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# JOURNAL OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, COMMUNICATIONS AND CONFLICT

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the *Journal of Organizational Culture, Communications and Conflict*. The journal is published by the Allied Academies, Inc., a non profit association of scholars whose purpose is to encourage and support the advancement and exchange of knowledge, understanding and teaching throughout the world. The *JOCCC* is a principal vehicle for achieving the objectives of the organization. The editorial mission of the *Journal* is to publish empirical and theoretical manuscripts which advance knowledge and teaching in the areas of organizational culture, organizational communication, conflict and conflict resolution. We hope that the *Journal* will prove to be of value to the many communications scholars around the world.

The articles contained in this volume have been double blind refereed. The acceptance rate for manuscripts in this issue, 25%, conforms to our editorial policies.

We intend to foster a supportive, mentoring effort on the part of the referees which will result in encouraging and supporting writers. We welcome different viewpoints because in differences we find learning; in differences we develop understanding; in differences we gain knowledge; and, in differences we develop the discipline into a more comprehensive, less esoteric, and dynamic metier.

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# **LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION: A MULTIPLE-PERSPECTIVE STUDY OF BEST PRACTICES**

**Michelle Kirtley Johnston, Loyola University New Orleans  
Brenda E. Joyner, Loyola University New Orleans**

## **ABSTRACT**

*This study explores the leadership and communication behaviors of an executive at a Fortune 500 pharmaceutical company based in the United States. One of the great problems in organizations today is that of capturing best practices, especially those that are exemplified in the actions and performance of individuals. Best practices can be used to train both new and existing employees. However, they must not only be identified within the organization, they must also be codified if they are to be useful to other individuals. The purpose of the study was to capture the key leadership and communication behaviors that made the executive successful. The results of the study and implications of these findings for future research and application are discussed.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the great problems in organizations today is that of capturing best practices, especially those that are exemplified in the actions and performance of individuals. Best practices can be used to train both new and existing employees. However, they must not only be identified within the organization, they must also be codified if they are to be useful to other individuals. At one of the largest drug companies in the world a project was developed to identify and codify best practices in leadership and communication. The subject of the study was an executive who was identified by the company's executive team as a high performer based on extremely high performance appraisals. The objective was to codify the executive's best practices so that they could be stored in the firm's organizational memory and made available for other managers for many years to come.

## **IMPORTANCE OF SHARING BEST PRACTICES**

The problem of identifying knowledge, codifying it, and then making it available to other within the organization is not a new one. Lew Platt, former Chairman of Hewlett-Packard said, "I wish we knew what we know at Hewlett-Packard." This wish was echoed in a comment from Jerry

Lunkins, the late Chairman, President and CEO of Texas Instruments, "If Texas Instruments only knew what Texas Instruments knows." (O'Dell & Grayson, 1998, pp. 154).

There are some clear barriers to the transfer of best practices. Ignorance of the process and the benefits associated with sharing of best practices is the number one barrier. This is especially so when employees are not brought into the process. A lack of communication at upper levels of the organization can lead to misunderstanding on the part of employees. In addition, some organizations have a limited capacity to absorb this kind of information, often because of lack of time and money. And finally, the lack of relationship between the source and the recipient of knowledge is another barrier. In fact, in-house best practices take an average of 27 months to share. (O'Dell & Grayson, 1998).

One way to share existing knowledge in the form of best practices is through internal benchmarking, the "process of identifying, sharing, and using the knowledge and practices inside its own organization" (O'Dell & Grayson, 1998, pp.154). Internal benchmarking can have very powerful financial implications for those organizations that pursue it with determination and rigor. Texas Instruments generated \$1.5 billion in annual wafer fabrication capacity by comparing and transferring best practices among its existing 13 fabrication plants. Chevron generated over \$650 million in savings as a result of its best practice teams. And Dow Chemical achieved \$40 million in savings as a result of efforts to manage its intellectual capital (O'Dell & Grayson, 1998). These success stories make the case for internal benchmarking.

### **BEST PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL MEMORY**

Many organizations find that there are numerous "best practices" a company or firm may use to achieve its organizational and leadership goals. Rowden (2001) acknowledges that over time, organizations have evolved and developed new ways to face change within an organization. Various approaches, including senior managers making decisions and implementing the changes, paying attention to how the plan should be implemented, and dealing with an organization's readiness to face a change, have all been molded into one more recent practice, establishing a learning organization. A learning organization is a model of strategic change. In addition to providing continuous learning, learning organizations are organizations in which all employees help identify and solve problems, enabling the company to change and improve itself on its way to achieving the main goals and objectives. This type of organization is constantly ready for change, having continuous planning by all employees, implementing change and experiments, and regularly enhancing the speed in which it learns to change.

O'Dell and Grayson (1998) identified that while many organizations may have a best practice within one office or branch of its organization, it is not always possible to transfer the practice to the organization as a whole. Many times, the practice goes unnoticed and when it is finally recognized as being beneficial, it can typically take over two years to implement it in all parts of the



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company. One division in a company may be unaware that another area has a practice that it needs to be successful. Once the best practice is recognized, managers may not have the time or money to implement the change. However, the potential gains of implementing a best practice and transferring knowledge within an organization are enormous. Internal transferring of knowledge allows for the growth of relationships, interactive and ongoing learning, and a better organizational culture overall.

Organizational learning is distinct from individual learning in that it is built from the learning of members of the organization. The organization learns when the knowledge and skills acquired by the individual members of the organization are instilled in the organization in the form of policies, procedures, routines, and beliefs that outlast the presence of the originating individual (Attewell, 1992). Often, the particular individual learning that led to those instilled practices and beliefs is lost even though the learning remains and becomes institutionalized within the organization as a part of its organizational memory (Levitt and March, 1988).

One construct integrally linked to organizational learning is organizational memory, the means by which the knowledge of an organization is stored for future use (Huber, 1991). The organizational memory construct includes both storing and retrieving information and computer-based organizational memory. Organizational memory is essential if an organization is to learn from its own behaviors and from the information it finds in its environment (Huber 1991). The intellectual resources available in organizational memory increase the likelihood that the organization will be able to find solutions to new or recently perceived problems because the organization "remembers" solutions previously created for similar problems or is able to create new solutions because of its access to information gathered for alternative purposes.

#### Leadership and Communication

There are also numerous leadership practices used today to make various organizations successful. Dare and de Boissezon (2000) acknowledge that to develop a leader, leadership must be within a corporation's culture so that it occurs daily and potential leaders should be given the proper tips and training to enhance this skill. The researchers also found that leadership is not necessarily an inherent gift, but rather it can be learned. Similarly, Birkner (2001) acknowledges that leaders are not necessarily CEO's and top-level managers, but rather the employees who qualify and inspire the people around them. Employees must be taught "to influence, delegate, empower, and build relationships" with each other and "understand where their company is going and the part they play in the organization." This way, every employee is a goal-setter, is motivated, and knows how to take charge.

Hartman (1999) conducted a study on the personality traits of effective leaders by "examining the relationship between leader traits and leadership behavior to determine leadership effectiveness across different situations." Hartman looked at the personality and the leadership effectiveness rating of 46 individuals at the senior management level and found that people with highly warm personalities were effective leaders and were described as easygoing, adaptable,

warmhearted, attentive to others, frank, expressive, trustful, cooperative, and participating. People with less warm personalities were found to be ineffective leaders and were described as cool, reserved, impersonal, detached, formal, egotistical, and cautious. The results of this study provide evidence that interpersonal warmth may be the key attribute to focus on in development efforts to develop leadership effectiveness.

Yrie, Hartman, and Galle (2002) looked at the communication patterns and the leader-member exchange between supervisors and subordinates. The researchers found that organizations where subordinates were seen as "trusted insiders" and were given a high quality of information and participation from the supervisor resulted in a much better supervisor-subordinate relationship. Organizations where subordinates received only adequate information and were not allowed to participate in supervisor decisions resulted in a much poorer supervisor-subordinate relationship. This study yields significant benefits for the training and development of supervisors.

Furthermore, Tjosvold and Wong (2000) found that developing productive relationships is an essential capability of effective leadership. The researchers analyzed various studies done over the years and concluded "cooperative goals and open-minded discussions are a strong basis for successful leadership" in both the eastern and western parts of the world. Leaders establish cooperative goals and work with employees on common tasks to serve customers. Managers and employees must also coordinate roles and tasks and encourage everyone to openly express ideas, opinions, doubts, and uncertainties. These relationships must be continually nurtured and all must work together to contribute to the organization as a whole.

Ireland and Hitt (1999) identified six components of effective strategic leadership that lead to competitive advantage. Leaders must determine the firm's vision and work with employees to achieve this goal. Strategic leaders also view employees as a critical resource and must continue to educate this human capital. The researchers also provide recommendations for effective strategic leadership practices, such as enabling the "organization to develop and protect the intellectual capital contained in employees."

Yammarino, Dansereau, and Kennedy (2001) looked at leadership in terms of multiple perspectives and how all of these perspectives need to be pulled together to perform the functions of a leader. The researchers examined the four levels of analysis in which leadership exists. The person level acknowledges the importance of individual differences, while the dyad level recognizes the importance of one-on-one relationships between leaders and followers. Furthermore, the group level acknowledges face-to-face relationships among subordinates with whom a leader interacts as a unit and the collective level realizes that people in organizations can be viewed as hierarchically structured groups. Leaders also need to provide vision, empower others, and portray the organization's mission through his or her actions, as well as remember that his or her actions often affect the satisfaction and performance of the employees.

In 2002, Kets de Vries and Florent-Treacy conducted a study based on global leadership. The researchers interviewed over 500 senior executives from various companies around the world

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and found that the most effective global leaders deeply connect with employees and realize the need for motivation to bring out a greater than usual effort in others. The most effective global leaders also brought about community among employees and a feeling of pleasure and meaning associated with his or her job. This way, by instilling excitement and pride in employees, a cohesive and globe-spanning organizational culture will form and the leader will be looked upon as successful.

Similarly, Recardo (2000) found through his research that good leaders evolve in reaction to a number of environmental variables. Additionally, these variables also help identify the best leadership practices. These trends can be identified as the leader setting a strategic direction, being committed to ethics, and knowing everything about his or her business. Also, by being action-oriented, focusing on the customer, having open communication among employees, and constantly learning new trends and ideas, a true leader can look at things as they are and form things into what they can be, thus moving an organization into the future.

Additionally, Fulmer and Wagner (1999) looked at six organizations, such as General Electric and Johnson & Johnson, noted for having a strong and innovative leadership development process. The authors concluded that best practice organizations develop their leaders rather than recruit them from other companies, teach these leaders by action, and always assess the impact of their leadership development processes. The findings are meant to be a starting point for an organization, with the researchers also recommending that leaders continue to listen to employees and keep up the learning process.

In summary, research has shown that effective leaders inspire others, build and nurture relationships, have warm personalities, are attentive to others, are trustful and trusting, are expressive, share information, encourage open communication, rally others around the company vision, and empower others (Hartman, 1999; Yrie, Hartman, & Galle, 2002; Tjosvold & Wong, 2000; Ireland & Hitt, 1999; Yammarino, Dansereau, & Kennedy, 2001.)

Given the importance of (1) codifying organizational memory in order to have it available for retrieval and (2) identifying best practices to insure their availability in the future, The Fortune 500 company commissioned this study to identify and record the best practices of one leader in its organization. The research questions that guided the study were (1) What are the best practices in leadership that this employee embodies? (2) How does this employee accomplish these best practices within the organization?

## **METHODOLOGY**

Three general approaches to the research design were considered: (1) study of outcomes, (2) study of processes, or (3) study of events. The outcomes approach could capture the outcome of the manager's leadership behaviors but would not capture the activities and behaviors of the manager. The processes approach would allow following decisions to assess their effect on employees and firm performance, resulting in a pattern of emotional, political, and cognitive

processes that are associated with the decision-making process in the organization. However, this method would be particularly difficult to use when looking at processes over the long period of time this manager has been in the organization. The third approach, an events study, had previously been used in a particularly interesting research project by Allison (1970). He studied strategic decision-making during a particular event, the Cuban Missile Crisis. By using political, behavioral, and bureaucratic decision making models that had already been developed in prior literature, he was able to delve into the behaviors and decision making of those people involved in the crisis. The researchers decided that the final approach would allow them (1) to capture the activities and behaviors of the manager and (2) to do it within a required time frame of no more than three months, thereby doing away with the problems inherent in each of the other two approaches to the study. Additionally, because the leadership tenure of this manager has a beginning and an end, it is possible to examine it as an event. Finally, the existence of two conceptual models, the Leadership Competency Model and the Team Member Competency Model, provided the same kind of research tool for this study as the previously developed decision-making models had provided for Allison in his study. Therefore, it was possible to design the research as an event study.

The sample for this study consisted of the subject and twenty different people who were either direct reports or external stakeholders who had significant contact with the subject. All of these individuals were interviewed using the Leadership Competency Model and the Team Member Competency Model (see Appendix A). In addition, the subject was observed in a variety of settings including (1) executive planning meetings, (2) coaching sessions and/or mentoring meetings with other directors, (3) conference calls, and (4) various team meetings.

