchill he would do. However, based on the United Kingdom's experience with the French government during recent months discouraged Churchill from accepting everything at face value. Germany was set to seize one of the biggest navies in the world—in its entirety. With these battleships and destroyers under German control, Hitler's threat to invade Britain would have taken giant steps toward becoming reality. Churchill chose never to have those ships join the German forces, sinking them instead at the cost of more than 1,000 French lives. In making this difficult, yet strategically critical, decision, Churchill demonstrated a key component of good leadership: the ability to make decisions under extreme pressure during times of uncertainty.

However, not every decision Churchill made was positive. Churchill's treatment of the workers during the famed Tonypandy riots in 1910, when he was Home Secretary, continues to be controversial; this incident caused ill feelings toward him in the southern regions of Wales for the rest of his life. The riots had erupted in the late fall due to a dispute between workers and the owners of the coal mines. The disagreement culminated in strikes that lasted nearly a year. The flashpoint occurred when striking miners clashed with the police. At the request of the local magistrate, Churchill authorized soldiers to be dispatched to the area. Although the allegations that shots were fired by the soldiers were unfounded, the incident haunted Churchill throughout his career. The fact is that he sent a memo expressly rebuffing the use of violence. However, the notion that he had authorized troops to mobilize against civilian strikers painted him as an aggressive anti-unionist and pantomime villain (Evans & Maddox, 2010) from that point forward.

Strategy: Positive and Negative Illustrations

In 1925, as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Baldwin administration, Churchill's annual budget provides a case study in poor strategy policy in both its making and execution. This financial plan, although famous for returning Britain

to the gold standard at $4.86 to the pound, has become synonymous with a classic pricing-out policy (Moggridge, 1972). Churchill's goal with this economic strategy was to reinstate the United Kingdom's position at the helm of the world's financial leaders. He surmised that no less than the British national honor was at stake. If the country failed to restore the pre-WWI parity of the pound, confidence in the currency would be undermined. However, this artificially high exchange rate served to make British industry noncompetitive and prolonged the national economic slump with which the country was struggling. All attempts to reduce prices and wages in order to support this overvalued, artificially fixed-rate pound, eventually provoked a general strike across the nation. Later in his career, Churchill recognized that this strategy represented the greatest mistake of his life (Mayhew, 1999).

However, more often than not, Churchill enjoyed a track record demonstrative of an extremely effective statesman and prudent leader because he possessed the attribute of strategic foresight. An example of his strategic savvy is founded in the aftermath of the Munich Agreement. The British government under Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain declared that its prolific policies of appeasement had fetched "peace in our time." However, Churchill protested the terms of the agreement, insisting that "a) nothing dynamic was at stake; b) terms for Czechoslovakia might 'have hardly got worse'; and c) the arrangement would eventually prove unsuccessful in preserving the tenuous European peace amid Hitler's still looming threat" (Keegan, 1989, 310). The invasion by Germany less than a year later demonstrated the accuracy of his strategic intuition.

Churchill Seeking Competitive Advantage

In 1979, young associate professor and economist Michael Porter submitted his first article to *Harvard Business Review* (Porter, 2008). In this landmark treatise, he revolutionized the field of strategy through the introduction of his five-forces model. To some degree, though his life predated Porter's theory, Churchill's function as a strategist can be assessed using some, if not all, of the forces

articulated in the five-forces model: industry rivals, customers, suppliers, potential entrants, and substitute products (Porter, 2008).

One example of Churchill pursuing competitive advantage can be seen in his display of strategic foresight by correctly assessing the communist Russian threat to the free world in the post-WWII era. In this way, Churchill was treating the Soviets and their new political philosophy and economic model as a threat of to the democracy and free markets represented by the United Kingdom and the United States. Even earlier than the reservations he voiced in his famous "Iron Curtain" speech in 1946—in which he warned of an iron curtain descending on Eastern Europe—Churchill could envision the epic struggle in the future between English-speaking countries and the communist bloc (Churchill, 1946). He prophesied such a caution during a 1931 speech to a large audience in the United States (Severance, 1996). The Cold War (1947–1991) proved his assessment correct.

A second example of Churchill seeking a strategic advantage was demonstrated during his tenure as First Lord of the Admiralty. In the manner that Churchill articulated his approach to British naval power, he was elevating his keen awareness of the need for what Porter's (2008) model terms "bargaining power." Churchill noted:

> Adequate preparation for war is the only guarantee for the preservation of the wealth, natural resources, and territory of the State, and it can only be based upon an understanding, firstly, of the probable dangers that may arise; secondly, of the best general method of meeting them as taught by the principles to be deduced from the events of history; and, thirdly, of the most efficient application of the war material of the era. (as cited in Gilbert, 1991, 239)

Churchill's appreciation for "adequate preparation" emphasizes his understanding of the tensions among the forces; he recognized that to maintain competitiveness, at a minimum, parity, and preferably supremacy, was required in each of the five. In a political sense, Churchill viewed the Germans as an industry rival and their buildup of armaments as producing an imbalance in the marketplace of international power. His comment about "the most efficient application of the war material" highlights his understanding of criticality of

supply. As First Lord, Churchill sought to maintain parity by remedying what he thought to be Britain's derisory fleet. He studied the progress, maneuvers, and strength of the German navy as a business strategist would study industry competitors. As a result of Churchill's diligence to pursue equality of force on the seas, the British navy was well prepared for battle, when World War I erupted four years later (Severance, 1996).

