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Evolution of Leadership Theories

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Evolution of Leadership Theories

BY

Ann M. Maslanka
B.S., Grand Valley State University, 2002

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the Master of Science degree in Communication
In the Graduate Studies Program
Of the School of Communications
Grand Valley State University
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Evolution of Leadership Theories
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December, 2004

**SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ALLENDALE, MICHIGAN**

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ENTITLED Evolution of Leadership Theories.

AS PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COMMUNICATION

Abstract

Evolution of Leadership Theories is a comprehensive study of leadership trends over the years, and in various contexts and theoretical foundations. This study presents the history of dominant leadership theories and research, beginning with the Great man thesis and Trait theory, to the Transformational and Transactional leadership styles to various leadership characteristics. This thesis also offers an example of how a current health care organization utilizes leadership knowledge through an employee satisfaction survey. The researcher took questions from an employee satisfaction survey that directly related to leadership and analyzed how questions as such are beneficial for improving employee job satisfaction. The researcher hypothesized that conducting and analyzing employee satisfaction surveys in relation to leadership is effective in providing information that helps in producing and enabling strong employee to employer relationships.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Background

Many have tried to establish a definition of leadership that encompasses the intricacy of this universal term. One simplified definition of leadership is “the process of influencing an organized group toward accomplishing its goals” (*Lesson 1: The Fundamentals of Leadership*). This definition emphasizes the importance of viewing leadership as a process, directed at influencing a specific group of people to meet a stated objective.

The Word Reference Dictionary (2003) defines leadership as “the activity of leading; the body of people who lead a group; the status of a leader; the ability to lead.” Yet another traditional definition of leadership is: an interpersonal influence directed toward the achievement of a goal or goals (Allen, 1998). This definition stresses the fact that a leader influences more than one person toward a goal.

Proctor (2004), stated that some leaders are born and others are made. The born leaders innately have many of the necessary characteristics to be a leader and somewhere along the way developed the desire to be leaders. According to this, without the willingness to lead, ability counts for very little. Leaders that are made, according to Proctor, may have some skills but need to develop others through perseverance, practice and consistent application. For these types of aspiring leaders it takes effort and time. Proctor feels that most of us have the ability to develop leadership skills; fewer of us have the desire, therefore the key is willingness (Proctor, 2004).

In his landmark 1978 study on leadership, James MacGregor Burns stated that leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth (Burns, 1978). In the mid-1980s, Warren Bennis stated that, “Never have so many labored so long to say so little”; and “leadership is the most studied and least understood topic of any in the social sciences” (Bennis and Nanus, 1985, 4, 20; Van Wart, 2003).

Another recent definition of leadership is from Gardner (1990, p 38) who holds that “leadership is the accomplishment of group purpose, which is furthered not only by effective leaders but also by innovators, entrepreneurs, and thinkers; by the availability of resources; by questions of value and social cohesion.” By this definition then leadership can be thought of as an even broader phenomenon; because, Gardner challenges the idea that leadership exists within a single designated person and situation, and positions leadership as moving toward and achieving a group goal, not necessarily because of the work of one skilled individual (i.e. the leader) but because of the work of multiple members of the group (Horner, 1997).

To most people, the importance of leadership is self-evident no matter what the exact definition or setting. In organizations, effective leadership provides higher-quality and more efficient goods and services; it provides a sense of cohesiveness, personal development, and higher levels of satisfaction among those conducting the work; and it provides an overarching sense of direction and vision, an alignment with the environment, a healthy mechanism for innovation and creativity, and a resource for invigorating the organizational culture (Van Wart, 2003). All of these are valid points; however, the history of leadership theory and research and its utilization in

current settings, in relation to employee satisfaction, shall be scrutinized more thoroughly in this paper.

Problem Statement

Researchers cannot agree on a single definition for leadership. In contrast, it is usually not difficult to identify who is the leader of a group of people performing a task. Some would say that leadership is like beauty; it is hard to define, but you know it when you see it (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). This is why there may be reason to introduce new tactics and/or new leadership approaches and to delve into the question of how to utilize knowledge accrued on the current organizational structure of an organization to increase and/or maintain employee morale and productivity (Popper and Lipshitz, 1993).

A recent report from *Cutting Edge Info* found that companies that emphasized leadership development out performed others by 15 times over the past 60 years. Furthermore, according to survey, only 39% of US workers feel their organization's mission is translated to a few goals that are important to organizational success (Schettler, 2003).

Significance of Problem

Many organizations experience a multitude of disciplinary problems. Therefore an effective way to minimize problems is by improving leadership and gaining a better understanding of the evolution of leadership study and how it can be utilized for the betterment of organizations' employee relationships.

Purpose of Study

Over the years, leadership has been studied extensively in various contexts and theoretical foundations. In some cases, leadership has been described as a process, but most theories and research on leadership look at a person to gain understanding (Horner, 1997). Leadership is typically defined by the traits, qualities, and behaviors of a leader. The study of leadership has spanned across cultures, decades, and theoretical beliefs. A summary of what is known and understood about leadership is important in understanding how it is and can be utilized in society today (Horner, 1997).

There are numerous types of leadership styles and definitions. This study is focused on basic leadership accrued throughout the years and one example of how a current health care organization utilizes leadership knowledge for the betterment of their organization.

Therefore, the research question is as follows: Can utilization of current leadership theory and practice by supervisors and managers increase employee job satisfaction?

The hypothesis of this study is as follows: Conducting and analyzing employee satisfaction surveys in relation to leadership is effective in providing information that helps in producing and enabling strong employee to employer relationships.

Thus, the history and popular leadership theories shall be explored in hopes of providing a solid foundation of leadership, leading into an example of how a current organization is utilizing leadership knowledge today.

Organization of Thesis

This chapter presented a background on leadership. It included various leadership definitions, and a summary of how general leadership definitions and theories have evolved over the years. This summary serves as the foundation of how utilization of current leadership theory and practice can be used to measure employee satisfaction in current organizations. Chapter two will follow with an extensive review of pertinent literature. This literature will consist of dominant themes of leadership history and theories over the years, leading up to current leadership research. Chapter three will introduce the methodology and technical procedures used in the study to measure employee satisfaction in relation to leadership. Presentations of the findings of this research are in Chapter four, and discussion of the findings and implications will be presented in Chapter five.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Introduction/Background

There is a great deal of literature on leadership; the field has scores of specific streams such as decision making, leader-follower interaction, power of the leader, and many more that have made important contributions to our understanding (Cacioppe, 1997). To begin somewhere, offered here is a brief outline of the history of leadership theory and research.

The scientific study of leadership originated in the work of one of the founding fathers of sociology, Max Weber (1864-1920). Weber set the questions of authority, status, and legitimacy in the context of religion, politics, and the military. Devoting great attention to the unresolved tension between leaders and bureaucracies, he grew convinced that an inexorable trend toward rationalization in every sphere of society made the role of leaders both more problematic and more important (Heilbrunn, 1994).

In a comprehensive review of leadership theories (Stogdill, 1974), several different categories were identified that capture the essence of the study of leadership in the twentieth century (Horner, 1997). Following this evolution of leadership research and theory, below, will be an explanation of a leadership study that was conducted at an organization in West Michigan.