## FINDINGS

The results of the interviews using the Leadership Competency Model and the Team Member Competency Model are reported here using the two differing perspectives: (1) assessing the subject as a leader and (2) assessing the subject as a member of the overall team. The two roles are interrelated and somewhat interdependent. The leader influences the team and is, in turn, influenced by her interaction with the team. This influence is reflected in future leadership decisions and those decisions begin the cycle once again.

### Section 1 - Leadership Behaviors:

1. Actively Pursues Business Opportunities for Company
  - Makes an excellent first impression; has an engaging personality, sense of humor, and is likeable
  - "Showed lots of initiative when dealing with my company even before we decided we were going to partner with anyone"
  - "Would make the trip to my city to have a meeting"
  - "Very candid and clear about corporate goals"
  - "Truly prepared for meetings months ahead"
  - "Remained cool, calm, and composed throughout the negotiations"

- 
- "Puts herself in the other company's shoes to understand their perspective. For example, "Are they scared of being consumed?" , "Are they afraid?" Related these issues and concerns to others."
  - "Was incredibly responsive to our needs and questions--always would get back to me promptly. It was quite clear we were a priority"
  - Marshaled resources outside of licensing; Had the leadership and authority to bring other parts of the company into the mix
  - Up front about what was needed from each side of the negotiation
  - Knew when to say, "I don't know"
  - Was able to let go and delegate control to parties closest to the topic being discussed
  - Acted as a team member, not a freelancer
  - Concise, Detail-oriented, Persistent, and Reliable
  - 2. Effectively Leads Meetings
    - Articulates the structure/roadmap up front. Lays out the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of everyone on team. Spells out the project deliverables, key activities, ground rules.
    - Only will hold a meeting if necessary--Respects everyone's time demands
    - Is confident, organized, respectful, which allows the team to play well together
    - "Understands the big picture and can break it down in components. We don't feel as if we are being blindsided. Things move quickly but there is enough time to catch our breath"
    - Knows when it is appropriate for her to lead, when she needs to take risks, and when she needs to take a step forward. For example, she championed a new product through difficult times. She took the lead on the issues and addressed them with senior management.
    - Explains the science of the compound, how it works and how it relates to the goals of company
    - Speaks the business language with business people and science with the science people
    - Explains how past deals were successful or unsuccessful
    - "During a recent business opportunity, ensured we were as honest and as straightforward as possible when giving feedback to management and outside partners. Was always checking to make sure we were not overselling or underselling the compound or position"
    - Keeps everyone posted and up-to-date with emails in between meetings, letting us know what happened at certain meetings, what and where the concerns are, telling us what the plans are for next week
    - Frequently goes to the research facility for face-to-face interaction
    - Delegates appropriately
    - Pays attention to detail; Is organized
    - Leads with influence vs. autocratic style
    - Doesn't fight with people over who is in charge; Is open, humble
    - Respects other people's opinions; Doesn't pretend to be the expert
    - Doesn't try to make decisions that others on the team are better able to do
    - Asks people for help
    - Always invites people to call her if they have questions
    - Has natural ability to make people feel welcome and secure as team members while still ensuring the business needs are met in a timely manner
  - 3. Manages Mechanics of Meetings
    - Personally communicates to people who are on the agenda, Explains their topic and the way it should be focused
    - Runs a tight ship. Recognizes when it is time to move forward and does it in a non-threatening way. "I realize that this could go on, but let's move to the next point so that we can get through the entire agenda."
    - Starts meetings on time and never runs over
    - States own view of the consensus opinion, verifies it, then moves on

- Reviews action items
- Turns around minutes within a few days
- 4. Presents Ideas Effectively
  - Analyzes audience, anticipates questions and meets with others before big presentations; She takes it upon herself to know all of the different disciplines and their issues. For example, she will visit a scientist at the research facility to learn more about the science or talk with a Vice President while working out in the morning to understand his issues and concerns.
  - Makes succinct presentations; Hits the major points
  - Keeps people engaged by turning off the projector and directing attention to the issues
  - Always has extra slides that contain "frequently asked questions." For example, a vice president often asks who the investors are or who the board of directors is. So she has a slide prepared. Another senior vice president often asks to see the structure or whether the company has made any money. She also prepares a slide with the background of the company, just in case.
- 5. Manages Self
  - Keeps composure/remains calm
  - Blocks off chunks of time when she is not to be interrupted
  - Is organized and effective at time management
  - Has a calm, firm, assuring way

### **LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR SUMMARY**

The executive is excellent at the leadership skills of pursuing business opportunities, leading and managing team meetings, making presentations, and managing herself. She achieved such excellence by being attentive and responsive to other companies needs and by being friendly and up front in her communication about the company and its goals. When leading meetings, she respects all members of the team, their roles and time constraints, by listening to their opinions and not being afraid to say, "I don't know." She is incredibly organized, prepared, and clear about expectations, roles and responsibilities, time lines and action items. In addition, she understands the pivotal role of being an effective communicator. She keeps everyone up-to-speed with emails, voice mails, and face-to-face interactions. She speaks the business language with business people and science with the science people. And finally, the executive does an excellent job of presenting herself in a confident, likeable, and professional manner. Before making presentations, she always analyzes the audience to figure out how and what needs to be presented. Once speaking, she is calm and confident, and keeps your attention by being succinct and only hitting the major points.

#### Section 2 - Team Member Behaviors:

1. Demonstrates Respect and Appreciation for Team Member Contributions
  - Never says a bad word about anyone
  - Does not engage in chit-chat or unprofessional conduct
  - Is issue specific when giving feedback
  - Never attacks people
  - Maintains confidentiality
  - Interacts with people on their level

- 
- Is a member of the team; is very business-like but personal, too. It's a combination.
  - Is the consummate professional
  - She called me and said, "It looks like "drug X" is going to a core team. I know you are tight with resources. Think about who you think should be on the team. Person x and y did a great job last time, and I would like to work with them again, but you decide what's best given your constraints. I need to know by such and such date." In one voice mail message, she characterized the problem, recommended a solution, and gave me the time line and urgency of the issue. This is how I want to be treated.
  - "We were working 16-18 hour days last month. She asked if we could deliver. I said it was a stretch but that we'd try. She called immediately when she found out there was an issue in the core team. She then let me make the decision if I wanted an extra week to work. This established trust and showed me that she wasn't putting false deadlines on my team and me."
  - Gives gifts/Has had plaques made with the date of the deal
  - Sends emails, "this was really helpful because of X, Y, and Z". Will copy the email and send it to others as well
  - Doesn't take all of the credit
  - Is quick to give appropriate "thanks" either in person or via email.
  - Takes the time to communicate successes to the person's supervisor
  - Takes teams out to dinner
  - Is not shy about saying "great job"
2. Treats Others Honestly and Fairly
- It's never just a project; it is what is in the best interest for the company. She makes sure it gets a thorough review and evaluation, regardless of what camp the opinion comes from.
  - Is not self-centered
  - Is confident in herself and wants to make you be the best you can be
  - Doesn't humiliate people; Doesn't pound people
  - Trusts that people will do their job
  - Is very professional in her questions, inquiries, no hidden agendas
  - Is very honest about what she is asking for
3. Is Open With Information
- By sharing information, she makes you feel that you are a part of the team instead of just feeding information to someone
  - Keeps everyone informed of the status of the project. Even if the deal falls apart, she will call a meeting to let us know what happened
  - Shares what she knows instead of using information as control
  - Gave me an orientation sheet with names, job titles, and explanation of acronyms. That piece of paper was incredibly helpful
4. Listens Actively
- Is tuned into people's feelings
  - Identifies those people who get cut off. "Wait, Francine is trying to say something."
  - Is an avid note taker
  - Follows up telephone conversations with emails that confirm what had been discussed
  - Questions when she doesn't understand
  - Incorporates people's input through documents, minutes
  - Prepares time to listen; Looks at you when you are talking
  - Listens to each functional group—their concerns, expertise, then relays concerns to each group

- "Makes an attempt to understand commercial market and development and does things to recognize its importance. For example, she came to a huge meeting and made a presentation last year. This year she attended and actively tried to learn the market and talked with people from all over the world"
- Is involved in trying to understand each group's processes, acronyms.
- Easily grasps financial issues
- Reads in advance and is a quick learner
- Meets with research, clinic people in private to learn
- Is a quick study

### **TEAM MEMBER BEHAVIOR SUMMARY**

In summary, treating other people with respect is one of this executive's strongest qualities, which makes her an excellent team player. She is described as a consummate professional because she doesn't engage in negative gossip about anyone or anything. She is trustworthy, open and honest in her communication, and she allows people to be the experts in their field and decide what is best for them and their team. Colleagues from other divisions greatly appreciate her desire and willingness to share information and keep them in the loop, to allow them to be a part of the decision making process, and to trust them to do their jobs effectively. In return they feel respected and appreciated, and they don't mind going the extra mile for her.

Time and again, people from inside and outside the company say that she is a very good listener. She is tuned-in to people's feelings and won't hesitate to dig further than the surface. She asks questions when she doesn't understand and will follow up phone calls with emails confirming the important points that had been discussed. She is attentive, keeps eye contact, will acknowledge if someone has been interrupted, and will incorporate other people's ideas into the discussion.

### **OVERALL SUMMARY**

One of the most successful executives at a Fortune 500 pharmaceutical company's Best Practices can be boiled down into three general categories:

- 1) Demonstrating respect to internal and external customers
- 2) Communicating clearly
- 3) Effectively facilitating/leading team meetings.

The executive's leadership and communication best practices are similar to those reported in recent research that found effective leaders to be relational, attentive, trusting, expressive, empowering, open with information, encouraging, and visionary (Hartman, 1999; Yrie, Hartman, & Galle, 2002; Tjosvold & Wong, 2000; Ireland & Hitt, 1999; Yammarino, Dansereau, & Kennedy, 2001.)



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## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The current study observed successful leadership and boiled it down into discreet behaviors that can be taught in a classroom, training room, or boardroom. This research is important for educators, researchers, and for business practitioners for a variety of reasons. First, professors of management and leadership can teach the specific behaviors that have been identified as crucial to being successful in the business world, resulting in better educated entry level managers for the workforce. Second, the model can be used to train and educate current and future managers already in the workforce to enhance their skills as they move up the corporate ladder. Corporate trainers and human resource departments can emphasize and teach the skills necessary to run effective meetings, make presentations, and treat customers - both internally and externally. Finally, the model can be incorporated into performance appraisals and orientation programs so that employees know what is expected of them to be successful in a specific company.

Researchers can expand on this study to build better models of successful leadership skills. In addition, there are strong implications for organizational learning through codification of best practices for individual organizations. By capturing the skills and practices most likely to lead to success, firms will be able to institutionalize the learning of individuals. This means that as individuals leave the organization, they will no longer take a piece of the organizational learning of the firm when they go as this learning will be a permanent part of the firm's records. A longitudinal study of this kind of codification might identify where such codification would be most advantageous for organizations. Future research with larger samples should hone and/or expand the list of skills presented here. While small samples provide specificity, larger samples will provide greater generalizability of results.

This particular leader was linked to enhanced financial performance for the firm because she brought in more licensing money than other leaders in her organization. Identifying those behaviors that are most likely to result in enhanced performance, financial or otherwise, will be of great value to the successful practice of business.