Conclusion

Churchill "was not a figure in history so much as a figure *of* history" (Hitchens, 2002, para. 6). In some measure, that is true; as much as Churchill was made for his time, his time was made for him, and ultimately, by him. Like the distinctive shape of an undulating frequency wave, Churchill enjoyed towering successes throughout his life, such as the "Finest Hour" speech, which successfully rallied his countrymen to find the resolve to fight on after the fall of France, as well as being peppered amidst crushing defeats: being out of step with the political sway of the 1930s and, subsequently, unceremoniously dismissed from office for nearly a decade over his opposition to Indian self-government. Northouse (1997) identifies as criteria for positive leadership the traits of determination and self-confidence; Churchill clearly possessed both.

His resilience is undeniable. After being elected to the British Parliament as a conservative, he turned on his colleagues four years later and became a liberal, rising swiftly in the party to becoming president of the Board of Trade. He was the valiant prime minister who bravely and brilliantly buoyed the British during WWII, yet he was suddenly and summarily discharged of duty by a general vote less than two months after VE Day. In some respects, he was the mythical character and symbol of the common people of Britain—John Bull—come to life.

Churchill also possessed an insatiable mind and worked very hard to prepare himself for his future. Though born into privilege as the son of an eminent Tory politician, his father thought he showed little promise intellectually; Winston almost proved him correct by failing the entrance exam for college twice. Yet at Sandhurst, the royal military academy, he led his class in fortifications and tactic.

However, at 21, he realized that his academic training was anemic, even at Sandhurst, and left gaps in his education. While on assignment in India, Churchill embarked on a course of self-enrichment during which he invested enormous amounts of time reading all the major literary works as well as stories and tales of adventure. He also studied Parliamentary history and read published debates and arguments about contemporary issues. In this way, he systematically taught himself to develop, support, and articulate his own arguments. He was internally motivated to provide himself with an unparalleled self-education, one that far surpassed any of the formal education through which he had suffered.

In a 2002 BBC poll of more than one million television viewers, Churchill was voted the greatest Englishman who ever lived, outranking Admiral Lord Nelson, Princess Diana, and even the Fab Four from Liverpool. Thus the lens of history—as well as the masses—affirms that Churchill stands alongside fellow islanders Shakespeare, Newton, and Queen Victoria as a titanic presence in the story of the United Kingdom.

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PRACTICE

Leader Personality at Work:
A Key Individual Difference Domain[*]

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Individual differences are a key dimension of interest in the study and practice of leadership, and within the sphere of differences, personality is an important domain on which individual leaders differ. After briefly reviewing some relevant literature, a stepwise approach to understanding and optimizing a leader's personality profile is offered. This six-step approach systematically presents how a leader can more fully understand personality and leverage relevant behaviors for greater impact. The value of leveraging and optimizing one's personality profile is also noted, along with some implications for practice, research, and teaching. Some specific challenges associated with the process of optimizing elements of a leader's personality at work are highlighted.

Key words: individual differences, leadership, optimizing, personality at work, stepwise approach, understanding

For more than 100 years, leadership has been studied across a variety of areas. Researchers have explored Individual differences and situational contexts, as well as a vast array of competencies (Judge & Long, 2012; Kerns, 2015a, 2015b; Kerns & Ko, 2014). These efforts, while yielding valuable perspectives and insights, have left the practicing leader and scholar with a rather fragmented picture of leadership. Over the past 30 years, the author has worked to integrate the various dimensions of leadership into a single coherent and integrated framework.[1] Within this framework, a core dimension of leadership—individual differences—resides. One key domain within the individual differences dimension is a leader's personality. This article will provide a practitioner-oriented approach

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[*]To cite this article: Kerns, C. D. (2017). Leader personality at work: A key individual difference domain. *International Leadership Journal, 9*(1), 86–112.

[1]This system of managerial leadership strives to provide practitioners, applied researchers, and teachers with an integrated approach to viewing and understanding leadership. The system brings together several streams of leadership study and research that have been offered over the past 100 years. A core dimension in this model relates to a leader's individual differences. As part of this dimension, a better understanding of managerial leader personality can help advance the practice, study, and teaching of leadership that is the focus of the current article. It is beyond the scope of this article to review and discuss the other dimensions of the system.

to helping a leader better understand and leverage his or her personality at work to help optimize his or her organizational impact.