History of Dominant Leadership Theory and Research

“Great Man” thesis. In the nineteenth century the notion of the “great man” thesis dominated leadership theory. Its core belief was that there are only a few, very

rare, individuals in any society at any time with the unique characteristics to shape or express history. However, though this idea may serve sufficiently for case studies, it is effectively irrefutable and therefore unusable as a scientific theory (Van Wart, 2003).

Trait theory. In the 1920's and 1930's, leadership research focused on trying to identify the traits that differentiated leaders from non-leaders. These early leadership theories were content theories, focusing on “what” an effective leader is, not “how” to effectively lead. The trait approach assumes that certain physical, social, and personal characteristics are inherent in leaders (Allen, 1998).

Early theorists examined the attributes of great leaders, and explained leadership by the internal qualities with which a person is born (Bernard, 1926). The thought was that if the traits that differentiated leaders from followers could be identified, successful leaders could be quickly assessed and put into positions of leadership. Personality, physical, and mental characteristics were examined. This research was based on the idea that leaders were born, not made, and the key to success was simply in identifying those people who were born to be great leaders (Horner, 1997).

Though much research was done to identify the traits, no clear answer was found with regard to what traits consistently were associated with great leadership. One flaw with this line of thought was in ignoring the situational and environmental factors that play a role in a leader's level of effectiveness (Horner, 1997).

Furthermore, trait theory posits key traits for successful leadership (drive, desire to lead, integrity, self-confidence, intelligence, and job-relevant knowledge)

yet does not make a judgment as to whether these traits are inherent to individuals or whether they can be developed through training and education. No two leaders are alike, and no leader possesses all of the traits (Allen, 1998).

Behavioral theory. The early twentieth century fostered the development of a more focused search for the basis of leaders. Behavioral theorists identified determinants of leadership so that people could be trained to be leaders (Allen, 1998). Researchers developed personality tests and compared the results against those perceived to be leaders. By the 1940s, researchers had amassed very long lists of traits from numerous psychologically oriented studies (Bird, 1940). This tactic had two problems: First, the lists became longer and longer as research continued; Second, the traits and characteristics identified were not powerful predictors across situations (Van Wart, 2003).

This second major thrust, which looked at leader behaviors in an attempt to determine what successful leaders do, not how they look to others, began to look at leaders in context. That is, in context of the organization they work in, by identifying behaviors leaders exhibit that increase the effectiveness of the company. Behavioral theorists developed training programs to change managers' leadership behaviors and assume that the best styles of leadership could be learned (Allen, 1998). The well-known and documented University of Michigan and Ohio State leadership studies took this approach (Horner, 1997).

Ohio State and University of Michigan studies. The next major thrust was to look at the situational contexts that affect leaders in order to find meaningful patterns for theory building and useful advice. One of the most important reviews of the traits

field was conducted in 1948 by Ralph Stodgill, a professor of management science and psychology at Ohio State University. In his studies, he conducted and examined 120 trait studies, declaring that no consistent pattern of traits could be detected among leaders; Stodgill claimed that a person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits, but that the pattern of personal characteristics of the leader must bear some relevant relationship to the characteristics, activities, and goals of the followers (Stodgill, 1948; Heilbrunn, 1994). Furthermore, because these “trait studies” were unable to quantify leadership, they seemed to demolish the “Great Man” theory of history, as mentioned above (Heilbrunn, 1994).

Another early example that came out of the Ohio State Leadership Studies was a study that started by testing 1,800 statements related to leadership behavior. By continually distilling the behaviors, researchers arrived at two underlying factors: consideration and initiation of structure. Consideration describes a variety of behaviors related to defining roles, control mechanisms, task forces, and work coordination, both inside and outside the unit. Coupled with the humanist or human relations revolution that was occurring in the 1950s and 1960s, these (and similar studies) spawned a series of useful-if often simplistic and largely bimodal-theories (VanWart, 2003).

These two primary independent factors that were identified by the Ohio State studies: consideration and initiation of structure, brought about research that was simultaneously being conducted in other universities and resulting in similar findings. The impact of this work was in part the notion that leadership was not necessarily an

inborn trait, but instead effective leadership methods could be taught to employees (Saal and Knight, 1988). These researchers were making progress in identifying what behaviors differentiated leaders from followers so that the behaviors could be taught. Another impact of this line of work dealt with the broadening of management's focus to include both people-oriented activities along with task-oriented activities (Horner, 1997).

Furthering this work, Blake, Shephard, and Mouton (1964) also developed a two-factor model of leadership behavior similar to that found at Ohio State and University of Michigan. They called the factors "concern for people" and "concern for output." They later added a third variable, that of flexibility. According to these studies, managers exhibit behaviors that fall into the two primary categories: task or people. Depending on which category was shown most frequently, a leader could be placed along each of the two continua. The outcome of this research was primarily descriptive and helped categorize leaders based on their behavior (Horner, 1997).

University of Iowa. Another approach to leader behavior focused on identifying the best leadership styles. Work at the University of Iowa identified democratic (participation and delegation), autocratic (dictating and centralized) and laissez-faire styles (group freedom in decision making). However research findings were inconclusive (Allen, 1998).

Leader interaction. Successful leaders must be able to identify clues in an environment and adapt their leader behavior to meet the needs of their followers and of the particular situation. Even with good diagnostic skills, leaders may not be

effective unless they can adapt their leadership style to meet the demands of their environment (Allen, 1998).

The leader interaction approach dealt with the idea that interaction between the leader's traits, the leader's behaviors, and the situation in which the leader exists. These contingency theories make the assumption that the effects of one variable on leadership are contingent on other variables. This concept was a major insight at the time, because it opened the door for the possibility that leadership could be different in every situation (Saal and Knight, 1988). With this idea a more realistic view of leadership emerged, allowing for the complexity and situational specificity of overall effectiveness. Several different contingencies were identified and studied, but it is unrealistic to assume that any one theory is more or less valid or useful than another (Horner, 1997).

Contingency theories. Situational Favorability is one example of a contingency theory that considers two variables in defining leader effectiveness: leadership style and the degree to which the leader's situation is favorable for influence (Fiedler, 1967). Fiedler's concept of situational favorability, or the ease of influencing followers, was defined as the combination of leader-member relations, task structure, and position power. Measuring each as high or low, Fiedler came up with eight classifications of situational favorability. He then developed a questionnaire to measure leader style, called the Least Preferred Co-worker scale. Through his research, he found that certain leadership styles were more effective in certain situations. Although in general this theory is questionably applicable due to its relative simplicity, it initiated discussion and research about matching a leader with a

situation that would be most conducive to that leader's style (Fiedler, 1967). The publication of this model even led Fiedler himself, and his associates, to perform extensive research in an attempt to examine the validity of the model (Mitchell, Biglan, Oncken, and Fiedler, 1970).

The Hersey-Blanchard situational leadership theory is based on the amount of direction (task behavior) and amount of socio-emotional support (relationship behavior) a leader must provide given the situation and the level of maturity of the followers (Allen, 1998). The appropriate amount of leader task and relationship behavior is determined by the level of follower readiness. As the level of follower readiness changes, the amount of leader task and relationship behavior should change to match the level of follower readiness (Cairns, Hollenback, Preziosi, and Snow, 1998).