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**Appendix A**

**Leadership Competency Model**

Actively Pursues Opportunities  
Effectively Leads Teams  
Manages Mechanics of Meetings  
Presents Ideas Effectively  
Manages Self

**Team Member Competency Model**

Demonstrates Respect  
Demonstrates Appreciation  
Recognizes Team Member Contributions  
Treats others Honestly and Fairly  
Is Open with Information  
Listens Actively  
Is an Active Learner

**Table 1: Examples of Leadership Behavior Data**

Leadership Behaviors	Interview Comments
Actively Pursues Opportunities	<p>Showed lots of initiative when dealing with my company even before we decided we were going to partner with anyone Would make the trip to my city to have a meeting Very candid and clear about corporate goals Truly prepared for meetings months ahead Remained cool, calm, and composed throughout the negotiations Was able to let go and delegate control to parties closest to the topic being discussed</p>
Effectively Leads Core Teams	<p>Articulates the structure/roadmap up front. Lays out the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of everyone on team. Spells out the project deliverables, key activities, ground rules. Only will hold a meeting if necessary--Respects everyone's time demands Keeps everyone posted and up-to-date with emails in between meetings. Leads with influence vs. autocratic style Starts meetings on time and never runs over States own view of the consensus opinion, verifies it, then moves on</p>
Presents Ideas Effectively	<p>Analyzes audience, anticipates questions and meets with others before big presentations. Makes succinct presentations; Hits the major points Always has extra slides that contain "frequently asked questions."</p>
Manages Self	<p>Keeps composure/remains calm Blocks off chunks of time when she is not to be interrupted Is organized and effective at time management Has a calm, firm, assuring way</p>

<b>Table 2: Examples of Team Member Behaviors Data</b>	
<b>Team Member Behaviors</b>	<b>Interview Comments</b>
Demonstrates Respect and Appreciation for Team Member Contributions	<p>Never says a bad word about anyone</p> <p>Does not engage in chit-chat or unprofessional conduct</p> <p>Is issue specific when giving feedback</p> <p>Maintains confidentiality</p> <p>Is quick to give appropriate "thanks" either in person or via email.</p> <p>Takes the time to communicate successes to the person's supervisor</p>
Treats Others Honestly and Fairly	<p>It's never just a licensing project; it is what is in the best interest for the company. She makes sure it gets a thorough review and evaluation, regardless of what camp the opinion comes from.</p> <p>Is not self-centered</p> <p>Is confident in herself and wants to make you be the best you can be</p> <p>Doesn't humiliate people; Doesn't pound people</p> <p>Trusts that people will do their jobs very professional in her questions, inquiries, no hidden agendas</p> <p>Is very honest about what she is asking for</p>
Is Open With Information	<p>By sharing information, she makes you feel that you are a part of the team instead of just feeding information to someone</p> <p>Keeps everyone informed of the status of the project. Even if the deal falls apart, she will call a meeting to let us know what happened</p> <p>Shares what she knows instead of using information as control</p> <p>Gave me an orientation sheet with names, job titles, and explanation of acronyms. That piece of paper was incredibly helpful</p>
Listens Actively	<p>Is tuned into people's feelings</p> <p>Is an avid note taker</p> <p>Follows up telephone conversations with emails that confirm what had been discussed</p> <p>Questions when she doesn't understand</p> <p>Incorporates people's input through documents, minutes</p> <p>Prepares time to listen; Looks at you when you are talking</p> <p>Is involved in trying to understand each group's processes, acronyms.</p>

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# FIFTY YEARS OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION SURVEYS: THREE FROM THE FINAL HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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## ABSTRACT

*Business emphasis on cost reductions can be expected to continue indefinitely although the emphasis can be expected to shift from layoffs, outsourcing, and high-tech purchases to increasing employee productivity especially through motivation. Unfortunately studies reveal wide discrepancies between what managers believe motivate their employees and what the employees themselves report.*

*Three surveys of employee motivation factors were conducted between 1946 and 1997 using the same questions. Employee rankings of ten motivation elements at the three time periods are provided. These findings indicate that major changes did occur in the prioritization of work motivators over these fifty years but also that an almost surprising degree of continuity prevailed as well. The latter was more unexpected than the former in view of the enormity of the social and economic changes occurring in the U.S. and the world from the first year after World War II until nearly the end of the last century.*

*Most employee subpopulations defined by demographic/socio-economic variables made choices which were largely consistent with those for the total samples. In addition, broad support was found for Herzberg's seminal "Two Factor" theory of motivation. Possible interpretations of these and other findings are presented along with implications for organizational.*

## INTRODUCTION

During the recent recession and subsequent period of slow growth U.S. companies have faced unrelenting pressure to reduce their costs and increase their profits. Many companies are indicating that their investment in electronic equipment and software and the outsourcing of non-essential activities during this time and earlier is beginning to pay-off in reduced costs of operations to produce essentially the same volume and quality of products and services. While much of this increase in productivity is publicly attributed to the companies' investment in technology and outsourcing, it is clear that these investments also made possible a significant reduction in the number of employees needed to accomplish the same (or even an increased) level of production. It

is likely that the continuing emphasis on enhancing productivity and profitability is (or soon will) turn from major employee layoffs and outsourcing to generating greater output from their remaining employees. Increasing employee output, in turn, is likely to place the focus on the oft-established relationship that motivated employees have the potential to be considerably more productive than unmotivated workers. Thus, we can expect to see a return in the U. S. of the periodic interest in employee motivation and ultimately then the oft-asked question of "how do you motivate employees?"

Viewed from the opposite perspective, a company which permits the development of de-motivation among a substantial portion of its workforce will likely suffer a major albeit avoidable loss of productivity. In addition to the direct and obvious financial losses suffered by a company due to the lower productivity of a de-motivated workforce, such unmotivated employees also have been associated with a wide range of essentially unnecessary and far less obvious costs for their companies both direct and indirect including such behaviors as excessive tardiness and absenteeism, work-related injury accidents, poorer quality work, unproductive activities ("playing" the system, etc.), negatively impacting other employees and potential employees ("trash" talk about the employer, policies, etc.), filing of excessive grievances, generating excessive "waste", and causing undesirable turn-over. (In relation to the latter it is not just the negative impact of the loss of some employees with special skills and/or experience, there are the often underestimated costs attendant to finding new "replacements" and bringing them "up-to-speed", e.g., recruiting, selecting, orienting, training, supervising, rewarding, disciplining, etc.) At a minimum, unmotivated employees are very unlikely to give the considerable support necessary for the sometimes challenging efforts to increase productivity.

This paper will present some comparable findings from three surveys of employee motivation spanning the latter half of the last century. First, we will attempt an assessment of the magnitude of change or stability in the results of the three administrations of the same ten job motivation items in 1946, 1986, and 1997. Second, we will present the findings of the most recent survey of several hundred employees of a medium-size manufacturing/retail firm using the same set of ten job motivation factors used in the two previous surveys—and in comparison to the findings of those two earlier studies. Some consideration will be given to each of those ten employee motivation elements. Third, the availability of these three data sets make possible an approximate empirical test of the Herzberg thesis (1968) that only "motivation" factors are truly motivating and thus should be ranked very high in the employees' rankings of the ten job elements and the "hygiene" factors should be ranked near the very bottom of those same employee rankings. Fourth and finally, data will be presented to provide some indication of the possible impact of select demographic/socio-economic factors in affecting employee motivation in the 1997 study. This paper will focus only on what appear to be major patterns in employee motivation factors, and changes therein, at the three discrete time periods rather than attempting to highlight and explain relatively smaller observed differences. In addition, no attempt will be made to relate employee motivation

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rankings at the three dates or during the interstitial periods to contemporary social, economic, and political influences.

The oft-reported positive relationship of a motivated workforce to an organization's productivity and employee satisfaction leads from time-to-time to an important re-focus on the "causes" of worker motivation. From the days of the pioneering "Hawthorne" studies in the 1920s and '30s, which explored links between worker productivity and employee motivation (Roethlisberger, Dickson & Wright 1939) to our own day authors have sought to identify possibly motivating factors and their operation. Particularly important in this connection were the seminal efforts of Abraham Maslow (1943) and Frederick Herzberg (1968) who focused on both the content (general psychological motivators in the case of Maslow and employment-focused motivators in the case of Herzberg) and how they tend to operate. Other "theoretical" authors focused on how these motivators affect employee behavior (e.g., Adams, 1963; Vroom, 1964; House, 1971; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Unfortunately, despite the considerable benefits to business firms of establishing a strong link between a motivated workforce and company productivity, this highly complex relationship is emphatically not easy to achieve or even maintain once achieved. One of the major complications of a relationship between a motivated workforce and increased productivity is that employee motivation is only a "necessary" but not "sufficient" condition to increasing the productivity of their labors. Other critical elements must be present to increase the probability of the motivation/productivity relationship occurring. In addition, there is plenty of empirical as well as anecdotal evidence that what motivates one employee may not motivate another.

Contemporary authors seem to focus on developing descriptive lists of specific motivators and motivation tools—including author suggestions, employee surveys and their findings, etc., which sometimes take the form of "How to..." manuscripts, e.g., Caudron (1995); Anonymous. Institute for Industrial Engineers (1996); Kraut (1996); Folkman (1998); Osteraker (1999); Tharenou (2001); sometimes in the form of applications to other countries, e.g., Kini & Hobson (2002); Huang & Van De Vliert (2003); Eskildsen, Kristensen, & Westlund (2004); sometimes in the form of application to not-for-profit organizations and agencies, e.g., Wright & Davis (2003); Levine (2004); and sometimes by focusing on more specific challenges for supervisor/managers, e.g., Kovach (1980, 1987, & 1995); Romano, (1996); Levine (2004).

In addition, management has often been reluctant to involve itself in exploration of this often-complex phenomena preferring to believe that the subject of worker motivation has only limited application to worker productivity. Kovach (1987) has shown that even the immediate supervisors of employees consistently err in their beliefs of what employment-related items are most important to the motivation of their employees. Kovach showed that over a span of at least 40 years supervisors have indicated that the number one motivator of their immediate employees has been "good wages". Their direct subordinates, on the other hand, have listed other items as their number one motivator—in 1946 it was "Full appreciation of work done" while in 1986 it was "interesting work". Moreover, in both of these years the employees themselves ranked "good wages" only fifth

of ten possibilities linked to their motivation on the job. Kovach even goes so far as to suggest that supervisors may, consciously or unconsciously, wish to misidentify the causes of their own employees' de-motivation or dissatisfaction to deflect responsibility from their role in these motivational challenges in favor of factors clearly outside their control, such as wage levels. Alternatively, Kovach suggests that it might even be the case that the supervisors are simply "projecting" their own financial objectives onto their employees.

## METHODOLOGY

The 1997 study which produced the data to be presented in this paper was based on the more than 1,000 local employees of an industrial and retail food company headquartered in the Pacific Northwest. The business is a medium-size company with over 1,000 company-owned retail locations across North America and Asia and three food production facilities. The company has been publicly traded since 1991 and has posted profitable quarters continually since that time through the time of the 1997 employee survey. An industrial-type firm was chosen for the 1997 survey in order to make these findings at least somewhat comparable to the 1946 and 1986 surveys of industrial employees both of which are cited in a paper by Kovach (1987). With the number of industrial jobs continuing to decrease since at least 1979 (Gardner and Hayghe, 1996), however, it seemed advisable to include in this survey at least some of the faster-growing service-type jobs as well as the industrial-type using the same survey instrument. To this end, in addition to including the staff of a food production facility in the population studied, the headquarters staff was also included.

The same ten job motivation items used in both the 1946 and 1986 surveys were used in the 1997 survey as well. The instructions to the respondents were also the same—to rank the ten items according to their importance as a job motivator to the respondent, with "1" being of greatest importance and "10" being of least importance. In addition, the respondents in the 1997 study were provided with three blank spaces to indicate any job motivation elements that they would like to substitute for any of the replicated set of 10 motivation items in order to retain a total set of ten ranked items per employee. The 1997 survey also included the same analytically useful demographic/socio-economic questions used in the 1986 survey as appropriate for the present study including: employee salary/wage; educational level; and chronological age. The salary/wage categories were expanded beyond the \$25,000 annual salary used in the 1986 survey to represent the higher salary/wages which were more common eleven years later due in part to the inclusion of jobs paying greater sums than those included in 1986 but also to reflect the impact of inflation during the intervening years.

Most of the 1997 employment questionnaires were distributed in person to employees at required company meetings. Distribution in the corporate office was accomplished through intra-company mail. A total of 1050 surveys were distributed at the two company locations. Unfortunately, only 363 survey forms were returned voluntarily for an overall return rate of 35%.



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In addition, of course, not all the returned surveys were usable. Of the 363 total returns, 117 were considered to be unusable for this analysis because 57 of the respondents, approximately 16%, did not correctly follow the instructions and an additional 60, approximately 17%, added substitute motivation elements which resulted in their questionnaires no longer corresponding directly to those completed without the substituted elements. Thus, only 246 questionnaires were used for the following analyses--representing an underwhelming 68 percent of the returned questionnaires and an even less satisfying 23 percent of those originally distributed.

A very real concern of any survey resulting in only a 23 percent usable return is the question of how representative the resulting sample is of the population from which it was drawn. 59% of the usable questionnaires were completed by females and 41% by males, which corresponded very closely to the gender breakdown provided by the company's Human Resource department (60% female and 40% male). Nearly half of all the respondents included in the analysis (110 of the 246 who provided useable questionnaires) indicated their age to be between 31- 40. Unfortunately, it is not known for certain how that percentage corresponds to the age distribution of the total population sampled in the two locations since that information is not collected by the Human Resources department. Some employees, however, suggested that it might be fairly close to the age distributions in these two locations.

A broader aspect of the question of representativeness is not the relation of the sample to the population from which it was drawn (internal representativeness), but of the outside populations to which one would like to generalize the resulting findings (external representativeness). It is the latter that is probably most important, of course, but also the most problematic. To try to "prove" that the findings generated from the sample used in this study are appropriate for a comparison with the findings generated from employee samples of the populations used in 1986 and 1946 would be impossible. However, hopefully a demonstration of considerable similarities among the findings of the three surveys will be sufficient to permit approximate comparisons for the modest purposes of the present report. On the one hand, some of the findings from the present study will reveal an almost surprising similarity to the findings drawn from the other two studies conducted up to fifty years earlier. For example, eight of the nine comparisons of the eighth, ninth and tenth ranked motivation factors over the three surveys were discovered to be identical. Such similarity supports, but does not "prove", the notion of comparability of studies and samples.