At this point in our study of leadership, it is appropriate to assert that leadership makes a difference in helping organizations achieve desired results. Pendleton and Furnham (2016), for example, after considering empirical findings and other evidence, conclude convincingly that leaders significantly affect organizational outcomes. These outcomes range from influencing employee engagement levels to impacting profitability. The assertion that leaders and leadership have significant impact on organizations is evidenced both in research and practice with considerable attention being given to what constitutes an effective leader (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Kaiser, McGinnis, & Overfield, 2012; Mumford & Barrett, 2013; Paglis, 2010).

Drawing upon the field of personality psychology, *personality* can be defined as an individual's unique and relatively stable patterns of traits and associated behavioral tendencies (Barenbaum & Winter, 2008). Each individual has a unique personality that distinguishes him or her from others and is determined by both heredity/dispositional and environmental/situational forces (Illies, Arvey, & Bouchard, 2006; Johnson, Turkheimer, Gottesman, & Bouchard, 2009). In terms of leadership, research, including meta-analytical investigations across diverse settings, has shown positive relationships between certain personality domains and leadership effectiveness (Barrick & Mount, 2005; Dudley, Orvis, Lebiecki, & Cortina, 2006; Hoffman, Woehr, Maldagen-Youngjohn, & Lyons, 2011; Judge, Bono, Illies, & Gerhardt, 2002; Judge & Zapata, 2015). These studies are supportive of the field observations and work that the author and his colleagues have conducted over the past three decades. Given the connection between a leader's personality and performance at work, it seems useful to find ways to help practitioners optimize relevant aspects of their personalities to increase their positive impact. To this end, the author has developed a systematic way to help individual leaders better understand their personalities at work and how to leverage this understanding to optimize their impact on people and situations in organizational settings.

Optimizing Leader Personality: A Stepwise Approach

The stepwise approach that follows reflects a review of relevant literature, applied research, and practice by the author and his colleagues. These efforts have produced the following observations that serve to support the approach offered in this article.

- Leadership matters in contributing to organizational effectiveness (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Paglis, 2010; Pendleton & Furnham, 2016).

- Strength-based management can help optimize leadership performance (Kerns, 2010; Rath & Conchie, 2008).

- Behavioral tendencies associated with personality can positively and/or negatively affect others in the workplace (Gaddis & Foster, 2015; Hogan & Blicke, 2013).

- Leader self-knowledge of his or her personality profile is an important way to better know "who" he or she is as a leader (Church, 1997).

- Systematic frameworks and assessment tools are available to help a leader better understand personality at work and to more fully recognize his or her own profile (Hogan & Kaiser, 2010; Prewett, Tett, & Christiansen, 2013; Strange & Kemp, 2010).

- Receiving performance feedback around a plan to optimize performance can be valuable for a leader's development (Guthrie & King, 2004).

- Coaching can help a leader better understand and manage behavioral tendencies associated with his or her personality at work (De Haan, Bertie, Day, & Sills, 2010; McCormick & Burch, 2008).

- A leader's personality may show substantial intrapersonal variability across situations (Fleeson, 2007; Judge, Simon, Hurst, & Kelley, 2014).

- Personality has both heredity/dispositional and environmental/situational components (Barenbaum & Winter, 2008; Funder, 2008; Kandler, 2012).

- There is no one leader profile that is ideal in all situations (Kerns, 2015a, 2015b).

- The interaction of personality facets and behavioral tendencies within and across broader dispositional traits and factors is important to understanding

a leader's personality profile at work (Fleeson & Gallagher, 2009; Kerns, 2016).

- The five-factor model (FFM) or "Big Five" is the most commonly referenced and recognized personality trait approach in the field of personality psychology (Funder, 2001; McCrae & Costa, 1999).[2]

When a leader recognizes the connection between leadership, personality and performance optimization as highlighted in the above observations and findings, he or she is likely more motivated to seek greater self-knowledge about his or her personality at work. This motivation is often heightened when a leader is presented with an evidence-based approach to assessing his or her personality in the context of his or her leadership role.

Steps for Leader Personality Optimization
The six-step approach for leader personality optimization offered in this article is as follows:

- Step 1: *Positioning* leadership, personality, and optimization at work.
- Step 2: *Acquiring* a language of personality at work.
- Step 3: *Assessing* your personality profile at work.
- Step 4: *Affirming* your personality profile at work.
- Step 5: *Developing* your optimization plan.
- Step 6: *Executing* your plan and seeking ongoing feedback.

Each of the six steps in the approach is reviewed below. Key content areas, perspectives, and actions associated with each step are offered. (This approach is typically facilitated by an executive coach or trusted advisor who helps an individual leader progress through the steps.)