Hersey and Blanchard argued that there could be best attitudes for managers but that there was no best leadership style. For example, all managers should be concerned about production and people. But that concerned attitude can be expressed in different leadership styles, depending on the situation. Hersey and Blanchard developed four leadership quadrants (called quadrants 1 through 4): "telling," "selling," "participating," and "delegating" (Hersey and Blanchard, 1996).

The Path-Goal contingency theory deals with an analysis of the people who are led by leaders. The importance of the followers in leadership emerged (House and Mitchell, 1974), and leadership was seen as an interaction between the goals of the followers and the leader. The path-goal theory suggests that leaders are primarily responsible for helping followers develop behaviors that will enable them to reach

their goals or desired outcomes (i.e. how the leader influences the subordinates' perceptions of their work-goals, personal-goals, and paths to goal-attainment). Leader behavior will be motivational to the extent that it helps subordinates cope with environmental-uncertainties, threats from others or sources of frustration. Variables that impact the most effective leader behavior include the nature of the task (whether it is intrinsically or extrinsically satisfying), autonomy levels of the followers, and follower motivation (House and Mitchell, 1974).

Vroom and Yetton (1973) developed what became known as the Vroom-Yetton Model. This model states that there is a variety of ways to make decisions and that a manager should choose the way that is most appropriate given the nature of the problem to be solved and the context in which the decision is to be made. The model provides a number of criteria for deciding which decision making mode to adopt. It describes what leaders should do given certain circumstances with regard to the level of involvement of followers in making decisions (Medcof, 2001). In other words, by following a decision tree that asks about the need for participation, a conclusion can be drawn about how the leader should go about making the decision to be most effective (Horner, 1997).

Emerging out of the Vroom-Yetton Theory, the vertical dyad linkage theory, also known as the leader-member exchange theory (Linden & Graen, 1980), explains the nature of the relationship between leaders and followers and how this relationship impacts the leadership process. Graen categorized employees into two groups: the in-group and the out-group. The relationship between the leader and each group is different, thus affecting the type of work members of each group are given. For

example, the in-group members make contributions to organization that go beyond their formal job duties. In return they receive more attention, support and sensitivity from their supervisors. The out-group performs the more routine, mundane tasks, experiencing a more formal exchange with the supervisor. Research has generally supported this theory; its value deals with the investigation of each follower's relationship with the leader as opposed to a general or average leadership style (Linden & Graen, 1980).

The broad and varied body of work on leadership, therefore, suggests that there are many appropriate ways to lead or styles of leadership. Contingency theories differ from and build on the trait and behavior theories, as the philosophy that one best way to lead evolved into a complex analysis of the leader and the situation.

Organizational culture. As leadership research has grown and expanded, an even broader look at leadership has emerged: a focus on the organizational culture (Schein, 1985). According to this view, leader effectiveness is related to a clearly identified culture. For example, leaders must be able to adapt to change, depending on the culture, as the environment shifts and develops. In one study it was found that organizations that have tried to resist change in the external environment have experienced more difficulties than organizations that have responded positively to change (Baron, 1995; Horner, 1997).

Culture management deals with the ability of leaders to know and understand what the organizational culture is, modifying that culture to meet the needs of the organization as it progresses. Baron (1995) found in his research that organizations that have tried to proactively exploit new opportunities in the environment

experienced successful culture change. Additionally, Baron found that the rise of the professional manager over the past several decades suggests that increasing and different management and leadership skills are high on the agenda for effective culture management. In other words, additional skills are needed in today's leaders so that they will be able to manage the organizational culture. This line of research, however, has not identified a model for different styles of leadership given different cultural factors. The application of these ideas is difficult, in part due to the organizational specificity of culture and the difficulty in defining culture. One conclusion that can be drawn is that leaders need to work within the culture to be most successful (Horner, 1997).

Motivation. Motivation theories add to the body of leadership work because of the emphasis on the followers themselves and what causes them to act, instead of focusing on the leaders and their traits, behaviors, or situations. Leadership is not only the process and activity of the person who is in a leadership position, but also the environment this leader creates, how this leader responds to the surroundings, and the particular skills and activities of the people being led (Horner, 1997).

One motivation theory is that of Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1959). Through research they differentiated between elements in the work place that led to employee satisfaction and elements that led to employee dissatisfaction, such that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are thought of as two different continua instead of two ends of the same continuum.

Elements that cause satisfaction can be thought of as motivators, because employees are motivated to achieve them. Motivators refer to factors intrinsic within

the work itself like the recognition of a task complete. Motivators distinguished by Herzberg, Maunser and Snyderman were: recognition, achievement, possibility of growth, advancement, responsibility, and work itself (Herzberg, Maunser and Snyderman, 1959).

Herzberg, Maunser and Snyderman labeled the other set of elements hygiene factors, because they are necessary to keep employees from being dissatisfied. Hygienes tend to include extrinsic entities such as relationships with coworkers, which do not pertain to the workers actual job. Hygiene factors identified by Herzberg, Maunser and Snyderman were: salary, interpersonal relations—supervisor, interpersonal relations—subordinates, interpersonal relations—peers, supervision-technical, company policy and administration, working conditions, factors in personal life, status, and job security (Herzberg, Maunser and Snyderman, 1959).

This theory ties to leadership, because leaders may be interested in reducing dissatisfaction and increasing satisfaction to develop an environment more conducive to employee satisfaction and perhaps performance (Horner, 1997).

Need theories. These types of theories suggest that people have needs for certain results or outcomes, and they are driven to behave in ways that will satisfy these needs (Alderfer, 1969; Maslow, 1943; Murray, 1938). Maslow proposed a need hierarchy in which certain needs are more basic than others and people are motivated to satisfy them (for example, physiological and safety needs), before they will feel a drive to satisfy higher-order needs (belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization) (Horner, 1997; Maslow, 1943).

Alderfer (1969) built on this work, suggesting that there may be only three needs (existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs) in a hierarchy of concreteness. He theorized that people could move up and down the hierarchy, and people may be motivated by multiple needs at any one time (Alderfer, 1969; Horner, 1997).

Another related theory is Murray's (1938) manifest needs theory. This theory suggests that people experience a wide variety of needs (for example, need for achievement, need for power, and need for affiliation), and everyone may not experience the same needs. The appropriate environmental conditions activate certain needs. Relating this to leadership, work typically satisfies some needs, and the question is whether leaders can develop an environment that helps meet peoples more advanced or immediate needs (Horner, 1997).

Additional theories. Other motivation theories include expectancy theory, equity theory, goal setting, and reinforcement. Each has implications for the approach leaders take to dealing with their followers.

Expectancy theory proposes that people engage in particular behaviors based on the probability that the behavior will be followed by a certain outcome and the value of that outcome (Vroom, 1964). By leaders understanding people's values, they can impact actions resulting in desired outcomes (Horner, 1997).

The equity theory of motivation, developed by J.S. Adams, proposes that people are motivated to seek social equity in the rewards they receive for performance. Equity is defined as an individuals belief that the treatment he/she is receiving is fair relative to the treatment received by others. The theory suggests that

people view their inputs/outputs as ratio and then compare it to the ratio of someone else. Comparison of the two ratios will yield an imprecise result, but will still affect the individuals' attitude and morale (Adams, 1965).