In fact, such similarities of findings while certainly welcome in one sense raise an awkward dilemma: Do these similarities suggest that the samples are sufficiently alike that broad comparisons are at least conditionally appropriate as we will maintain for the purposes of this study? Or is it possible that the appearance of relatively similar findings is no more than a simple coincidence and that the samples really are too dissimilar for a legitimate comparison? While answers to these questions, unfortunately, cannot be attempted with the available data we would like to beg the readers' indulgence to conditionally accept that the first question might be answered in the affirmative and that with much humility and caution we can proceed to see where simple

comparisons over the fifty-plus years might lead. As a safeguard against reading too much into the resulting data we will make only gross comparisons devoid of sophisticated statistics based upon assumptions we dare not make and insist on rather large differences (changes of three ranks or more) before even suggesting that observed differences might be noteworthy. That is, we preferred to err in the direction of overlooking relatively small differences (changes of two ranks or less) in order to avoid trying to build a case for possibly spurious changes so that we can increase the likelihood of identifying only the most likely-to-be-valid observations, and changes therein, of employee rankings of these ten job motivational factors.

### FINDINGS

One can see in Table One that changes in rank of three or more positions between the maximum time interval of 1946 to 1997, fifty-one years, occurred for seven of the ten motivation factors. In fact, two of those seven "changed" motivators revealed changes of five or more ranks during the forty year interval from 1946 to 1986. It is well worth noting that for all ten motivators the observed rank changes over time were "orderly" in the sense that in every case the rankings increased or decreased in such an orderly way that the "book-end" years of 1946 and 1997 consistently displayed the extreme ranks (sometimes in concert with the rankings of the middle survey year of 1986). Table One also displays somewhat surprising constancy in these rankings across time periods as well, especially between the most recent 1986 and 1997 surveys. For example, only three of the ten employee motivation elements revealed differences of three or more ranks between 1986 and 1997. In addition, the same two motivational elements which revealed the major change of five ranks between 1946 and 1986 revealed absolutely no change in their rankings for the subsequent eleven-year time period from 1986 and 1997. Moreover, with but one exception, the three lowest ranked motivation factors held their positions in all three time periods. And for three additional factors, the maximum difference among the three time periods—fifty-one years-- was only three ranks. Thus, for six of the ten motivators the rankings change over half a century were either relatively small or non-existent. Additionally, comparing the ten motivators by two sets of consecutive surveys (ten of the comparisons separated by approximately forty years each and the other ten by approximately eleven years each) fully eleven of those twenty comparisons—a slight majority--reveal a change of only a single rank or even no change at all. (Please see Table One below).

Second, we can present the rank order of the ten motivation factors based upon the most recent 1997 survey and then discuss the changes and/or stability among the ten motivation elements over the fifty-plus year time span. The rank order of the ten motivators from highest to lowest were: (1) "interesting work", (2) "good wages", (3) "promotion and growth in the organization", (4) "full appreciation of work done", (5) "good working conditions", (6) "job security", (7) "feeling of being

in on things", (8) "personal loyalty to employees", (9) "tactful discipline", and (10) "sympathetic help with personal problems".

Beginning a "quasi-longitudinal" analysis with the number one ranked motivator in 1997, "interesting work", we can see in Table One that it attracted the same first-place rank in both 1997 and the previous 1986 survey but that it had dramatically increased in importance since its sixth place ranking in 1946. Thus, there was complete concurrence between the two most recently conducted employee surveys on the number one most important employee motivation element, but a major difference with the earliest survey conducted about forty years earlier. Contrariwise, in regard to the next two highest ranked motivators in 1997 (Nos. 2 and 3) --"good wages" and "promotion and growth in the organization"-- there was considerable difference between the employee-given ranks in 1997 and 1986 suggesting a steady increase in employee perception of importance. Interestingly, it is now the 1986 and 1946 surveys that reveal the greatest similarities in rankings on these two motivators. The next four motivational factors reveal two different patterns: Nos. 4, 6 and 7, "full appreciation of work done", "job security" and "Feeling of being in on things", display a lineal down-trending relationship among the three surveys, while the No. 5 employee factor, "good working conditions" consistently gained in favor across the three time periods. Finally, the lowest ranked three (Nos. 8, 9, and 10) will not be subject to analysis since, with but one exception, they have not been able to attract any higher rankings over the past 50-plus years.

Job Motivation Factor	1997	1986	1946	Herzberg Class***
"Interesting work"	*1	1	*6	M
"Good wages"	*2**	5**	*5	H
"Promotion and growth in the organization"	*3**	6**	*7	M
"Full appreciation of work done"	*4	2	*1	M
"Good working conditions"	*5	7	*9	H
"Job security"	6	4	4	H
"Feeling of being in on things"	*7**	3**	*2	M
"Personal loyalty to employees"	8	8	8	H
"Tactful discipline"	9	9	10	H
"Sympathetic help with personal problems"	10	10*	3*	H

\* Changes in rankings of three levels or more between 1946 and 1997 surveys  
 \*\*Changes in rankings (three levels or more) between 1986 and 1997 surveys  
 \*\*\* Classification of M= "motivators" and H= "hygiene" were made based upon the authors' best judgment using Herzberg's updated typology (1987)

Third, looking at the right hand column of Table One, labeled "Classifications", we can see how the ten replicated motivation factors might be assigned a Herzberg-like classification. Using the classifications indicated in this column we find that three of the top four (75%) of the 1997 employee-ranked motivation factors probably could be considered to be "motivators" in the Herzberg typology (1987). A review of the other two surveys, 1986 and 1946 in the next two columns, reveal much the same pattern. In 1986 once again three of the top four (75%) and in 1946 two of the four (50%) could probably be considered "motivators" in the Herzberg sense. At the other end of the scale, one can see that all three of the lowest ranked items in the 1997 survey would most likely be identified as "hygiene" factors in the Herzberg schema. Moreover, the same low ranking is found for eight of the nine rankings of these factors across all three time periods.

	Intrstng Wrk	Grwth in Org	Wrk Conds	Pers Loyalty	Tet Disc
Total Sample Rank	# 1	# 3	# 5	# 8	# 9
Demographic/socio-economic					
Gender:	--	--	--	--	--
Age: 51+ years	--	--	#10	--	--
Income: Under \$12,000	# 8	#9	#10	# 3	# 6
Education: Less than high school	# 9	#8	#10	# 3	--
Occupation: Prodct. line/frnt line	# 4	#6	--	--	--
Office assts/secres	--	#6	--	--	--

\*Only those sub-categories of demographic/socio-economic variables in which the variation from the overall sample ranking was three or more ranks are displayed in this table

Fourth and finally, we can look to determine the impact on the ten motivational factors of five demographic/socio-economic variables in fairly common usage in business and behavioral research. For fully one-half of the ten motivation factors, none of the sub-categories of the five demographic/socio-economic variables revealed a rank more than two removed from that established by the overall sample. (Such uniformity among those five motivation elements does not merit inclusion in a separate table.) Even the five of ten motivation elements which did develop some differences among their demographic/socio-economic sub-populations, only a very few of the resulting sub-populations generated a ranking more than two removed from that of the overall sample. Table Two provides information showing that four of the five demographic/socio-economic variables had at least one sub-category in which the ranking was distinctively differently from that of the overall sample. The demographic of gender revealed no major differences across these five motivational elements and the demographic of age produced only one sub-category which displayed

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a major difference and that was true for only one of the five job motivators. The other three "standard" demographics usually had only a single sub-category ranking the various motivation elements at least three or more ranks higher or lower than the overall sample's ranking. The three sub-categories of employees who were earning less than \$12,000 in annual income, had less than a high school education and, to a lesser extent, were employed as "production line/front line workers". ("Office assistants/secretaries" in 1997 ranked one of the five motivational factors lower in importance than the overall sample).

## DISCUSSION

Observations can now be made about: (1) the magnitude of change and stability among the replicated set of ten employee motivation factors over the span of fifty-plus years; (2) the employee prioritization of the specific ten motivation elements in 1997 and changes among these priorities over the past half-century; (3) whether a Herzberg-type classification of the ten motivation factors provided support for his now-classic "Two Factor" theory of employee motivation; and (4) whether the select demographic variables produced possibly major differences in ranking priorities among important sub-populations. In addition, very brief reference will be made to the three employee motivation elements which were most often suggested in the 1997 survey as possible replacements for some of the ten replicated employee motivation factors.

(1) The magnitude of change and stability among the motivators over the fifty-plus years. Data were presented in the "Findings" section of this paper that supported both the notion that indeed, as expected, some major changes had occurred in regard to employee prioritization of the ten surveyed motivational elements but also that a surprising degree of continuity also existed occurred during the fifty year period of study as well. The case for priority changes over time was supported by the observation that seven of the ten motivational factors (70%) experienced changes of three or more ranks between the maximum time interval of fifty-one years. It was noted that in every one of these seven cases of moderate to major change, however, that the ranking changes increased or decreased in an orderly way, that is the "book-end" (extreme) years of 1946 and 1997 consistently displayed the extreme ranks (occasionally in concert with the rankings of the middle survey year of 1987). This latter observation of the evolutionary nature of the change and in both directions--increasing or decreasing importance--leads us to speculate that we may be tracking long-term trends for most of these motivators that may well extend beyond the fifty-plus years covered for this article.

These three sets of survey data also support a case of there having been surprising stability in these rankings over the three time periods. To wit, for six of the ten motivators, as previously noted, the change in rankings over half a century were either relatively moderate or even non-existent; and with but one exception, the three lowest ranked motivators held the same lowly positions in all three time periods. Additional support for the notion of considerable stability in the

rankings over time was provided by the finding that three other motivation factors displayed only a moderate difference of just three ranks over fifty-one years. Additionally, the data revealed that for six of the ten motivators (60%) employees ranked them literally identically in consecutive pairs of surveys which were separated by at least eleven years and as many as forty. Frankly, these findings of stability were the most surprising to the authors. In view of the enormous social and economic changes which were occurring in the U.S. and the world during this past half-century, we would never have expected this level of "stability" among these rankings.

(2) the ten employee motivation elements as ranked in 1997 and changes in these priorities over the past half-century. The most highly ranked employee motivation factor among the ten offered respondents in 1997 was "interesting work"—a position which this factor had achieved by the time of the 1986 survey when it was similarly ranked. In the landmark 1946 survey, in contrast, this motivation factor only occupied the sixth position among the same ten employee motivation factors. It is certainly not difficult to appreciate why "interesting work" would not have been of first importance to employed workers in the first year following the end of the highly disruptive Second World War and only five or six years following the Great Depression of the 1930s. On the other hand, as the workplace focus in the U.S. shifted in the mid- to late-1980s to "engaging", "empowering" and "developing" skilled employees as a part of the continuous quality improvement (CQI) movement, it might be argued that the nature of employees' jobs once again became central. Employees, if not employers, began to focus on how to make individual jobs more challenging, engaging and personally fulfilling.

The second motivational factor in order of priority among the replicated set of ten employee motivation factors ranked in 1997 is that of "good wages". This element moved from a fifth place location in both the 1946 and 1987 surveys to second place in the most recent survey. One might speculate, in the absence of specific corroborative evidence, that this time period of very solid, almost spectacular economic growth—especially among a large portion of the high tech industry and the widely circulated stories of spectacular "new wealth" generation--led to increasing employee interest in sharing financially in the economy's success. The financial rewards of a job are often a very complex element of a job's motivational potential because of individual variation in both the value of the financial content to at least stave off worker dissatisfaction and to its potential as a highly symbolic motivator in Herzberg's terminology (1968). Perhaps equally important, is how the financial elements of employee motivation can be "processed" by employees consistent with Stacy's "equity" theory (1963). Such reasoning might be as follows: "If I am working just as hard, or maybe even harder, than the employees in the high-tech industry who are becoming literally wealthy just because of its current popularity, then I am entitled to good financial rewards also". It is likely that this and related perspectives are more likely to emerge during economic "boom" times such as in the mid- to late-1990s prior to the high tech "meltdown".

"Promotion and growth in the organization", which was the third highest ranked employee motivation factor in 1997, seems to reflect employee interest in developing a long-term commitment

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to a specific business organization. If this interpretation of employee interest in long-term employment with a single business organization is accurate then individual businesses will be severely challenged to make such opportunities available in the present business environment of almost unprecedented organizational downsizing. The reduction and even elimination of entire levels and divisions of organizations mean that businesses now have fewer promotional opportunities to offer employees a time when such opportunities may be taking on greater importance to the job satisfaction of employees. It should be noted that this third place position in employees' 1997 priorities represents a substantial jump in importance over the 1986 priorities and even a bit more compared to the 1946 rankings (Sixth and Seventh, respectively).

The fourth highest ranked employee motivation factor in the 1997 survey was "full appreciation of work done", although the data suggest that it may have slipped a few positions from its second place standing in the eleven years between the last two surveys, 1986 and 1997 and even more from its first place position in the original survey of 1946. If the set of three surveys accurately portray a genuine decline in the importance of this element to employee satisfaction generally, it may suggest that the more physical returns of "good wages" and "promotion and growth in the organization" will trump the non-physical, but still external, managerial acknowledgement of one's contribution—which was so important at an earlier time. The findings of the three surveys suggest that three motivation factors—not only No. 4 ranked, but also No. 6 and 7 ranked-- may be losing their motivational value for employees over time and may experience still further erosion in the future.