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[2]The Five-Factor Model (FFM) or "Big Five" is an empirically tested approach to understanding and assessing personality. This model espouses five factors or domains that account for the majority of differences in human personality. The FFM has received wide support in research studies and enjoys strong reliability and validity (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1990; Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002; Oh, Wang, & Mount, 2011). The FFM has also received cross-cultural support in research studies (Rolland, 2002; Yamagata et al., 2006). While the labeling of the five factors has varied when described in the literature and in practice, common foundational constructs are consistently revealed: neuroticism/emotional stability, extraversion, openness to change, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

Step 1: Positioning leadership, personality, and optimization at work.
Positioning these topics sets the stage to help a leader better understand, appreciate, and optimize his or her personality tendencies at work. During this step, a leader is encouraged to see the value in better understanding his or her personality tendencies that influence leadership and to recognize the importance of being able to optimize facets of his or her personality at work. During this initial step, three themes are explored:

- Theme one stresses how research and practice have shown that leadership matters to organizational effectiveness and well-being. Studies connecting leadership to desired organizational outcomes, including financial results, and well-being metrics can be discussed.

- Theme two connects the extensive literature with the experience of the author relating to the impact of personality on behavior at work. Discussions and examples of a leader's behavioral personality tendencies (addressed in Step 3) underscore personality as a key area of individual difference in a leader's effectiveness. It is stressed that personality is a key aspect to helping a leader answer the question: "Who am I as a leader?"

- Theme three centers on a discussion of the target areas in the stepwise framework. The connection between a leader's unique personality and performance is made, and the importance of optimizing the leader's uniqueness is highlighted. Using content areas covered in the stepwise framework, the leader is encouraged to look at his or her personality as a collection of specific behavioral facets which, if optimally managed, will positively affect performance. However, as the strength-management literature shows, one's talents, if under- or over-utilized, can prevent a leader from expressing his or her uniqueness for high performance (Kaplan & Kaiser, 2013; Kerns, 2010). Elements of Step 5, which focuses on developing a leader's optimization plan, can be previewed.

The desired outcome of discussing these themes is for the leader to see the value in better understanding his or her personality and optimizing performance

impact by leveraging those personality facets that are unique in the context of his or her current position and organizational operating environment.

Step 2: Acquiring a language of personality at work. Leaders who have a way to professionally describe facets of their own personalities and those of others at work are typically more effective, project greater executive presence, and are likely more effective at describing their own and others' personality tendencies. For example, rather than calling an employee a "jerk" for overreacting to a stressful encounter, the leader might instead describe the individual's behavior as lacking composure and resilience in the face of this workplace stressor. With a more professional and evidence-based approach to describing personality at work, the leader will likely be able to provide more useful performance feedback to others and may reduce the likelihood of undesired outcomes, such as employee poor performance, turnover, and perhaps legal actions.

When endeavoring to acquire a useful language to describe personality at work, the leader has a variety of options and sources available (Hogan & Kaiser, 2010; Prewett et al., 2013; Strange & Kemp, 2010). These alternatives range from materials provided with the report generated by commercially distributed formal assessment instruments to less formal professionally generated tools. In consultation with a knowledgeable and trained professional, leaders are encouraged to find an assessment framework or tool that is relevant and applicable to their work to help them more effectively and professionally describe personality at work (Ones, Dilchert, Viswesvaran, & Judge, 2007).

Step 3: Assessing your personality profile at work. The five-factor model (FFM) of personality, or the "big five," has emerged over the past several decades as a research-based reliable and valid measure of personality describing personality in terms of five broad factors (Gill & Hodgkinson, 2007; John & Srivastava, 1999; McCrae & Costa, 1999). An assessment instrument based on the FFM has been developed that yields an individual workplace big-five profile describing the respondent's big-five personality factors in the context of the workplace (Howard & Howard, 1995, 2008). Drawing upon the extensive

work done on the five-factor model, the workplace big-five profile offers a language for understanding and professionally addressing the topic of personality at work. The profile provides a leader with a practitioner-oriented way to look at behavioral facets and tendencies distributed across the five personality factors contained in the FFM.

While it is beyond the scope of this article to detail the content of personality assessment instruments, the author uses the following five factors as the framework of a generalized discussion of the FFM components of personality with leaders in workplace settings:

- *Response to stressors:* the degree to which an individual responds to stress in the workplace. Individual leaders can respond to stressors across a behavioral range from being resilient to responding in a reactive manner or somewhere in between.

- *Extraversion:* an individual's tolerance for sensory stimulation from people and situations. Individual leaders may be considered introverted, extraverted, or in between these two response patterns. This middle ground area on the extraversion factor is in the ambivert or moderate range.

- *Openness to change:* the degree of openness to doing things in new ways. An individual leader's openness to change can range from low (a maintainer) to high (an explorer) or be in the moderate range.