Goal setting theory suggests that people are motivated to achieve goals, and their intentions drive their behavior (Locke, 1968). In 1990 Locke and Latham built upon Locke's 1968 goal setting theory findings and established new core findings: (1) Specific high goals lead to higher performance than setting no goals or setting an abstract goal such as "do your best"; (2) There is a linear relationship between goal difficulty and performance. Thus the higher the goal the higher the performance; (3) Variables such as feedback, participation in decision making, and competition only affect performance to the extent that they lead to the setting of and commitment to specific high goals; (4) Three of the four mediators of the goal setting performance relationship are motivational, namely direction, effort, and persistence; the fourth is cognitive, namely, task strategies. Moderators of the effect of goals on performance are ability, commitment, feedback, task complexity, and situational constraints (Locke, 1968; Locke and Latham, 1990).

Finally, reinforcement theory stems from a behaviorist viewpoint and states that behavior is controlled by its consequences (Skinner, 1972). Leaders are in a position to provide either positive or negative consequences to followers; reinforcement theory has had a significant impact on developing effective leadership style (Horner, 1997).

Transformational and transactional leadership. Until 1978, the focus of the mainstream literature was leadership at lower levels, which was amenable to small

group and experimental methods and simplified variable models, while executive leadership and the more amorphous abilities to induce dramatic change were largely ignored. James Burns' book on leadership, entitled *Leadership*, dramatically changed that interest by introducing the notion that transactional leadership was what was largely being studied, and that the other highly important arena – transformational leadership – was largely being ignored (Burns, 1978).

Another example of recent leadership theory is Bass's (1994) Transformational and Transactional leadership model. Transformational and transactional leadership originates in the sphere of political analysis; Bass took these concepts and applied them more generally to supervisor-subordinate relations. Bass finds that transactional leaders have a cost-benefit orientation towards leadership whereby they concentrate on rewarding effort appropriately and ensuring that behavior conforms to expectations. In the process, they concentrate on compromise, intrigue, and control (Bass, 1994).

Whilst transactional leadership is likely to be conservative, transformational leadership is either revolutionary or reactionary. Transformational leaders are charismatic, inspirational, visionary, intellectually stimulating and considerate of individual needs. They encourage followers to find novel solutions to problems and delegate, coach, advise and provide feedback (Bass, 1994). The efficacy of transformational leadership is well documented (Margaret, 2003). The transformational leadership approach offers one of the most effective ways in which a manager can minimize problems. Leaders using this human resource-based system strive to inspire their followers through building enthusiasm and confidence in their

work. Leaders portray a vision of self determination, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Each and every employee is valued as an individual (Haddock, 1989).

In a recent book, *Geeks and Geezers*, Bennis and Thomas postulated that the most successful leaders have been shaped by an intense transformational experience. They looked at two groups of successful leaders: the geezers, who are now in their 70s and 80s; and the geeks, who, for the most part, are under 40. Geezers, when at the age the geeks are now, were concerned about making a living; they were mostly focused on careers and they had heroes and role models. Geeks want to change the world, and seek balance between careers, family and personal activities. They have fewer heroes (Bennis & Thomas, 2002).

They call this transformational experience the crucible of leadership. Other elements that make the leader are the era in which they live (environment) and their own values. These help to determine whether this transformations experience will result in a leader or not. By their definition, the crucibles can be of many different types and can take on many different forms. They can be experiences that are forces on us or experiences we seek. They can be harsh, such as dealing with failure, or they can be pleasant, such as seeing unexpected positive results that yield an unanticipated revelation (Bennis & Thomas, 2002).

Sub schools. According to Van Wart, three sub schools emerged out of this research that emphasized different aspects of leadership. The transformational school emphasized vision and overarching organizational change (Burns, 1978). The charismatic school focused on the influence processes of individuals and the specific behaviors used to arouse inspiration and higher levels of action in followers. Less

articulated in terms of leadership theory was an entrepreneurial school that urged leaders to make practical process and cultural changes that would dramatically improve quality or productivity; it shared a change emphasis with the transformational school and an internal focus with the charismatic school (Van Wart, 2003).

Even before the 1980s, some work had been done to create holistic models that tried to explain more aspects of leadership. Yet it was not until the 1980s that work began in earnest and that conventional models routinely incorporated transactional and transformational elements (Van Wart, 2003).

Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Leadership has been articulated by Stephen Covey (1989) in his bestselling book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. The habits he uses to distinguish leaders are: 1) Be proactive. A leader does not wait for things to happen and then react to them. The leader takes control of his or her life and thus seizes the initiative. 2) Begin with the end in mind. Leaders have a vision – for themselves and for their organization – and a mission for achieving it. 3) Put first things first. A leader will make sure that the most important things – the activities that further the mission and are consistent with the vision – are done first and will not get bogged down in extraneous matters. The first three habits address primarily the leader's own personal approach (Covey, 1989).

The next three habits deal with interpersonal leadership: 4) Think win/win. The leader is committed to developing relationships in which all parties are winners. 5) Seek first to understand, then to be understood. If a leader is going to influence the behavior of a follower, it is important to understand not only the task to be performed,

but also where that individual stands. Another way of saying this is diagnose before you prescribe. 6) Synergize. Synergy occurs when people are open to new ideas and new concepts, when diversity (in the broadest sense) is valued, when people are encouraged to “think outside the box,” when communication is open. It is the effective leader who will create the environment for this to happen. 7) Sharpen the saw. An effective leader will take the time to make sure that his/her tools (skills) remain sharp. This is done through the process of renewal: physical, mental, social/emotional and spiritual (Covey, 1989).

Five fundamental practices. Detailed in their book *The Leadership Challenge*, Kouzes and Posner (1995) identified through case analysis and survey questionnaires what they call the five fundamental practices that enable leaders to get extraordinary things done. Embedded in the five fundamental practices of exemplary leadership are behaviors that can serve as the basis for learning to lead, called the ten commitments of leadership. Kouzes and Posner’s five fundamental practices and the ten commitments of leadership are as follows:

- A. Challenging the process
 1. Search out challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate and improve
 2. Experiment, take risks and learn from the accompanying mistakes
- B. Inspiring a shared vision
 1. Envision an uplifting and ennobling future
 2. Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interest, hopes and dreams
- C. Enabling others to act
 1. Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust
 2. Strengthen people by giving power away, providing choice, developing, competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support
- D. Modeling the way
 1. Set the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared

- values; walk the talk
 - 2. Achieve small wins that promote consistent progress and build commitment
 - E. Encouraging the heart
 - 1. Recognize individual contributions to the success of every project
 - 2. Celebrate team accomplishments regularly
- (Kouzes and Posner, 1995).

Kouzes and Posner surveys. Kouzes and Posner conducted two surveys of over 20,000 participants, one in 1987 and one in 1995, which produced almost identical results. The respondents were asked to list the seven qualities they most look for and admire in a leader, someone whose directions they would willingly follow. The top ten qualities (in descending order of importance) were: 1) honest; 2) forward-looking; 3) inspiring; 4) competent; 5) fair-minded; 6) supportive; 7) broad-minded; 8) intelligent; 9) straightforward; and 10) dependable. Over half of the respondents cited the first four characteristics as important in a leader (Kouzes and Posner, 1995).