"Good working conditions", which ranked fifth in importance in 1997, seems headed in the opposite direction. This factor has revealed a steady increase in importance to employee motivation from a seventh place position in the intermediate 1987 survey and a lowly ninth, next to last position, in 1946. Thus, the No. 5 ranked employee factor, "good working conditions" has consistently gained in favor across the three time periods and might even experience greater importance in the future. Here is another instance where physical factors in the workplace seem to represent an employee satisfaction factor of increasing importance over time. This factor may also be linked in an important way to the more complex physical motivation factor of good wages (No. 2) and promotion/growth in the organization (No. 3), but not to the non-physical ones of interesting work (No. 1) and appreciation of one's work (No. 4).

Another non-tangible component of worker satisfaction is the next highest ranked, the now-challenging-for-employers-to-provide motivation element of "job security". Ranked sixth in 1997, where it had declined from its position of fourth in both the 1987 and 1946 surveys, one could speculate about the significance of its decline along several possible directions. One, the element may just represent another non-physical factor which seemed to have lost its favor as major employee motivators at the close of the 20th century. Its declining value as a major workplace motivators might also have reflected its seeming irrelevance during the heady days of economic growth of the mid- to late-1990s. This era was a part of what was to become the longest period of

sustained economic growth in U.S. history. With the continuing prospect of plenty of job openings well into the future, and serious discussions of the end of economic "boom and bust" economic cycles in the U.S., job security was seemingly on its way to becoming a "non-issue". From our current vantage point, of course, that almost-euphoric perspective was clearly pre-mature and it now seems that the importance of job security to employee motivation might well become, once again, of greater importance to employee motivation.

The seventh ranked employee motivation factor of 1997, the "feeling of being in on things", like the non-physical fourth ranked motivation factor of "full appreciation of work done", reveals a steady decline in significance to employee motivation over the past half-century. From the lofty rank of second in the original 1946 study, the factor declined to third in 1987 and then the more dramatic drop to seventh place only eleven years later. Why such a striking drop in importance as a major employee motivational factor? Once again there is plenty of room to speculate in the absence of supportive data. One possible explanation is that this "soft", or non-physical element, like the fourth-ranked satisfaction element, has simply been "upstaged" by the more physical or concrete of the ranked motivators. The final three of the ten ranked employee motivators were in the lowest ranks of eighth, ninth, or tenth in eight of the nine possibilities over the three surveys (the final three ranks times three surveys). There is reason to consider whether these job motivation factors are now relatively insignificant (and perhaps always were) and might be considered as candidates for replacement by new and currently more highly valued employee motivators. It was with this possibility in mind that the most recent 1997 survey invited employee respondents to suggest up to three replacement motivational factors.

(3) Herzberg's "Two-Factor" theory of motivation. Earlier, we indicated that we were able to group the ten replicated motivational factors according to a "Herzberg-like" classification. Although apparently not explicitly a part of either prior study, the employee rankings of the ten motivation elements in this study do present an opportunity to informally "test" the Herzberg (1968) thesis in yet another company, industry, and time period. The reader is undoubtedly familiar with Herzberg's "Two-Factor" theory of motivation with its major premise that only what Herzberg classified as "motivators" could truly motivate and energize employees at work while what he classified as "hygiene" factors could do no better than merely prevent employees from becoming dissatisfied at work. The employee rankings in the present study seemed to provide general support for Herzberg's thesis since three of the top four (75%) employee-ranked motivation factors probably could be classified as "motivators" in the Herzberg typology. A review of the other two surveys revealed much the same pattern. In 1986 once again three of the top four (75%) could probably be considered "motivators" in the Herzberg sense. In 1946 only two of the top four (50%) might be so classified which would not be unexpected since the employees' emphasis was likely to be on more basic, or "hygiene", factors in the first year following the termination of the highly disruptive World War II. At the other end of the scale, where we find the lowest ranked motivation elements, we saw that all three of the lowest ranked items in the 1997 survey would most likely be identified as



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"hygiene" factors in the Herzberg schema. Moreover, the same low ranking is found for eight of the nine rankings of these factors across all three time periods. Thus, both the highest- and the lowest-ranked motivation elements in this series of replicated surveys conducted over 50+ years could be seen to provide a broad level of support for the Herzberg thesis.

(4) Select demographic/socio-economic variables which could modify employee motivation priorities. We can possibly increase our understanding of the employee motivation factors in 1997 by focusing on the impact, if any, of five fairly commonly used demographic/socio-economic variables. The data, somewhat surprisingly, provided support for the conclusion that there is very little difference among the various sub-populations of these five demographic variables. For fully one-half of the ten motivation factors, none of the sub-categories of the five demographic variables revealed a ranking more than two removed from that established by the overall sample. Thus, these five motivational elements were regarded as being of essentially the same level of importance across all sub-categories of the five demographics. (Such uniformity does not merit inclusion in a separate table.) In addition, even when some differences were uncovered among the sub-populations of a demographic only a very few of the sub-populations revealed a ranking more than two removed from that of the overall sample.

Table Two provides information showing that four of the five demographic variables had at least one sub-category in which the ranking was distinctively differently from that of the overall sample. The gender demographic revealed no major differences between its two component populations across any of these five motivational elements and even the age demographic had only one sub-category which displayed a major difference from the overall study sample and that was true for only one of the five employee motivators. The other three "standard" demographics usually had only a single sub-category which ranked some of the motivation elements at least three or more ranks higher or lower than the overall sample's ranking. These three sub-categories are almost certainly related-- employees who earned less than \$12,000 in annual income, had less than a high school education and, to a lesser extent, were employed as "production line/front line workers". ("Office assistants/secretaries" also ranked one of the motivational factors considerably lower in importance than the overall sample).

We can now look at the five motivation elements in which at least one sub-category of a demographic ranked the element significantly different than the overall sample. The employment motivator ranked number one by the total sample also most often received that rank or one nearly as high (no more than two ranks removed) from both gender, most age groups, most income groups—except for those earning \$12,000 or less who ranked it number eight, most educational attainments—except for those with less than a high school education who ranked it number nine, and most occupational groups—except for those involved with production line or front-line work who ranked it number four. It is apparent that these three exceptions to the ranking of "interesting work" as of number one importance are most likely closely related. It is highly likely that these entry or near-entry level jobs in this rather large food production and service company would require the

lowest level of formal education and would be paid the least. There is some indication that these three probably overlapping sub-categories of demographic groupings ranked most highly those employee motivation factors which were among the most basic ones indicated in the pioneering works of Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1968). The contrarian choices by these groupings suggest that these employees could feel "left out" of any company-generated motivational factors focusing on the interests of the majority of its employees.

Only the most minor differences were found in regard to the overall second highest ranked employee motivator, "good wages". Thus, this employee motivation element shows its strength "across the board" for all five of the demographic factors (age, gender, income, education, and occupational category) analyzed at the time of the most recent survey. This finding of only minimal differences among the set of five demographic factors on the overall second ranked employee motivator applied also to the overall fourth ranked employee motivator, "full appreciation of work done". It is somewhat surprising in view of the number of categories used to subdivide the demographic variables that any of the employee motivation factors would reveal such strong consistency across all demographic sub-categories.

This near-uniformity across the five demographic variables for both the second and fourth ranked employee motivator, however, did not hold for the overall third and fifth ranked employee motivators. We will review the overall third ranking employee motivator first, "promotion and growth in the organization". The findings here, as with the overall top ranked employee motivator, seem to suggest how employees with the lowest educational level (less than a high school education), lowest pay (less than \$12,000 per year), and the least skilled jobs (production line and front line workers and, in the case of this motivation factor, also included office assistants/secretaries) were considerably different in their choice of job motivation elements from the other subcategories in this demographic, giving the overall third-ranked employee motivator, a rank of only nine, ten, and six respectively. The overall fifth-ranked employee motivation factor, "good working conditions", followed the general pattern just seen for the third-ranked employee motivators. Once again employees with the lowest educational level and receiving the lowest wages ranked the employee motivator in question considerably differently than most of the other sub-categories of this demographic. In their case, both likely related sub-categories gave the employee motivation element a substantially higher level of importance, ranking it number two for them. In this case, however, these two lowest categories of education and income were NOT joined by the likely related lowest occupational categories of production line/front-line workers. At the other end of the importance scale, the age category of fifty years and older, ranked this job motivator the lowest in importance to them—tenth of the ten motivators!

Thus, in general the authors were surprised by the unexpected findings of only relatively minor differences across the sub-categories of the five demographic clusters selected for inclusion in this survey. We found that only half of the set of ten employee motivators revealed substantial differences across their demographic subdivisions. We were not surprised, however, to see some

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pattern of demographic sub-categories stretching across the motivational variables. The poorest paid, lowest skilled positions staffed by persons with relatively little formal education were fairly consistent in ranking employee motivators in ways substantially different from most other sub-categories of these five demographics. On the other hand, the almost complete lack of variation among gender and most age categories suggest that, with this large company at least, gender and age factors appear to have lost most of their relevance for choice of employee motivators—at least among the set of ten factors presented to them.

Finally, the study reported herein invited company employees to suggest possible replacement motivators if the ten provided did not include their choice(s) of the ten most important ones. As indicated earlier, sixty of the 363 respondents, approximately 17 percent, offered suggestions for replacements of at least one on the list of ten replicated employee motivators presented to them. The top employee motivator suggested as a replacement was a concept that might be described as a "feeling of being needed" or that their "job really does make a difference" to the company or community in some way. Such a concept would seem to qualify as a true motivator in the Herzberg sense (1987). The next two employee motivators most often suggested as replacements seemed to reflect more contemporary employment interests with one which might be entitled something like "continued personal development" which might also qualify as a true motivator in Herzberg's typology (unless it is intended to buttress a sense of job security to be discussed) while the third most often mentioned substitute emphasized the importance of having "flexible work schedules". This element is clearly a "hygiene" factor in the Herzberg typology. The latter two suggestions may be seen as especially pertinent to the contemporary work environment if employees are intending to recognize on the one hand that no jobs are "forever" and that they need to continually develop new skills to qualify for potential new employment opportunities—which would be a "hygiene" element of job security in the Herzberg typology and on the other hand, that today's employees can be severely time-challenged with their multiple commitments and responsibilities.

### SUMMARY

This paper began with the premise that as the U.S. comes out of its first recession of the twenty-first century that the unrelenting emphasis on discovering opportunities for cost reductions and increased labor productivity will continue unabated well into the new century. It also was postulated that before too very long we are likely to see the focus of businesses turning from the highly publicized actions involving massive employee layoffs, outsourcing and the near-ubiquitous adoption of high tech equipment to more subtle, but equally pervasive, attempts to increase productivity through a focus on the efforts of individual employees. Such an emphasis can be expected to raise the profile once again of searches to find the "magic key" to employee motivation --a key element in employee productivity. It is difficult to say it any better than the title of Frederick Herzberg's 1968 classic, "One more time: How do you motivate employees?"

The research reported in this paper continues the tradition begun over fifty years ago by updating employee rankings of a set of ten motivational factors and also by the continued use of a set of demographic/socio-economic variables first introduced in 1986. The employee sample used in this 1997 replication had unknown limitations since it represented only about one-third of the potential pool in the cooperating company and even less of a regional or even national population. As a caution against the sample's unknown representiveness, we set a moderately high operational standard for acceptance of "change" in rankings from the two previous studies, i.e., a difference of three or more ranks.

We reported that changes of that magnitude (three or more ranks) in employee prioritizing seemed to have occurred during the largest interval, 1946 to 1997, for seven of the ten factors (70%). We also noted that in all of these cases the observed changes were "orderly" in the sense that in every case the rankings increased or decreased in such an orderly way that the "book-end" years of 1946 and 1997 always displayed the extreme positions. But the comparative data also revealed considerable stability in the rankings since for six of the ten (60%) motivation elements the change in rank differences over half a century were comparatively small to only moderate. And for six of the ten (60%) motivators the ranks were literally identical in consecutive pairs of surveys, separated by at least eleven years and in some cases as many as forty. This level of stability seemed rather remarkable in the face of the major social and economic changes occurring during these two time periods of eleven and 40 years respectively.

We found that the highest ranked employee motivator, "interesting work", attracted the same first-place rank in both 1997 and 1986, which is a major increase from its relatively low rank of sixth in 1946. On the other hand, a very different pattern was revealed in regard to the next two highest ranked motivators in 1997--"good wages" and "promotion and growth in the organization", respectively where the data revealed that the surveys separated by some forty years reveal the greater similarities in rankings than those separated by eleven. The fourth ranked motivator in 1997, "full appreciation of work done", has experienced a steady decline since the factor was the highest ranked in 1946. "Good working conditions" seems headed in the opposite direction since it has been consistently gaining in favor across time.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGERS**

The apparent success of this relatively simple methodology suggests that managers might want to consider doing such employee surveys somewhat often—Kovach (1995) suggests annual surveys--to remain current in what motivates and de-motivates their various sub-populations of employees. The critical importance of such information to business organizations is due to such factors as: (1) the very dramatic and rapid changes occurring in the nature of the "new" and much more highly diverse workforce in the U.S.; (2) the fact that many "lean and mean" companies are expecting a much smaller workforce to accomplish substantially more and of much higher quality

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than did a considerably larger workforce in the past; and (3) its potential to help companies address the continuing challenge in which most supervisors/managers are mistaken in their beliefs of what motivates their employees. Our research, in fact, showed that only the employees characterized by the very lowest levels of education, occupation and income ranked the job motivators as expected by supervisors, with wages and job security among the highest ranked factors (Kovach, 1987). Collecting employee data on a frequent, regular basis could force a shift in the focus of managers from elements which are largely outside of their control (and thus capable of absolving them of most blame for an unmotivated workforce), e.g., wages and job security, to those employee motivational components which managers can control. If companies can become more adept in understanding what motivates their various employee sub-populations, they may be better able to offer motivational elements tailored to the special needs of each and, in at least some cases, perhaps even the specific needs of individual employees. Management might even consider developing something like a "motivation cafeteria", which could be akin to the concept of a "benefits cafeteria", for the purpose of tailoring motivation elements to the specific needs/wants of individual employees.