- *Deference:* the degree to which an individual defers to others. An individual leader's level of deference to others may be low (a challenger/forcer), moderate, or high (an adapter/smoother).

- *Concentration of effort:* the degree to which an individual pushes conscientiously toward accomplishing goals at work. An individual leader may score low on this factor (be flexible), show a moderate level (be balanced), or be structured and highly focused in pursuing goals.

In the context of executive coaching, the author typically asks an individual leader to complete the formal workplace big-five instrument (Howard & Howard, 2008). Other less formal tools are also available to help leaders estimate their

profile based on the five factors (Howard, Medina, & Howard, 1996). This step in the process requires professional expertise and consultation for workplace personality assessment, which may be provided by a qualified consultant–psychologist and/or by an experienced executive coach as part of his or her ongoing work with a leader. Executive coaches without the training and experience in personality assessment in workplace settings need to consult with an outside professional when executing this assessment step in the process (Del Guidice, Yanovsky, & Finn, 2014).

Step 4: Affirming your personality profile at work. After the personality assessments from Step 3 are complete, the leader, often in consultation with a trusted advisor, identifies typically one to five behavioral areas detailed in the profile that are important to the leader's successful performance at work. The leader is then encouraged to seek affirmation regarding the identified areas from others in the leader's network who have knowledge of the leader and his or her personality traits. This process of seeking affirmation from others may extend beyond the targeted areas and include questions or clarifications that the leader wants to review with other credible people in his or her network.

Typically, leaders contact supervisors, peers, subordinates, and significant others when seeking affirmation and/or clarification about facets of their personality profile at work. Affirming and clarifying personality tendencies with others who are well acquainted can increase the agreement between self-perceptions and the perceptions of others relating to personality. Personality judgements by those most acquainted with the leader have the most validity because their input is more likely based on more significant behavioral information (Back & Vazire, 2012).

Step 5: Developing your optimization plan. Using the key behavioral areas identified and affirmed in Step 4 as being important to the leader's success at work, a plan to manage and optimize these areas is developed. Some example areas of personality functioning that have been targeted for development to help leaders optimize their personality at work include:

- prioritizing focus on reducing real and perceived stress levels (relates to a leader who is low on resilience and highly reactive to stressors at work (refer to response to stressors factor in Step 3);

- reducing extraverted behavior of being overly engaging with others to allow more time to quietly reflect and plan around very important but non-urgent strategic matters (relates to a leader who is very high on extraverted behavior and very low on introverted behavioral tendencies (refer to extraversion factor in Step 3);

- increasing the focus on performance as a criterion for change/innovation rather than making/exploring changes just for the sake of change (relates to a leader who is an explorer rather than a maintainer of the status quo (refer to openness to change factor in Step 3);

- increasing strategic deference in situations that are relatively unimportant (relates to a leader who challenges people most of the time and rarely adapts or defers to others (refer to deference factor in Step 3); and

- working to create more work–life balance (relates to a leader who scores extremely high on structuring work and targeting work goals and very low on being flexible (refer to consolidation of effort factor in Step 3).

In practice, areas of developmental focus can be within one of the five factors or across all five areas. The main objective of this step is to develop a clear and concise action plan to guide the leader's efforts in managing and leveraging elements of his or her personality to optimize performance.

Step 6: Executing your plan and seeking ongoing feedback. The optimization of selected elements of a leader's personality usually requires that he or she practice volume control around the frequency of use of elements being targeted. Generally, when striving to optimize behaviorally relevant aspects of their personalities at work, leaders need to either do less of something or more of something (Kaiser & Hogan, 2011; Kaplan & Kaiser, 2013). For instance, in the example provided in Step 5 relating to deference, the leader needed to reduce his or her behavior of challenging others while selectively and strategically deferring to others in situations of less importance.

In practice, to help leaders effectively execute their optimization plan, ongoing feedback is needed. An especially useful method for providing feedback is the excess rating scale approach. Using this method, a leader regularly receives feedback on his or her use of the relevant personality behavioral tendencies being targeted for development and whether they are overused, underused, or used just right or optimally. In the example below, the individuals offering feedback are asked to circle the number corresponding to the amount of behavior being observed; in this instance, deferring.

The leader being surveyed "defers to others":

-4   -3   -2   -1   -0-   +1   +2   +3   +4
    Way too little   In just right amount   Way too much

The leader uses this feedback to make control adjustments as needed to his or her behavior. This method of obtaining behavioral feedback has proven to be practical and useful in helping leaders monitor and manage their performance at work (Kaiser & Kaplan, 2005).

Application Value and Implications

Work relating to helping leaders better understand and leverage their personality at work has application value and implications for practitioners, researchers, and teachers. All three groups contribute to the growth and development of emerging and seasoned leaders, who can benefit from having practical frameworks and tools to help them better understand and manage their own personality at work.