Irrefutable laws of leadership. Leadership theorist John Maxwell has articulated irrefutable laws of leadership in his book *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* (1998). Some of these laws are: leadership ability determines a person's level of effectiveness; the true meaning of leadership is influence; leadership develops daily, not in a day; anyone can steer the ship, but it takes a leader to chart the course; trust is the foundation of leadership; people naturally follow leaders stronger than themselves; good leaders are intuitive – they can read the situation, trends, resources, people and themselves; who you are is whom you attract; leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand; a leader's potential is determined by those closest to him or her; people buy into the leader, then the vision; leaders find ways for the team to win – defeat is not an option; leaders can create momentum, but it is

easier to sustain it than create it; leaders understand that activity is not necessarily accomplishment; a leader must give up to go up – the more responsibility you have, the fewer rights you have; when to lead is as important as what to do and where to go; and a leader's lasting value is measured by succession. Your success as a leader is measured by how well the people you have developed can lead the organization to greater things without you (Maxwell, 1998).

Five factor model. During recent decades a consensus in social psychology in personality and personnel selection has emerged for a general taxonomy of five personality traits (e.g., extroversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness). Known formally as the Five Factor Model (FFM) or colloquially as “the big five”, this conceptual scheme has generated an enormous amount of published research and, has had a significant impact throughout the social sciences. In his most recent work Moberg (1999) presented a lengthy review relating the ‘big five’ to leader ethics. Moberg (1999) concludes that the traits ‘conscientiousness’ and ‘agreeableness’ are the most essential virtues which he terms “organizational virtues”. This is not an unreasonable position when one considers the components of these two elements of character. Moberg (1999) argues that, conscientious people have a sense of competence, have orderly work habits, and are principled, diligent and self-disciplined. The key characteristics of agreeable persons are: people who are frank, disposed to trust others, and who are humble, compliant, and sympathetic (Margaret, 2003).

Schmidt and Hunter (1998) have identified these same two dimensions as the key components of the construct ‘integrity’. They propose that ‘integrity’ is one of the

best predictors of future job performance. The relevance to the current study of these research findings is that the virtues of 'conscientiousness' and agreeableness' are shown to be synonymous with 'integrity' and, 'integrity' is a central component of 'justice'. Although some may notice a relationship, there has been little research carried out relating transformational and transactional leadership to the big five (Schmidt and Hunter, 1998).

Key characteristics of transformational leadership as outlined earlier include: individuals who demonstrate consideration of their staff on an individual basis; are motivating, inspirational, provide intellectual challenges and; are considered to promote vision. Further, transformational leaders generally are perceived by their followers to: demonstrate self-confidence, exert influence over others, and develop a sense of affiliation. Thus it is evident that the transformational style of leadership reflects many of the essential components of the traits 'conscientiousness' and 'agreeableness' as described by Moberg (1999).

Ethical decision processes. Another model is the Ethical Decision Processes Leadership Style. In current ethical decision research the Moral Intensity model of Ethical Decision-making (Jones, 1997) has dominated literature. This model contends that ethical decision making is contingent upon the ethical issue itself. The intensity of a moral issue is determined collectively by the: magnitude of consequence of the moral act; the degree of social consensus that the moral act is unethical; the likelihood that the moral act would take effect; the temporal immediacy of the effect of the moral act for the target of the moral act; as well as the concentration of the effect (Jones, 1997; Margaret, 2003).

The model further contends that the overall intensity of a moral issue would influence the recognition of a moral issue and the intention as well as the engagement of a moral act. Recent empirical studies have provided support for the model. Two independent lines of research have been the focus of recent ethical decision studies: (a) characteristics of the moral issue; and (b) characteristics of the moral agent. To date no study has directly related leadership style to the moral intensity model of ethical decision-making and tested whether differences in leadership style result in different moral intensity judgments made (Margaret, 2003).

Personal moral orientation. In traditional moral psychology literature there has been a long history of research into individual differences; Forsyth's (1994) theory of Personal Moral Orientation is one such example. The philosophical theories of deontology, and teleology, commonly referred to as the DU model, form the basis for Forsyth's model in which he suggests that differences in individuals' personal moral orientation can be parsimoniously described by the degree to which they are relativistic and/or idealistic. Relativism represents a rule-universality dimension and is defined as the extent to which individuals cognitively accept or reject universal moral principles as the basis for ethical decisions (Margaret, 2003).

According to Forsyth (1994) idealistic individuals believe that positive outcomes can always be achieved regardless of the type of severity of the ethical dilemma that is encountered. Individuals who are lower in idealism admit that undesirable consequences will often be mixed in with desired ones. Highly idealistic individuals insist that an ethical action must not harm others but less idealistic individuals permit harm to be mixed with good. Theoretically, differences among

individuals in their acceptance of the tenets of classical ethical philosophies will affect their ethical judgments and behavioral intentions (Margaret, 2003).

Moral philosophies provide a framework within which individuals contemplate issues of right and wrong and assist individuals in determining what the “right” way to behave is. Empirical research suggests, for example, that individuals’ adherence to deontological and/or teleological philosophies is associated with their ethical judgments about moral issues. Several empirical studies have addressed the relationship between individuals’ moral orientation and their judgments of ethical dilemmas. In general, the research indicates that highly relativistic individuals judge ethically ambiguous actions more leniently than non-relativists (Margaret, 2003).

Leadership Characteristics

Leaders must have a clear vision of what they want to achieve. They must also have identified the mission for reaching that vision. The vision and mission could be broad – as for the entire organization – or narrow – as for a specific project or objective. Leaders evaluate actions against the mission. But they must also be flexible and adaptable to deal positively with unforeseen circumstances (Proctor, 2004).

They must communicate these to their followers and get the necessary buy-in and commitment. To do this, leaders must first understand their followers: how they feel, what their capabilities are, where their interests lie, and what concerns they have. Based on this understanding, they can then determine what type of interaction (leadership style) will be most effective at getting the followers to embrace the vision and mission as their own (Proctor, 2004).

Leaders create an environment where diversity is valued, open communication is encouraged, creative thinking is enhanced, and new and unique ideas are sought and welcomed. Leaders will be focused on results, but will be equally focused on people. They will encourage, reward, develop and involve their followers. They will seek input and feedback, delegate and empower. They will continue to learn and to seek opportunities to learn (Proctor, 2004).

Leaders will be involved. Interaction is critical. They will lead the way, but also share the load and the risks. In relationships with followers, leaders recognize that trust is a key ingredient and will seek to build and maintain trust (Proctor, 2004).

CHAPTER III

Methodology and Findings

Study Design Overview

Every year, Resthaven Patrons, Inc. (RP), conducts an Employee Satisfaction Survey designed to measure employee job satisfaction at RP. There are numerous sections of this survey, each with a different heading. Utilization of the entire survey was deemed irrelevant due to subject matter that did not directly relate to the topic of this thesis. Therefore only sections of relevance were utilized for fulfillment of the methodology portion of this master's thesis at Grand Valley State University.

Furthermore, if not specified please note that from this point on, all subject matter and portions of the RP Employee Satisfaction Survey utilized will be referred to in general terms, e.g. "the study" or "this study". The researcher would like to clarify and reiterate the fact that the entire 2004 RP Employee Satisfaction Survey is not being utilized in this study due to irrelevance of subject matter.