More research will need to be undertaken on such topics as the above using more representative samples of employees from more than a single company in more than a single industry. In addition, some substitution of motivation categories among the ten utilized in the three studies cited might be considered, especially the three consistently lowest-ranked. Potentially new motivating factors in contemporary employment and in service-based industries should be considered. Our research suggested three: a feeling of being needed or that ones' job is important; continued personal development of work-related skills/abilities; and the availability of flexible work schedules. In addition, future research might be profitably invested in studying whether employee responses to such employment motivators are based on the employees' perception of having found these qualities in their present work or whether they represent employee wishes for new possibilities and how these perspectives impact their satisfactions/motivation at work and their efforts related to increasing their productivity. One could also consider research which will relate employee rankings of job satisfaction/motivation factors with their assessment of their current managers and the companies themselves.

Finally, despite the limitations of the present sample, this research and others like it demonstrate a very cost-effective way for a company to target only those job-related motivators which are most important to their various employee subpopulations. Rather than taking a "one size fits all" approach, a company could attempt to tailor its motivators in such a way as to develop or enhance activities which will benefit both their employees through individual job motivators and the company through reduced costs (including turn-over) and increased productivity.

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# A STUDY OF COMMUNICATION IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN HOSPITALS

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## ABSTRACT

*Communication is of vital importance to any organization, but more so to a hospital, where the question of human lives is involved. It is essential that fast and accurate information be passed on to the right people, to avoid a situation like an emergency from turning into a crisis. Emergency communication begins with the detection of an emergency incident and ends only with the full resolution of it. The network of communication makes a significant difference with respect to the speed and accuracy of information passed during communication in an emergency. However, many barriers affect the efficiency of communication, which can be removed by having a more professional outlook. Hospitals must also assess the emergencies, to ensure that they are avoided in future. Along with this, it is of vital importance to predict the kinds of emergencies that are likely to affect the hospital and take suitable precautions for the same.*

## INTRODUCTION

The importance of communication in our modern world cannot be overlooked. It is an absolutely essential element business organizations as well as for individuals who work and interact with each other. A hospital is an organization having a number of people working together and hence proves to be no exception. In fact, an error in communication could have serious effects on its smooth functioning and could lead to great loss, especially in terms of human lives. Hence, in a hospital, which often deals with emergency cases, a fast, accurate and efficient communication system is extremely important, to avoid the occurrence of a major crisis for which there is always a potential danger.

## COMMUNICATION

"Communication is the sum of all things, one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It is a bridge of meaning. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding. " Communication needs vary from user to user, but they have some requirements in common – time is critical, instant communication is a

must and effective communication is essential. Effective communication takes place when the receiver understands the message in the same sense as the sender wishes to convey it. In a hospital, one has to constantly interact with other people, either within the hospital, which would include peers as well as superiors and subordinates, or with people from outside like patients, suppliers, visitors and members of the public. This is communication at an individual level. The network of communication a person would have depends on his relationship with the people he interacts with. In addition, good communication plays an important role in effectively performing all the managerial functions in any hospital. Information has to be passed on to managers to have a base to make plans to be communicated to others. Employees are made aware of their job assignments through communication. Communication also connects the hospital with the outside world, which includes patients, suppliers and even other hospitals. This constitutes communication at the organizational level.

The importance of effective communication becomes all the more relevant in cases of emergencies, where the time to react is extremely short. Fast decisions have to be taken and passed at an equally fast pace, to prevent the situation from becoming worse.

### **TYPES OF EMERGENCIES AND CRISES**

An emergency may be defined as a condition, which does not occur in the normal working of an organization or may occur in the normal course of working of an organization, but requires immediate attention and response, which if not given may lead to a crisis. "A crisis is an unstable or crucial time or state of affairs whose outcome will make a decisive difference for better or worse (Vernon, 1998)." An emergency faced by a hospital could be even more critical as it could mean the difference between life and death for many. Hence, effective communication is essential to ensure that a life-threatening emergency does not turn into a crisis.

A hospital could be faced with the following emergencies, which if not given immediate attention, could trigger a crisis. The crisis can be of two types: Internally Generated Crisis and Externally Generated Crisis. Internally Generated Crises are developed when the hospital does not sufficiently monitor or manage its internal activities. Some emergency situations that can trigger an internal crisis include shortage of essential amenities such as medicines, major utility outage such as telephone failure or power breakdown, overflow of emergency departments due to a mismatch between supply and demand for hospital services ("Hospital administrators' efforts to address this problem over the past two years primarily have centered on better capacity management through a focus on three main areas: 1) staffing, 2) bed availability and 3) patient flow within and out of hospitals."<sup>1</sup>), or strike by employees. On the other hand, externally generated crises are sparked by unforeseen events in the social or physical environment. The emergency situations that can lead to such a crisis involve patients in critical conditions coming for treatment and natural disasters like flood, fire, earthquake, etc. Communication in such circumstances has to be organized in such a way,

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as to bring about maximum efficiency in minimum time. This is where the selection of pattern and network of communication is of prime importance.

### **PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION**

Based on hierarchy, patterns of communication are differentiated into the following categories:

Vertical communication, which is of two types. First being downward communication, flowing from a higher level of an organization to a lower level. Second is upward communication, flowing from a lower level in the organization to a higher level. Both downward and upward patterns of communication facilitate proper delivery of instructions, transfer of the information and feedback, which are essential to handle an emergency effectively. Downward communication is used by managers to assign goals, provide job instructions, inform policies and procedures and point out problems that need attention. On one hand, this type of communication brings about job satisfaction and improves the morale of employees, while on the other, it leads to distortion of messages by passing them through various levels of an organization. Upward communication mostly relates to feedback from subordinates as well as the expression of their feelings, demands and problems with regard to their work. It helps in the contribution of subordinates in achieving the goals of an organization. However, it is not easy to communicate in this manner, due to the risk of being frank with seniors when the message to be conveyed is not to their liking.

The second pattern of communication takes place between peers, at the same hierarchal position in an organization's structure and is called Lateral Communication. This kind of communication saves time and facilitates coordination and teamwork. Thus, the importance of lateral communication in the case of an emergency situation is evident. If there is no effective communication within the people of the same department and then between the various departments, there is no possibility of the existence of good coordination and teamwork. And, if in case of an emergency, if there is absence of teamwork and coordination, the required response to the said emergency will not be possible. The problem with this pattern is the difference in approach of different functionaries working on the same task.

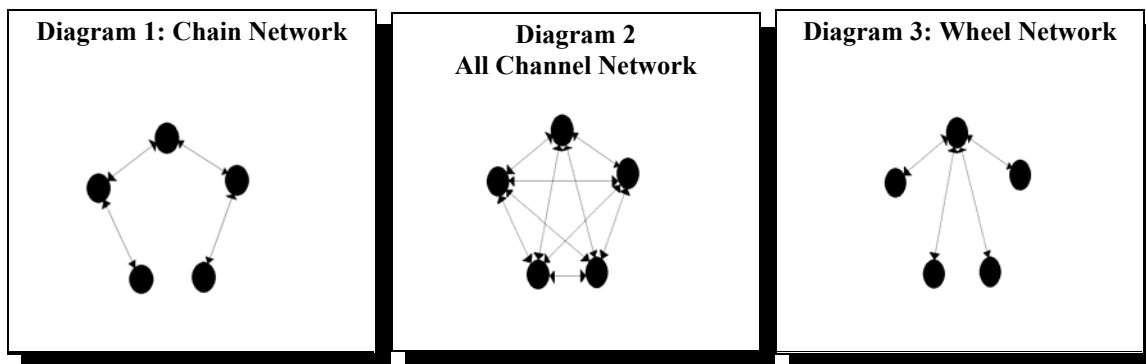
The third is diagonal communication, which as the name suggests, consists of communication between members not only at a horizontally different level, but also at a different department all-together. This pattern of communication comes into play where the emergency is such that one department alone cannot handle it alone. This could include coming in of a critical patient who may require multi-specialty care and treatment, making it necessary for the required departments to coordinate their activities. This pattern provides efficient and speedy communication but can create communication gaps, as superiors are bypassed due to the diversion in pattern from the normal chain of command.

Patterns of communication are also differentiated into formal and informal. Formal systems are designed by management to dictate who should talk to whom while getting a job done. All downward, upward and lateral communication flows through this type of communication. It prevents confusion in communication and makes it more orderly, timely and smooth. Formal communication is used in emergencies when the immediate attention of an authority in the hospital is required. However, an emergency is a situation where a specific need arises and numerous communications have to be carried out. Hence, formal systems cannot be used in isolation in such a situations. Here informal systems come into play to ensure immediate action. These patterns are not deliberately formed patterns of communication but arise to meet specific needs left unsatisfied by formal communication.

In a study conducted at a private hospital in Jodhpur, India, it was found that the hospital does not have definite hierarchal levels and hence most of the communication is of an informal nature. However, formal communication does exist in some amount, as it cannot be completely ignored.

### COMMUNICATION NETWORK

Communication Networks refer to the channels created to aid a single person in informing different people about their jobs and duties. No single network can be used on all occasions, as the type of network to be used depends upon the demands of the task. Chain, Wheel and All Channel are the types of networks generally employed.



Chain Network is effective when high accuracy of information is required. Each person interacts with his immediate neighbour hence passing the information accurately. However this network is not efficient in emergencies, as the communication is moderate in speed and follows a more formal chain of command. Faster communication can be facilitated by the All Channel Network, where each member of the organization communicates with all the other members. The speed of communication is fast but it can lead to overloading and distortion of messages due to varying interpretations of the situation by different people. This problem can be overcome by the

Wheel Network, which relies on one person to act as the source of the group's communication. The first person to know about the emergency spreads the news to all people concerned, which facilitates immediate response. There is no scope for distortion of messages as no middlemen are involved. Since it brings about faster communication without distortion, this type of network is most effective in case of emergencies.

The hospital where the research was conducted, uses the wheel network of communication aided by a Public Announcement System, placed at the reception, so that the required doctor can be immediately contacted. This enables highly efficient communication in emergencies by removing unwanted people from the communication network. The table below compares the efficiency of the different communication networks.

Criteria	Chain Network	Wheel Network	All Channel Network
Speed	Moderate	Fast	Fast
Accuracy	High	High	Moderate
Emergence of leader	Moderate	High	None
Member Satisfaction	Moderate	Low	High

Source: (Exhibit 10-4). Robbins, Stephen P. (2001). Organizational Behaviour (Ninth Edition). New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India Pvt. Ltd.

Keeping in mind the patterns and networks of communication, the next factor to be looked into is the carrying out of communication while dealing with an emergency.

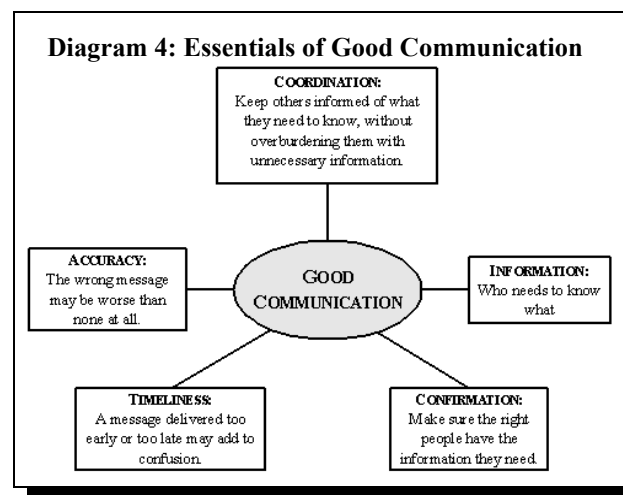
### **EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION**

Emergency communication begins with the detection of an emergency happening and carries on through the dispatching of personnel and equipment necessary to respond to the emergency scene. It extends through the treatment of the patient at the scene and during the transport of the patient to the hospital. Emergency communication ends only with the full resolution of the emergency.

Emergencies faced by hospitals have already been classified as reasons for internally generated crises and externally generated crises. In the case of externally generated crises, there are certain key elements, which include citizen access, vehicle dispatch and response, interagency communication and good communication during treatment.