Practice Domain

The stepwise approach to helping a leader optimize elements of his or her personality at work can serve as a practical resource for productive conversations and action planning. While this framework is broken down for clarity and review purposes, in practice, the six-step process is an integrated and overlapping whole. The following 10 behavioral practice areas can be gleaned from the six-step process, each practice area being integral to the process of understanding, identifying, and optimizing personality facets. The relevant behavioral practice areas are:

- stating verbally the connection between leader personality and performance optimization,
- recognizing key personality factors and related behavioral tendencies at work,
- estimating (assessing) the leader's personality profile,
- estimating personality profiles of others at work,
- affirming personality tendencies based on assessment information and feedback from others,
- clarifying selected areas relating to personality profile with others as needed and appropriate,
- selecting specific personality related behavioral tendencies for performance optimization planning,
- developing a practical and behaviorally focused performance optimization plan,
- executing an optimization plan and self-monitoring progress, and
- holding regularly scheduled feedback sessions or "accountability forums" with trusted colleagues to assess progress and effectiveness.

In practice, these 10 areas are introduced as part of Step 1 in the process. They are presented as a behavioral practice checklist to follow as the leader strives to optimize his or her personality at work. The checklist offers a springboard for conversations about a leader's personality-related behavioral tendencies and how to leverage these elements for greater impact. Managerial leaders may also address the practice skills noted on this checklist with reports when coaching them to enhance their personality self-knowledge and use them to have greater impact at work.

The practice checklist has been adapted for use in "coaching the coach" programs by the author and his colleagues with managerial leaders. The work being done relating to situational judgement testing and scenario-based training has also been applied by the author when engaging key executives around personality self-knowledge and optimization practices at work (Campion & Ployhart, 2013; Fritzsche, Stagl, Salas, & Burke, 2006).

Each of the 10 behavioral practice areas can be aligned with the appropriate step in the framework to foster further efficacy of the framework. The author and his colleagues frequently provide clients with an expanded version of the behavioral practice area checklist wherein the six steps in the stepwise approach are appropriately integrated into the checklist. This adaptation has proven especially helpful in coaching the coach sessions with managerial leaders.

Research Domain

The purpose of this article is to provide managerial leaders with additional perspective and understanding of personality self-knowledge and ways to approach optimizing elements of a leader's personality at work. Several areas, however, could benefit from additional research. Given the paucity of evidence-based frameworks for practitioners to review and consider, it would be of interest for future research to further examine additional practice-oriented approaches intended to enhance practitioner personality self-knowledge and optimization of specific behavioral tendencies. This work would be especially valuable if these approaches integrate practices into a practical and coherent framework.

While the current approach focuses on the language of personality offered by the five-factor model, other emerging perspectives need to be examined for their practical utility in helping practitioners acquire personality self-knowledge (Dinh & Lord, 2012; Fournier, Di Domenico, Weststrate, Quitasol, & Dong, 2015). Special attention should be given to principles and frameworks that offer an integrated perspective of personality. This emphasis would likely help the managerial leader more clearly see how key elements of personality come together to create a more coherent whole. McAdams and Zapata-Gietl (2015) and McAdams and Pals (2006) seem to offer an expanded and more integrative approach to explaining personality that may hold promise in helping leaders better understand the language of personality. In particular, these researchers conceptualize and study personality as a dynamic and developing system that connects with three distinct, yet interactive, levels of functioning: dispositional traits, characteristic adaptations, and narrative identity (Lilgendahl, 2015). Gawronski and Bodenhausen (2012) and Back and Vazire (2012) also extend the discussion of

personality beyond dispositional traits. This conceptual and empirical work needs to be more directly applied to helping leaders acquire personality self-knowledge and offer practical terms and tools for applying them to personality at work.

Practical assessment tools to help practitioners estimate their personality profiles as a precursor to more elaborate instruments would help engage leaders around this topic in a more relaxed and informal way. Step 3, in particular, would likely benefit from these additional assessment resources. These resources could serve as springboards for further conversations about leader personality at work and perhaps indicate the need for more sophisticated assessment with individual leaders. Beyond the traditional self-report measures, there are also likely opportunities for researchers to develop additional assessment tools to help managerial leaders better understand their personality at work (Campion & Ployhart, 2013; Mehl, Gosling, & Pennebaker, 2006).

Given the strong connection between situation demands and the expression of leader personality facets, additional research would be useful regarding the relationship between leader–situation interactions (Funder, 2008). In particular, it would be enlightening to learn more about leader discretion and the expression of his or her personality tendencies in situationally relevant circumstances. Knowing which potential situations correlate with a leader's effectiveness, especially as it relates to his or her level of situational discretion, would be of practical importance to leaders. This work could help leaders better recognize situations that best match their personality profile. The recent work of Judge and Zapata (2015) concerning person–situation interaction seems to have implications for leader personality and performance at work.