This study was designed to measure employee satisfaction in relation to supervisor relationships, in the year 2004, at RP. The researcher worked with the director of Human Resources (HR) at RP, the HR team at RP, and the Carl Frost Research Center at Hope College, all located in Holland, Michigan.

Verbal approval to utilize survey questions and results that are related to supervisor and employee relationships was granted by the RP HR Director. Survey questions were composed by the HR Team and the Carl Frost Research Center to ensure measurability of the questions, to ensure an end result of qualitative data for

analysis, and to ensure that results could be utilized as a tool in the process of improving employee satisfaction.

The purpose of utilizing this study was to fulfill the methodology portion of the master's thesis at Grand Valley State University and to provide a professional and thorough analysis of how conducting and analyzing employee satisfaction surveys in relation to leadership theory is effective in providing information that helps in producing and enabling strong employee to supervisor relationships.

Resthaven Patrons, Inc.

RP is a Christian, not-for-profit, continuing care organization located in Holland, Michigan, serving seniors in Ottawa and Allegan counties, since 1945. The founders' intention for establishing a senior community was made clear in their first printed appeal to Holland churches: "Resthaven is intended to be just what its name implies, a Haven of Rest for elderly and retired people who need and deserve a quiet place in which to spend their sunset days" (www.resthaven.org, 2004, para. 1).

Thus, in 1945 RP was started. The needs of the community were fulfilled at the time; however in 1948 expansion was needed. In 1955 Resthaven Retirement was completed. This new independent living facility, located on 32nd Street, was a 26-room home. By 1969, construction of additional wings provided Resthaven Retirement with the capacity of 103 residents (www.resthaven.org, 2004, para. 2 & 3).

Popularity of RP increased over the years and in 1981, the Board of Trustees of RP purchased the historic Warm Friend Hotel in downtown Holland, Michigan.

After renovation, Resthaven Warm Friend had 100 independent living apartments available for rent (www.resthaven.org, 2004, para. 4).

In 1989 the need for a total care facility arose and RP purchased a licensed nursing care facility now known as the Resthaven Care Center. The Care Center helped to fulfill RP continuum of care and services for its residents offering several levels of service to the community including independent living, supportive care, and skilled nursing care (www.resthaven.org, 2004, para. 5).

In 1993 RP established Resthaven Home Care, due to the community need for specialized health care for clients not needing a rehabilitation facility while recovering from illness or injury. Home Care allows Resthaven to serve its residents and other community members in their homes as they recover; Resthaven Home Care became Medicare certified in 1996 (www.resthaven.org, 2004, para. 6).

In 1996, RP opened the Good Shepherd Home, attached to Resthaven Care Center. The Good Shepherd Home offered focused care to meet the needs of the growing population of elders suffering from dementia (www.resthaven.org, 2004, para. 7).

Today RP serves over 650 individuals through Resthaven Retirement, Warm Friend, Resthaven Care Center, Good Shepherd Home and Resthaven Home Care. (The researcher would like to note that from here on Resthaven Care Center and the Good Shepherd Home will be referred to as one entity called the Care Center, due to the fact that they are stationed within the same building) (www.resthaven.org, 2004, para. 9). Resthaven's mission statement is: "To glorify God by providing a continuum

of quality care and services that demonstrates the love and compassion of Jesus Christ” (www.resthaven.org, 2004, para. 1).

Through the years RP has grown to meet the changing needs of the Holland area’s aging population. The researcher is a former employee of RP (February 1999 to May 2001 and December 2002 to July 2004). Having been employed at RP in the Home Care and Care Center divisions over the years has helped establish the fact that RP has not only grown to meet the changing needs of the Holland area’s aging population, but also its ever-growing and dedicated staff.

Target Population

The survey was given to all 310 employees. Each employee is classified into one of the following job status categories: Full time, part time, flexible and temporary/seasonal. Surveys were given to employees at every facility: Resthaven Care Center (and Good Shepherd Home), Resthaven 32nd Street, Warm Friend, Resthaven Home Care, and the corporate office. The survey was given to employees in every department: Nursing/Health Services, Food Services, Building Services, Social Services, Resident Life, and Administration; and administered to employees for every shift: 1st/Days, 2nd, and 3rd.

Instrumentation/Validity and Reliability

During former employment at RP, the researcher served as a committee member on the HR Team (October 2003 to July 2004). While serving on this team, the researcher partook in the review, administration, and collection portions of the Employee Satisfaction Survey in 2004.

Review process. The HR Team was given the Employee Satisfaction Survey questions from the Executive Team to review and make editorial suggestions. Each team member had a two week time frame to review and to make suggestions. After the two week review session was over the committee reviewed each team members' editorial suggestions and made what deemed to be appropriate changes. Upon review and edit, the survey was given back to the Executive Team for final approval. The Executive Team then forwarded the survey on to the Carl Frost Research Center for printing and formatting.

All of this was done to ensure clarity of survey questions and to help increase reliability of the study. The final survey questions utilized were a conglomeration of the previous years' employee satisfaction survey, 2003, and a few additional questions formulated by the Executive and HR Teams.

Administration. The survey was administered May, 2004, through the employee payroll system. All names in the employee payroll system are names of active employees; an active employee is one who meets the requirements for one of the following job status groups: Full time, part time, flexible and temporary/seasonal. Job status qualifications will be identified in further detail in subsequent sections.

Therefore, if an employee was in the payroll system, that employee received a survey. Employees on the payroll and in the system were given a survey on pay day, regardless of whether they received a pay check that pay period or not.

The survey was attached to all employee paychecks. Surveys were mailed to the residence of employees who did not receive a pay check.

Collection. Each facility set up depository sites for completed surveys. The boxes were sealed to ensure staff that the survey was to remain anonymous (in hopes of increasing response rate), and clearly marked to avoid confusion on where the surveys were to be returned. The researcher at the time was in charge of the Care Center's collection box and placed it on her desk for optimal accessibility to all staff. This location was chosen to be the most accessible because: a) the researcher handed out paychecks to all employees and was able to inform staff of location of the depository; and b) the researcher's desk was located in the front office adjacent to the front entrance of the facility.

Data Collection/Analysis

There were a total of 154 surveys returned. The researcher analyzed results from the returned surveys. Only questions from the section "Supervisor Relationships" were analyzed for the purpose of this study. All other questions and answers are irrelevant for the purpose of this study and were not analyzed.

Surveys were collected separately at each facility. The HR Team developed strategies to enable and encourage high employee participation. Participation was measured by taking the total amount of employees and subtracting the total number of surveys returned; for purpose of this study RP HR divulged only the total number of surveys returned.

Strategies implemented to increase participation were: 1) Each employee that participated in the anonymous survey was able to enter their name in a drawing for a monetary gift; 2) Flyers were disbursed throughout each facility to encourage employees to participate; 3) A cover letter was attached to surveys, stressing the

importance and the benefits to be reaped in completing the survey; and 4) Supervisors were asked to encourage employees to complete the survey, with an emphasis on the high level of importance.

Employees were given 14 calendar days to complete and return the survey. Completed surveys were then given to the HR Director, who delivered them to the Carl Frost Research Center for compilation of results and a detailed analysis.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

Survey Results

As previously stated there were 154 total surveys returned. Of the 154 surveys returned, the only statistics that were analyzed were those relevant and directly related to supervisor and employee relationships.