For good citizen access, the emergency communication system must be able to receive and process any requests for emergency services or medical assistance and must act upon the same according to the urgency of the situation. The next step involves providing means to dispatch vehicles promptly to the emergency scene, upon notification. Communication systems must enable the hospital to talk with responding vehicles enroute to the scene, at the scene, enroute to the emergency medical facility and their return to availability for further assignment. The particular hospital researched, has a good vehicle dispatch system. The ambulance carries first aid along with a doctor and contact with all vehicles going for emergency services is maintained through mobile phones and radio. Interagency Communication is also necessary incase of any urgent aid required in the case of an emergency. The hospital analyzed, however does not communicate with other hospitals during emergencies and this can create problems when the hospital is short of resources or overloaded with patients.

The essentials of good communication during treatment as identified by the UK National Health Service are represented in the Diagram 4.



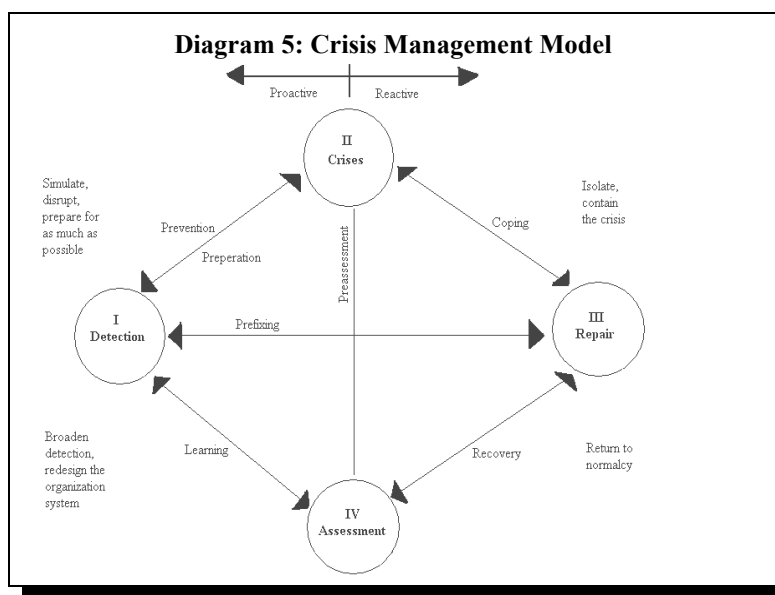
Source: The Importance of Communication in An Emergency. Retrieved August 18, 2004, from <http://www.waikatodhb.govt.nz/wdwb/default.asp?Content=444>

Coordination is a vital element required to achieve good communication while dealing with an emergency. Proper coordination ensures that everyone is aware of their duties and knows how to act according to the situation. It binds the staff as a team. Without coordination, the entire communication system breaks down and the communication between different departments would remain inefficient. Timeliness is required since an emergency is called so only because it requires immediate attention and response, which, if not given, would cause the occurrence of a crisis. In addition, the contents of the message must be accurate. Improper information could lead to wide scale damage. Moreover, the message should be short and precise to ensure that timely action is

taken and that relevant information directly reaches the person capable of handling the situation, to make the communication pattern effective. Thus, the pattern has to cut across the normal hierarchy of communication set by the formal network. The final step, confirmation, refers to the importance of the concept of feedback in an effective communication. After the message is delivered, the subsequent actions taken should be in accordance with the contents of the message. In emergency situations, confirmation holds importance in each and every step as even one mistake could convert it into a crisis. Feedback here does not mean immediate feedback, but at the time when the instructions are being executed or already have been executed. If there is accuracy of information, then feedback only at the later stage is required because then the instruction has been understood properly and feedback would be required only if there is some problem in the execution of the same.

As far as internal emergencies are concerned, in a hospital, situations such as power failure, telephone failure; overflow of emergency department or lack of medicines could lead to a situation of crisis. In such cases, the management needs to assess the situation and devise strategies to reduce the severity of the crisis and hence limit damages.

The model in Diagram 5 is useful for the purpose of crisis management.



Source: Vernon, Heidi (1998). *Business and Society A Managerial Approach* (Sixth Edition). : McGraw-Hill

The first step helps the hospital detect the emergency and hence places them in a position to take immediate action, to try to prevent the crisis. If detected early enough, a crisis can be prevented by efficient communication during the emergency. When it comes to detection, which includes preparation as well as prevention, the hospital surveyed, has provisions for in-house electricians and plumbers, present 12 hours a day, for fixing small faults that could lead to large problems, a generator for power backup, as well as round the clock guards for security. Despite

trying its level best, a hospital cannot always avoid an emergency being turned into a crisis, but it can, through proper communication to ensure timely action, and reduce the damage caused by the crisis. Hence, it always has to be ready to either prevent a crisis or prepare for it. Before coming to the repair stage, a hospital needs to isolate and contain the crisis, so that its effects do not get more dangerous. The deadlier the crisis, the tougher would be the repair work. The repair work has to be of high standard, to ensure that the hospital is again at the same position as it was before the emergency occurred. Finally, assessment is a very important step in which the company evaluates what it has learnt from the emergency situation. After this, a new cycle begins as the hospital now has developed better crisis detection and prevention systems through their experience of dealing with such situations (every crisis "contains within itself the seeds of success as well as the roots of failure." The essence of crisis management is "finding, cultivating, and harvesting the potential success."<sup>2</sup>)

Assessment of emergencies is carried out by the analyzed hospital studied, to improve the efficiency of dealing with such situations. For example, a fire had broken out in the hospital, after which fire hydrants were placed at a number of places in the hospital. However, they need to lay more emphasis on predicting an emergency situation and take suitable steps before hand rather than suffering the damage and then finding a solution.

### **BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IN EMERGENCIES**

A communication barrier may be defined as the factor that leads to miscommunication i.e. a factor which influences the communication process in such a way, that the receiver does not understand the message in the way the sender was trying to communicate it.

Communication barriers in the case of emergency situations in hospitals include insufficient time period, since whenever communication is made, sufficient time period is needed to understand and digest the message needs to be given. However in cases of emergency, the sender and receiver might not have enough time to convey and receive the message respectively, hence causing miscommunication. Another barrier arises due to the requirement of fast communication. There maybe a situation that the information being received is more than the receiver can handle during the short period. This overburdens the receiver with messages and hence he might not act appropriately in time. In addition, emotional factors like fear, nervousness etc. hinder both the proper delivery and the decoding of the message and thus proper communication cannot be possible if either of the two i.e. the sender or the receiver or both are adversely affected and are not capable enough to convey or understand the message properly. Distortion of messages i.e., consciously distorting information, for the purpose of impressing the receiver, also seriously affects the carrying out of effective communication gravely. This can generally occur when a subordinate is afraid to tell his superior about a mistake he committed and hence can lead to a barrier due to the lack of proper information being transferred. Moreover, at times the person giving the message leaves gaps



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in the message presuming that the receiver of the message will understand what he actually wants to convey. But it is not necessary that the receiver also interprets the message in the same manner as the sender presumes. This may lead to confusion and chaos. Hence, in an emergency this is a major barrier and one way to sort it out is by establishing a good feedback system. Faulty communication also arises from distractions on the part of both the receiver and the sender, as it deviates the attention of the sender or the receiver, or both from the task to be performed. Another problem arises when a patient speaks a different language and is not able to communicate his problem, and hence a lot of time is wasted in trying to find the problem.

The major barriers affecting the analyzed hospital studied were shortage of time and overburdening of staff in the emergency department. The staff's activities are disrupted when an emergency situation comes up and hence they find it difficult to divide work to make sure all cases are looked after. ("It is important for people to be clear about the role of hospital emergency departments. They are designed to deal with serious emergencies such as road accidents or heart attacks as well as less urgent conditions. Knowing how hospital emergency departments work and what other services to use instead can reduce waiting times and help you get treated more quickly."<sup>3</sup>) However, the employees of the organization were professional in their work and hence the other factors did not have a major impact on the efficiency of the hospital. Hence, most barriers can be removed by having a professional approach. As far as overburdening of staff goes, a systematic procedure based on the priority of the case needs to be implemented. Critical cases have to be given more emphasis, without neglecting the other cases.

## CONCLUSION

In the end, it must be mentioned that communication is an essential part of any organization and more so for a hospital dealing with emergencies, as the matters of life and death are involved. Hospitals should essentially maintain informal communication especially during emergencies due to the presence of time restraints. A multi directional communication network such as the wheel network or the all channel network needs to be adopted in situations of emergency, as it delivers messages quickly and accurately, leading to efficient communication. In addition, since emergency communication begins with the very detection of the emergency, steps to make the handling of such situations efficient should be taken up from this stage itself. The various barriers hindering the effectiveness of communication in emergencies can be removed by having a more professional approach. Moreover, there has to be proper feedback to avoid misinformation, which could cause harm. Cases must be prioritized according to urgency to ensure that the emergency department is not overburdened. The critical cases have to be given immediate attention in such a way, that the other patients are not ignored. This can be achieved by keeping personnel in charge of identifying the intensity of the case and referring only the critical cases to the emergency department. Hospitals must also maintain communication with other hospitals in case of any emergency such as shortage

of medicines or overburdening of patients. Another important aspect is the forecasting of emergencies to prevent them, rather than experiencing the emergency and then taking measures to restore the normal condition of the hospital. This would greatly reduce the time, money and effort of the hospital, which could be better used for the purposes of treating its patients. Hospitals cannot undermine the importance of communication, because they have a very important duty of treating patients. This can only be carried out in an efficient manner if they take steps to ensure that no barriers are affecting the communication, so that accurate information can be transferred within a short interval of time.

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**ENDNOTES**

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# GENDER EFFECT ON THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF HUMAN CAPITAL IN MANAGEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examined earnings inequality in Thailand. There is a relatively higher ratio of men than women in high level management positions in manufacturing. Women are typically employed in lower level positions such as bookkeeping, human resources and secretarial staff. They are the main force in the service sector such as banking, retail trades, education, hospitality and tourism. The trend has shifted in recent years when more women than men enter into a managerial level position. However, earnings for women are relatively lower than that of their male counterparts.*

*A human capital model was employed to assess factors affecting earnings among men and women at managerial levels. These factors included education, work experience, marital status, job satisfaction, number of hours at work and at home, willingness to engage in frequent business trips and gender. The empirical analysis found that education, work experience, marital status and willingness to engage in frequent business trips had a significant effect on all samples in the study. Education and work experience profoundly affected earnings for both men and women. However, only women's earnings were affected by marital status and willingness to engage in frequent business trips.*

## INTRODUCTION

Thailand is currently undergoing reforms and adjustments in economic development planning aimed at bolstering market confidence and achieving economic recovery and stability. Amidst the past financial crisis, female employment has played an important role in the Thai economy, especially in the private sector. Table 1 provides selected statistics to compare males and females in the labor force. The Thai labor force is about 57 percent male and 43 percent female. More than twice the number of administrative, managerial and professional workers reside in an urban area. The percentage of women in administrative, managerial and professional positions increased from 49.7 in 1996 to 56.8 percent in 2000. There have been more job opportunities and better career advancement for women in the modern private sector. However, women with college degrees continue to earn less than their male counterparts. Wage and earnings inequality may arise

due to heterogeneous jobs and workers. The initial motivation behind this research was to assess the impact of crucial factors affecting earnings at the entry to middle managerial levels in Thailand in order to control for some consequences of heterogeneities. Previous research has shown gender effect on employment and earnings inequality mainly among low educated and unskilled workers. Higher educated women at the managerial level have rarely been investigated.

<b>Table 1: Thailand Labor Force Survey Selected Categories by Gender</b>				
Year	1996		2000	
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female
Labor force in millions (percent)	17.2 (57.34)	12.8 (42.66)	17.4 (57.24)	13.0 (42.76)
Administrative, Managerial & Professional Workers				
Urban Area (percent)	170,850 (50.3)	168,700 (49.7)	248,600 (43.2)	326,200 (56.8)
Rural Area (percent)	82,400 (44.7)	101,800 (55.3)	96,100 (40.7)	139,800 (59.3)
Year	1994		N/A	
Avg. Monthly Earnings (Baht) of College Graduates				
Urban Area	10,192	9,662		
Rural Area	9,618	8,390		
Avg. Weekly Hour Work of College Graduates				
Urban Area	38.9	39.8		
Rural Area	38.6	37.9		
Source: Thai National Statistical Office				

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The US historical trend in the female-male ratio indicated a rapid increase during the 1980s and stood at .72 by 1990 (O'Neill & Polachek, 1993). American women's economic status improved significantly in the 1980s. Understanding the gender gap in pay is important because even in the absence of any labor-market discrimination, it is unlikely that the wage rates of women and men would be equal (O'Neill, 2003). The relative improvement in women's wages can be attributed to an increase in labor market experience and work attachment (Blau & Kahn, 1997; O'Neill & Polachek, 1993). Not only can changes in the structure of the economy affect the wage distribution, but also human capital investments can create income inequality within a particular population.