To further motivate practitioners to explore their personalities at work, additional empirical study is needed that connects positive outcomes, such as well-being and performance improvement, to enhancing leader personality self-knowledge and optimization. The connection of personality with the achievement of important outcomes in workplace settings would be valuable for encouraging leaders to leverage their personality at work (Ozer & Benet-Martínez, 2006). Closely associated with this area is the need for further research into the

mechanisms that mediate the effects on leadership outcomes (Chen & Zaccaro, 2013; Wood & Beckman, 2006.) This research could further refine the evidence that indicates, for example, that dispositional personality traits help predict leader emergence and effectiveness.

Finally, the work on the accuracy of self-views of one's personality seems to have important application value and implications for organizational leaders (Funder, 2012). This is especially important since leaders make many decisions based on their self-views or what is in their communication filter on a specific topic (Kerns, in press). Leaders whose self-views correlate positively with perceptions of others are likely to have more credibility and be viewed as more authentic. This self–other agreement may help a leader be more effective in influencing others.

Unfortunately, the mounting research on the incidences of "bad bosses" seems, in part, to reflect situations where a leader's self-views frequently do not match perceptions of others (Gaddis & Foster, 2015; Kaiser & Curphy, 2013). A better understanding of how we best objectively compare a leader's self-views with others' perceptions of the leader would be useful. Also, research that would help leaders better understand the sources of discrepancies between leader–other perceptions and interventions to reduce these differences would be valuable in helping leaders be more effective. Additionally, process models of personality self-knowledge that help clarify and explain the dynamic interplay among key elements of personality would be fruitful areas for applied research. Back and Vazire (2012), for example, advance this effort by offering frameworks relating to personality self-knowledge that could be applied to leaders working on the organizational firing line.

Teaching Domain

The teaching of managerial leadership could be advanced by offering practical frameworks and tools to both emerging and experienced practitioners seeking to enhance their effectiveness. The author has imported some of the applications used in organizational settings to the business school classroom when facilitating

the learning of frameworks and practices associated with leader personality self-knowledge and effectively leveraging one's personality at work.

Application of the six-step framework relating to leader personality at work has been used in experiential exercises in the business classroom to help learners better understand and utilize this approach. For example, this learning process often includes having adult learners in MBA leadership-related courses review how the six steps can be applied with an executive. In an effort to acquaint students with the five dispositional traits and related behavioral facets, the author provides learners with an actual summary sheet of a workplace big-five personality profile of an anonymous executive. Learners are also given a list of five behavioral observations that key reports made about the executive in a 360-degree survey. In small groups, students identify which dispositional factors and related behavioral tendencies best align with the behavioral observations from the survey. This activity typically finds students actively engaged in connecting the personality language (five-factor model terms) to the real-world behavioral observations offered by their key reports. This experiential process helps learners acquire an understanding of personality language and connect dispositional traits to actual behavioral tendencies of a leader at work.

Another helpful exercise is for students to research, develop, and make five-minute presentations on how leadership, personality, and optimization can be connected to guide leader development. This particular activity reinforces the idea that personality is a key individual-difference-making domain that can be leveraged to optimize performance at work. It also addresses Step 1 in the framework by helping students formulate a positioning statement relating to the connection between leadership, personality, and performance optimization.

Another useful activity in applying the six-step approach involves students completing a big-five questionnaire. Before receiving their big-five personality profile reports, they engage in the previously noted exercise involving estimating which five-factor dispositional traits most closely align with the 360-degree feedback received by the executive. The author has found that orienting learners to the five-factor language by reviewing an executive summary profile for a

specific leader is effective. Once students have been oriented to the five-factor model language, the instructor asks them to do each of the following tasks.

- Select three to five behaviorally oriented areas from their profiles that are important in successfully performing in their current position.
- Of these, identify one specific behavior on which to focus. This process includes considering the feedback obtained from an acquaintance and from their self-analysis.
- Target the identified personality-related behavioral area and develop a plan that will help the individual student optimize performance when executing this behavior at work.

This activity has also proven to be useful in helping students learn a language of personality and to consider how they can translate dispositional personality traits/factors into behavioral tendencies connected to the work they do. They come to see how this translation of the language of personality can be used to formulate action plans to optimize performance at work.

Another impactful method for familiarizing learners with the framework is to have successful leaders review the model—including the 10 practices contained in the behavioral checklist—with students and indicate how they manage personality traits at work to improve their effectiveness. The lessons learned by the successful executive have been useful in helping learners acquire a better working knowledge of managing personality at work and learn how a leader can leverage facets of his or her personality for increased effectiveness. Stories from executives who have found ways to optimize their personality-related behavioral tendencies at work have proven to be valuable lessons. These lessons cover a multitude of behavioral tendencies ranging from learning the value in deferring more to others to finding the benefits in behaving more like an introvert in key strategic situations.