To offer a more substantial analysis of the data gathered and the demographics that comprise RP, the following tables were extracted from the Employee Satisfaction Survey. Data are broken down as follows: Table 1) “At Which Facility Do You Work the Majority of the Time?”; Table 2) “What is your Job Status?”; Table 3) In What Department Do You Work?”; Table 4) “What Shift Do You Work?”; and Table 5) “Supervisor Relationships.”

These tables were used to establish an increased credibility and understanding of the research at hand. Taking into consideration all survey questions and sections, these tables proved to be the best representation for offering a solid foundation of RP demographics that lead up to the “Supervisor Relationship” questions being analyzed.

Explanation of tables. Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 are in the same format, explained as follows. The survey question is center justified at the top of the table. Underneath that, in the second row of the table, are three columns: the first column contains either the Facility, Job Status, Department or Shift title; the second column contains the Frequency; and the third column contains the Percent.

The first column (i.e. Facility, Job Status, Department or Shift) is merely a descriptor of what is being measured. The Frequency is the number of surveys

returned per descriptor in relation to the number of surveys returned as a whole/conglomerate (154). The Percent is the percentage out of 100 determined by dividing the frequency by the number of surveys (154).

Table 1. Table 1 below breaks down employees by the facility that they work at. The question is as follows: “At Which Facility Do You Work the Majority of the Time?” Upon analysis of this table, it appears that a majority of the employees are based out of the Care Center. In other words 57.1% out of 100% of the 154 surveys returned came from Care Center employees. The 32nd Street facility had the next largest group of respondents. More than three fourths of all respondents (77.2%) came from these two groups. There were two employees who did not indicate which facility they worked at.

Table 1

Resthaven Employee Satisfaction Survey At Which Facility Do You Work the Majority of the Time?		
Facility	Frequency	Percent
Care Center	88	57.1%
32 nd Street	31	20.1
Warm Friend	16	10.4
Home Care	9	5.8
Corporate	8	5.2
Did not indicate facility	2	1.3
Total	154	100.0

Table 2. The second table below (Table 2) breaks down employees by their job status. The question reads as follows: “What is your Job Status?” From this table one can gather that most of the employees who responded to the survey, 63.6%, were full time employees. This table included all full time, part time, flexible, temporary/seasonal, and unspecified employees. Job Status classification is as

follows: Full time employees are required to work 32 to 40 hours/wk; Part time employees are required to work 20 to 31 hour/wk; Flexible employees are required to work every other holiday; and Temporary/seasonal employees are required to work one holiday a year. There were three employees who did not indicate their job status.

Table 2

Resthaven Employee Satisfaction Survey What is your Job Status?		
Job Status	Frequency	Percent
Full time	98	63.6%
Part time	47	30.5
Flexible	4	2.6
Temp/Seasonal	2	1.3
Did not indicate job status	3	1.9
Total	154	100.0

Table 3. Table 3 (below) broke down the survey results by department. The question for Table 3 is as follows: “In What Department Do You Work?” From this table it is recognized that just over half of the employees that partook in the survey were Nursing/Health Services employees (53.2%). The Administration department (13.6%) came in second to the Nursing/Health Services department, followed closely by the Food Services staff (12.3%). There were ten employees who did not indicate the department they worked in.

Table 3

Resthaven Employee Satisfaction Survey In What Department Do You Work?		
Department	Frequency	Percent
Nursing/Health Services	82	53.2%
Food Services	19	12.3
Building Services	11	7.1
Social Services	2	1.3
Resident Life	9	5.8
Administration	21	13.6
Did not indicate department	10	6.5
Total	154	100.0

Table 4. Table 4 breaks down employee responses by the shift they work. The question for Table 4 was: “What Shift Do You Work?” It was determined from these results that most employees that participated in the survey were 1st shift employees (70.8%). These employees worked the day shift. For the Food Services, Building Services, Social Services, Resident Life, and Administration departments, day/first shift is approximately 8am to 5pm. For the Nursing/Health Services Departments, day/first shift is approximately 7am to 3pm.

Table 4

Resthaven Employee Satisfaction Survey What Shift Do You Work?		
Shift	Frequency	Percent
1 st /Days	109	70.8%
2 nd	30	19.5
3 rd	10	6.5
Did not indicate shift	5	3.2
Total	154	100.0

Table 5. Table 5 is the employee survey results from questions that related to supervisor relationships. There were 15 questions in direct relation to supervisor relationships. Respondents were given a 5 point Likert Scale to answer the question.

Answers ranged from Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4), to Strongly Disagree (5).

The answers are laid out to display the frequency and percentage. For example, the first question in Table 5 asks: "I have the ability to communicate concerns I may have to my immediate supervisor." The answers reveal that 57 employees strongly agreed with this statement. These 57 employees represent 37.0% of the 154 surveys returned. Seventy-six employees (49.4%) agreed on this question; 15 employees (9.7%) were neutral; 5 employees (3.2%) of the 154 surveys returned, showed disagreement with this question; and 1 employee (0.6%) strongly disagreed with this statement. All subsequent questions are formatted and are to be read in the same manner: Frequency/Percentage.

Table 5

All Employees Resthaven Employee Satisfaction Survey Supervisor Relationships						
Question	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)	2004 Mean
I have the ability to communicate concerns I may have to my immediate supervisor	57/37.0%	76/49.4%	15/9.7%	5/3.2%	1/0.6%	1.81
My unit/department manager listens and responds to my concerns	47/30.7	68/44.4	27/17.6	8/5.2	3/2.0	2.03
I am involved in making decisions that affect my job	28/18.2	62/40.3	36/23.4	20/13.0	8/5.2	2.47
I have the opportunity to provide feedback and input for key decisions	25/16.2	63/40.9	40/26.0	23/14.9	3/1.9	2.45
I am treated with respect and appreciation	42/27.6	69/45.4	29/19.1	8/5.3	4/2.6	2.10
I feel my efforts are appreciated	38/25.2	65/43.0	30/19.9	14/9.3	4/2.6	2.21
In the past month, I have received adequate recognition/praise	31/20.1	63/40.9	33/21.4	18/11.7	9/5.8	2.42
I receive adequate feedback on my performance	22/14.4	60/39.2	40/26.1	25/16.3	6/3.9	2.56
In the past six months, my supervisor has talked about performance	21/14.5	70/48.3	20/13.8	27/18.6	7/4.8	2.51
If I have a suggestion for improvement, I am able to communicate it	33/21.4	90/58.4	26/16.9	3/1.9	2/1.3	2.03
My immediate supervisor encourages staff to work as a team	43/28.3	69/45.4	27/17.8	9/5.9	4/2.6	2.41
My immediate supervisor helps me learn how to do my job better	28/18.2	59/38.3	47/30.5	16/10.4	4/2.6	2.41
My immediate supervisor encourages me to contribute my opinions and ideas	34/22.2	63/41.2	37/24.2	15/9.8	4/2.6	2.29
My immediate supervisor has confidence and trust in me	38/25.0	82/53.9	26/17.1	6/3.9	0/0.0	2.00
My immediate supervisor cares about me as a person	41/27.0	70/46.1	33/21.7	5/3.3	3/2.0	2.07

CHAPTER V

Conclusions

Conclusions and Implications of Findings

The researcher hypothesized that conducting and analyzing employee satisfaction surveys that ask questions dealing with leadership are effective in providing information to help produce and enable strong employee to employer relationships. According to the RP employee satisfaction survey the majority of responses indicated that the way supervisors communicate with their employees is deemed satisfactory in the eyes of employees and in their job satisfaction.

Furthermore, much useful information can be drawn from the data collected from the employee satisfaction survey. Analysis of these data can be utilized as testimonial information from employees to assist and enable the production of strong employee to employer relationships.

For the purpose of demonstrating how the RP 2004 employee satisfaction survey results can be utilized, the researcher constructed a new table, denoted as Table 6. Table 6 was constructed in hopes of offering an alternative, uncomplicated, and more comprehensive ranked-view of the statistics extrapolated from Table 5.

Table 6 is comprised of information extrapolated from Table 5, page 41 of this thesis. Information/data that were extrapolated were the survey question and the corresponding mean score from Table 5. All other data from Table 5 were omitted.

The researcher then reformatted and placed data in sequential order in Table 6. Sequential order was denoted by the mean score. The question with the highest mean score (lowest/least amount of agreement) was placed in the first row of Table 6.

The question with the 2nd highest mean score was placed in the second row of Table 6, and so on, ending with the lowest mean score (highest/most amount of agreement) in the last row of Table 6. The mean for all of the employee satisfaction survey questions analyzed here (Table 6), regarding supervisor relationships ranked between 1 and 3. Possible rank values were between 1 and 5. These values were as follows: 1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Disagree and 5= Strongly Disagree.

Below is Table 6. It demonstrates the level of employee job satisfaction in relation to supervisor relationships. Higher mean scores reflect lower employee satisfaction. Lower mean scores denote greater satisfaction. For example, the highest mean score (2.56) in Table 6 denotes the least, and almost neutral, amount/level of satisfaction in relation to the question asked. The lowest mean score (1.81) in Table 6 denotes the greatest level of satisfaction.

Table 6

Question	Mean
I receive adequate feedback on my performance	2.56
In the past six months, my supervisor has talked about performance	2.51
I am involved in making decisions that affect my job	2.47
I have the opportunity to provide feedback and input for key decisions	2.45
In the past month, I have received adequate recognition/praise	2.42
My immediate supervisor helps me learn how to do my job better	2.41
My immediate supervisor encourages me to contribute my opinions and ideas	2.29
I feel my efforts are appreciated	2.21
I am treated with respect and appreciation	2.10
My immediate supervisor encourages staff to work as a team	2.09
My immediate supervisor cares about me as a person	2.07
My unit/department manager listens and responds to my concerns	2.03
If I have a suggestion for improvement, I am able to communicate it	2.03
My immediate supervisor has confidence and trust in me	2.00
I have the ability to communicate concerns I may have to my immediate supervisor	1.81

Through analysis of leadership findings RP is able to determine what aspects their leaders need to assess. For example, the first question in Table 6 (above) reads: I receive adequate feedback on my performance. This question received the highest (somewhere between agree and neutral) rated mean. By looking at Table 5, one can determine that out of 154 surveys, 22 employees strongly agreed with this question, 60 agreed with this question, 40 were neutral on the question, 25 employees disagreed, and 6 strongly disagreed. According to these statistics, in order to improve on this, supervisors must find ways to increase job performance feedback to employees.

Suggestions for Action

The overall utilization of these findings can be greatly beneficial to RP for improving its supervisor relationships. All suggestions below can be done with mere process improvement and implementation techniques.

Provide adequate feedback. “I receive adequate feedback on my performance.” Since this question received the highest mean score, that is the lowest satisfaction rate, it will be analyzed first. It is important for supervisors to provide ample feedback to employees. It gives employees a sense of self fulfillment and job accomplishment in knowing that the job was done in a satisfactory manner, and whether or not there needs to be improvement.

Providing ample feedback is as simple as verbal communication. When a supervisor sees that an employee has met all job requirements on a given day or at a given time, the supervisor should practice immediate feedback to the employee, instead of waiting until it is employee review time. For example, the supervisor could

give the employee(s) a pat on the back, a smile, or a quick thank you to establish open lines of communication and ample feedback.

Verbal communication. Ranking second in Table 6 was: “In the past six months my supervisor has talked about performance.” This received a mean score of 2.51, falling in between agree and neutral. One suggested route to take is to implement quarterly performance reviews. The researcher is not aware of whether this is being practiced at RP. At the time of the researchers’ employment only yearly reviews were done. However, if this process has been changed, then it is suggested that the process be reviewed and analyzed to determine what the next step should be to increase satisfaction.

Another suggestion is to provide employees with a written communication note. The note would contain information pertaining to employee job performance. This would also provide employees with documented proof and serve as a reference source for performance goals and/or feedback. If supervisors lack time, this process could be done at monthly meetings, directing feedback to the “team” as opposed to one-on-one. It is also important for supervisors to have an open-door policy. This gives employees accessibility and a sense of openness and honesty from their supervisor.

Decision making. The third statement that could be analyzed is: “I am involved in making decisions that affect my job”. This statement received a mean score of 2.47, also falling close to the line of agreeing and being neutral. It is suggested that further research be done in relation to this question. Employee answers to this question could have numerous and varying meanings.

Some employees may have answered neutral to this question because they may not want to be involved in making decisions that affect their jobs; or some employees may want an over-abundance of involvement in making job decisions that could lead to overruling of their leaders. Therefore, it is recommended that actions be taken to increase and encourage teamwork efforts and to compose a more thorough and clear-cut question in next years (2005) employee survey. Some examples are: “I want to be more involved in making decisions that affect my job” and “I have the opportunity to be more involved in making decisions that affect my job.” These questions are more direct and offer a more focused representation of employee desires.

The voice of the employee. The question “I have the opportunity to provide feedback and input for key decisions” received a mean score of 2.45. The researcher suggests: inform employees of their options of how to be heard, increase employee team participation within the organization, create a “suggestion box” to be reviewed monthly by the HR team, and/or encourage and inform staff of the “open-door” policy to enable communication within the organization.

Limitations of the Study

The literature review of leadership provides a sound foundation for acquiring a greater knowledge on leadership and its origination. The example given in this thesis from the RP Employee Satisfaction Survey, 2004, was an example of how research, data analysis, and data compilation can be utilized to provide information that helps in producing and enabling strong employee to employer relationships. The

researcher found that utilization of the RP Employee Satisfaction Survey, 2004 is beneficial for improving relationships at RP.

Though an extensive review of literature was conducted, the researcher feels that one limitation in this thesis is that the researcher lacked variety in Chapters III and IV due to the fact that only one company was studied. For example, to conduct a more comprehensive analysis on this topic of leadership, one could analyze employee satisfaction surveys from numerous organizations. Although findings of this research from RP reaffirm the researchers' hypothesis and prove to be beneficial to improving leadership at RP, the results of the survey cannot be generalized to other not-for-profit organizations.

Recommendations for Further Study

As demonstrated in Chapter II of this thesis, the Literature Review, accrued knowledge on the topic of leadership is beneficial to utilize because it provides information that can help in producing and enabling stronger relationships and leadership abilities. It is recommended that the research laid out in this thesis be utilized and built upon in the future for more detailed analysis of leadership theory and for an increased understanding of the complex phenomena of leadership as more knowledge is accrued over the years.

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