Some Challenging Issues

Leveraging elements of a leader's personality to help optimize performance presents challenges on a number of fronts. The construct of personality as

espoused by academic scholars represents a broad range of largely unintegrated conceptualizations; it becomes challenging to find practical frameworks to use to help organizational leaders delineate and position this construct to key stakeholders (McAdams & Pals, 2006). Going forward, it would be useful for leaders seeking to leverage their personality at work to have a practice-oriented description of what is meant by personality in workplace settings, especially as it relates to leadership. Currently, the five-factor model and its associated language have been connected to many organizational studies. However, there is a need to extend the construct of personality beyond the five-factor model, both in research and applied settings. Lilgendahl (2015), for example, concisely summarizes how personality as traits (e.g., the five-factor model) can be extended to include dynamic adaptations and narrative identity. The recent work relating to measuring and assessing narrative identity and implicit theories in organizational settings will likely contribute to helping translate the construct of personality into practical ways to help leaders leverage their personalities at work for enhanced positive impact (Gawronski & Payne, 2010; Grumm & von Collani, 2007; Meister, Jehn, & Thatcher, 2014; Vasilopaulos, Siers, & Shaw, 2013). The author's recent fieldwork is helping organizational leaders construct an individualized leadership narrative or story across their lifespan appears to be assisting these leaders to better understand themselves as leaders.

   Closely connected to the definitional issue is the challenge of getting basic researchers, practitioner-oriented scholars, and practitioners together to share findings and observations. The field of personality psychology—and more specifically, personality self-knowledge—have much to gain from and offer leadership practitioners. The author has consistently seen how personality at work can be leveraged by leaders to drive results. As Kerns (2014), Locke and Cooper (2000), and Locke (2007) note, there is a need for practitioners and academics to come together on important topics that advance the study and practice of leadership. Leader personality as a key individual-difference-making domain is likely a topic worthy of this type of collaboration. The challenge of getting these groups together to collaborate remains and needs to be advanced.

The dynamic relationship between personality and performance at work, for example, would likely be a fruitful area for collaboration among researchers and practitioners. To advance our knowledge of the personality–performance dynamic, process models showing how personality as an individual difference can impact performance at work have been offered to help explain how personality and performance interact with such variables as skills, work habits, and motivation (Johnson & Schneider, 2013). For example, it has been shown that political skill affects the relationship between extraversion and sales performance, wherein salespeople with political skill outperform those with less skill in this area (Blickle, Wendel, & Ferris, 2010). More generally, a better understanding of personality at work can help leaders link personality attributes to key performance requirements when designing work, in making selection decisions, and developing reports.

There is also the challenge of putting the topic of personality at work in a business management context. Given the extensive history of personality psychology, there is a tendency to see personality intervention in a psychotherapeutic context rather than as frameworks and tools to help leaders to advance organizational performance. The challenge is to find effective ways to position leadership, personality and performance optimization in a way that is appealing to the practical proclivities of organizational leaders while exploring some of the softer sides of individual functioning. This challenge also raises a potential issue regarding who is qualified to assess and facilitate leaders as they seek to acquire personality self-knowledge and strive to optimize their personality-related behavioral tendencies at work.

A final challenge for managerial leaders applying this approach is to consider the role of culture in influencing leader personality at work. Global leaders, for example, need to be mindful of how culture affects elements of personality expression across diverse cultural settings. There may be different pressures and/or demands to conform within different cultures. The expression of dispositional traits and specific personality-related tendencies may need to be inhibited depending on cultural rules or customs. McAdams and Pals (2006)

underscore that different cultures may require different types of adaptations. Indeed, the individual difference domain of personality dynamically interacts with cultures across the globe (Gjerde, 2004).

Focusing on challenges relating to defining personality for practitioners, collaboration among stakeholders, putting personality at work into a business management context, and addressing the interaction of personality across cultures will enhance our understanding and execution of approaches designed to help leaders increase their personality self-knowledge and their efforts at optimizing this individual-difference domain at work. Moving forward, additional challenges for practitioners, applied researchers, and teachers will emerge. This important practice area will, if executed wisely, likely contribute to enhancing a leader's overall effectiveness across diverse organizational settings as well as boost the achievement of desired results.

Summary

The development and application of frameworks and tools to help managerial leaders more effectively understand and optimize their personality at work will be beneficial to advancing the practice and study of leadership. In turn, it will also likely contribute to leaders achieving agreed-upon results. With a systematic approach that builds upon personality research and practice-oriented frameworks and tools, additional resources can be developed and applied to help leaders acquire personality self-knowledge and useful ways to optimize relevant elements of their personalities at work. As this work moves forward, there will be a need for definitional clarity, collaboration between practitioners and researchers, a business management orientation toward personality at work, and a sensitivity to how cultural diversity may affect the expression of facets of personality. These and related efforts will likely advance our knowledge and understanding of leader personality as a key individual-difference domain in organizational settings.

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