Earnings dispersion generally occurs due to differences in job characteristics and worker skills. Conversely, earnings inequality may occur among equally skilled workers in the same job because of gender, race and other irrelevant characteristics. It is widely accepted that differences

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in human capital between men and women do matter (Borjas, 2000). Men tend to acquire more human capital than women. The human capital that women acquire depreciates somewhat during the child bearing years when they engage in household production. According to Polachek (1981), women who wish to maximize the present value of lifetime earnings will not enter occupations where their skills will depreciate rapidly during the child bearing years. The human capital explanation of gender wage differential states that because women have shorter payoff periods, they invest less in on-the-job training and other forms of human capital, and hence have lower wages. Becker (1985) pointed out that women remained largely responsible for child care and household production with high effort intensive. Thereby, married women seek occupations that require less effort. They segregate themselves into less demanding occupations. In addition, wage depends not only on hours worked but also work effort. Hence, women's earnings are lower. Lower wages lead to less incentive to work. Gronau (1988) and Neumark (1995) examined whether a woman weaker work's attachment resulted in a lower wage or whether the lower wage led to less work attachment. Some studies (England, Farkas, Kilbourne and Dou, 1998; Macpherson & Hirsch, 1995) investigated the relationship between women's employment and earnings in a particular occupation. After holding constant the human capital and other socioeconomic characteristics, these studies found that female jobs pay lower wages.

Michael (1973) further investigated how human capital influenced various aspect of a worker's behavior. Macpherson and Hirsch (1995) found that women in a profession where at least seventy five percent of the coworkers were women earned fourteen percent less than comparable women in a profession where less than twenty five percent of the coworkers were women. In contrast, a man in a predominantly female profession earned fourteen percent less than a man in a predominantly male profession.

### **HYPOTHESIS**

The above literature review leads to the hypothesis that earnings are affected by three categories of independent variables: human capital variables, worker characteristics and working conditions.

Human capital variables include educational attainment (ED) and years of work experience (WORK). Mincer (1974), employing earnings power function, found the direct effect of years of education and work experience on earnings. Educational attainment augments a worker's productivity via enhancement of his/her abilities or skills, especially cognitive skills. A more educated and better trained worker is able to offer a greater productive potential than one with less education and training. Additional years of education will increase an individual's productivity. Johnson, Palermo, and Asgary (2002) found positive effects of increased literacy on wages in manufacturing in their international study. Mincer (1974) indicated that once the postschooling on-the-job training investment was included in the human capital definition, one-half to two-thirds

of the personal earning variations were explained. Over time, workers may acquire human capital through work experience and thereby increase earnings (Mincer, 1974; Naderi & Mace, 2003). Acquired additional job skill increases productivity. Increase in marginal productivity results in higher earning. Thus, education and work experience positively affect earnings (Y).

Worker characteristics may include marital status (MSTATUS), weekly hours worked at the office (HRWORK) and at home (HRHOME) and gender (GENDER). Schumann, Ahlburg and Mahoney (1994) examined the influence of both the worker characteristics and job characteristics on earnings. Data were collected specifically for this purpose. They found that both worker characteristics and job characteristics were important determinants of pay. In addition, women held jobs that were of lower value to the firm. This explains part, but not all, of the gross male-female pay differential.

Marital status is expected to have either positive or negative influence on earnings. Married persons may have a greater incentive to increase earnings to support their families. On the other hand, married women may engage in occupations that require less effort in order to spend more time providing for child care and household production. This leads to lower earnings. Time spent in the office increases productivity if it is time well spent, but the fact that most women continue to take the primary responsibility for child care is a cause of distraction, diversion, anxiety and absenteeism (Schwartz, 1989). Hill (1983) investigated allocation of weekly hours to various activities by gender and marital status. Women allocated more hours to the non-market sector than men. Married women worked about 35 hours per week as compared to 14 hours for married men. However, the total hours at work and at home were above 50 hours per week for both genders. While weekly hours worked at the office is positively related to earnings, weekly hours worked at home is expected to have a negative impact on earnings.

Working conditions are reflected in job satisfaction (JOBSAT) and willingness to engage in frequent business trips (FREQUENT). Job satisfaction is conceived in terms of a worker's general reaction to the job without reference to any specific job facets (Hamermesh, 1977). Higher job satisfaction results in higher productivity and thereby increases earnings. Schumann, Ahlburg and Mahoney (1994) indicated that the characteristics of both workers and jobs determine pay. The introduction of job characteristics to the pay function reduces the male-female pay differential. Willingness to engage in business trips frequently (FREQUENT) is a newly introduced factor in this paper that represents job characteristics and preference or tastes. If women prefer jobs that require fewer business trips, then the exercise of this preference may result in lower earnings. This should directly relate to earnings.

For empirical analysis, the model has been constructed as shown below:

$$Y \text{ or } \ln Y = \text{CONSTANT} + b_1ED + b_2WORK + b_3MSTATUS + b_4JOBSAT + b_5HRWORK + b_6HRHOME + b_7FREQUENT + b_8GENDER + u_i$$



Description of variables is summarized in Table 2.  $u_i$  is a stochastic error term or disturbance term.

<b>Table 2: Description of Variables</b>	
Dependent variables	
Y	Monthly earnings
LnY	Natural logarithm of monthly earnings
Human capital variables	
ED	Years of education
WORK	Years of work experience
Worker characteristics	
MSTATUS	Marital status: 0 = married, 1 = otherwise
HRWORK	Weekly hours work at the office
HRHOME	Weekly hours work at home
GENDER	0 = Men, 1 = Women
Working conditions	
JOBSAT	Job satisfaction: 0 = unsatisfied to unsure, 1 = satisfied
FREQUENT	Willingness to engage in business trip frequently: 0 = No, 1 = Yes

First, two models are estimated by controlling the gender variable. In effect, the first model was estimated based upon men's earnings, the second model on women's earnings. The last model includes gender variables, along with other independent variables, to determine whether the gender variable is statistically significant.

## **DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

The data source used in this study is an original survey conducted in 36 parts of the Bangkok Metropolitan Area in 2002. A stratified simple random sampling was employed to obtain sample managers from two groups of establishments, which included (1) manufacturing, handicraft, construction, transportation, and (2) retail and service industries. The population was restricted to entry to middle level men and women managers in establishments of more than twenty employees. The number of returned surveys totaled 203. Of those surveys completed and returned, some had one or more items on the survey left blank. Therefore, 198 observations were analyzed. Members of the sample surveyed ranged in age from 21-58 years, and 63 percent were married. Education ranged from high school diplomas to Master's degrees.

Further data exploration is shown in Table 3, Subpopulation Differences. By and large, women managers' monthly earnings were about 8 percent less than men's earnings. Monthly earnings are shown in Thai baht (approximately 40 Baht = 1 US dollar). Married persons earned 54 percent more than singles. Over all, when compared with women, men managers showed slightly higher education (16.30 VS 15.83 years), years of work experiences (6.82 VS 6.32), job satisfaction (.81 VS .69) and willingness to engage in frequent business trips (.65 VS .55). They also reported fewer numbers of hours worked in the office (44.76 VS 46.04) and at home (6.43 VS 9.83).

Gender	Mstatus	Y	Ed	Work	Jobsat	Hrwork	Hrhome	Frequent
Men	.00	24,747.7273	16.4667	9.2059	.9062	45.7000	9.9853	.7187
	1.00	16,470.0000	16.1667	4.7462	.7250	43.9630	3.4075	.6000
	Total	20,372.3571	16.3030	6.8233	.8056	44.7620	6.4297	.6528
Women	.00	24,849.0789	16.0000	9.3925	.8250	46.4406	17.9359	.3750
	1.00	15,978.9024	15.7595	4.8027	.6235	45.8306	6.1059	.6353
	Total	18,787.7917	15.8333	6.3200	.6880	46.0383	9.8266	.5520
Total	.00	24,801.9718	16.2154	9.3068	.8611	46.1309	14.2329	.5278
	1.00	16,131.5966	15.8870	4.7843	.6560	45.2640	5.2424	.6240
	Total	19,371.5789	16.0056	6.5094	.7310	45.5951	8.5571	.5888

Note Marital status: 0 = married, 1 = otherwise

The ordinary least square (OLS) method was employed to test the above hypotheses. One of the tasks in performing regression analysis with several independent variables was to calculate a correlation matrix for all variables. Table 3 reports the Pearson Correlations for all variables. Monthly managers' earnings were highly correlated with education attainment, years of work experience and marital status ( $< 0.01$ ). There were no particularly large intercorrelations among independent variables. However, a measure of multicollinearity among independent variables would be performed.

## EMPIRICAL RESULTS

The assumption of linear multiple regression and the fitness of the model was tested with no apparent violation. According to the computed values of a multiple regression model, the null hypothesis was rejected at a significant level of less than 0.01 (F test) in all three earnings models shown in Table 5. This means that among these estimated equations, there existed a relationship between earnings and the explanatory variables; education, years of work experience, marital status, job satisfaction, weekly hours worked at the office and home, willingness to engage in frequent

business trips and gender (for third model only). The variance inflation factor (VIF) is presented in Table 5 to detect multicollinearity among independent variables. A value of VIF less than 10 generally indicates no presence of multicollinearity. It appears that the observed dependencies did not affect their coefficients.

**Table 4: Correlations**

	Y	Edu	Work	Mstatus	Jobsat	Hrwork	Hrhome	Frequent	Gender
Y	1	.285(**)	.371(**)	-.305(**)	.122	.028	.157	.052	-.056
EDU	.285(**)	1	-.042	-.173(*)	-.051	-.004	-.038	.079	-.249(**)
WORK	.371(**)	-.042	1	-.389(**)	.171(*)	.023	.187(*)	-.096	-.044
MSTATUS	-.305(**)	-.173(*)	-.389(**)	1	-.223(**)	-.050	-.474(**)	.094	.142(*)
JOBSAT	.122	-.051	.171(*)	-.223(**)	1	-.119	-.002	-.083	-.125
HRWORK	.028	-.004	.023	-.050	-.119	1	.036	-.008	.066
HRHOME	.157	-.038	.187(*)	-.474(**)	-.002	.036	1	-.256(**)	.190(*)
FREQUENT	.052	.079	-.096	.094	-.083	-.008	-.256(**)	1	-.095
GENDER	-.056	-.249(**)	-.044	.142(*)	-.125	.066	.190(*)	-.095	1

NOTE \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 5: Earnings Model Coefficients**

Coefficients	Men		Women		Both	
	(1) Y	VIF	(2) Y	VIF	(3) Y	VIF
CONSTANT	-33856.264* (-1.743)		-33638.461** (-2.250)		-34758.282*** (-3.018)	
ED	2764.699*** (2.800)	1.376	2808.614*** (3.697)	1.084	2812.594*** (4.819)	1.162
WORK	900.398*** (3.288)	1.309	1054.021*** (4.989)	1.275	952.408*** (5.943)	1.222
MSTATUS	-5747.549 (-1.555)	1.800	-5118.356* (-1.712)	1.745	-4820.381** (-2.160)	1.700
JOBSAT	3108.047 (.776)	1.220	3724.927 (1.332)	1.327	3305.612 (1.543)	1.184
HRWORK	107.260 (.714)	1.038	-33.708 (-.280)	1.205	-3.100 (-.035)	1.082
HRHOME	-79.442 (-.426)	1.326	55.742 (.584)	1.590	25.588 (.318)	1.519
FREQUENT	134.501 (.043)	1.095	7099.004*** (2.796)	1.354	4532.556** (2.437)	1.173
GENDER					2244.466 (1.182)	1.168
R Square	0.596		0.515		0.527	
F Statistics	6.736***		9.716***		14.344***	

Notes t statistics are in parentheses.

Significant level : \* 0.10, \*\* 0.05, \*\*\*0.01

VIF = Variance inflation factor, a measure of collinearity

The coefficient of multiple determination (R Square) of earnings model for men, women and both were 0.596, 0.515 and 0.527, respectively (see Table 5). These indicated that 51.5 to 59.6 percent of variation in the earnings could be explained by the variations of variables included in each model. Furthermore, significant test (t-test) for men's earnings indicated that coefficients of education and years of work experience had a highly significant t-value ( $< 0.01$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis of education and years of work experience was rejected. Two additional independent variables, marital status ( $< 0.1$ ) and willingness to engage in frequent business trips ( $< 0.01$ ) were significant in women's earnings. When combining both men and women's earnings, coefficients of education and years of work experience had a highly significant t-value ( $< 0.01$ ), while marital status and willingness to engage in frequent business trip were significant at  $< 0.05$ , all with expected signs. Job satisfaction, weekly hours spent at work at the office and at home, and gender itself had no significant influence on earnings.

## DISCUSSION

This study found that years of education and work experience, marital status and willingness to engage in frequent business trips were crucial factors in determining the managerial earnings of both men and women. Years of education and work experience positively affected earnings. Marital status and willingness to engage in frequent business trips seemed to have more effect on women's earnings, as these variables were insignificant under men's earnings. When marital status was coded as 0 for married and 1 for single persons, the negative coefficient indicated that single women earned less than married women. This might be because married persons strive to earn more to support their families. The result contradicts what generally is found in the USA, i.e., that married women earned less than singles due to high effort for childcare and household production (Becker, 1985).

The willingness to engage in frequent business trips directly affected women's earnings. Willingness to accept frequent business trips was more likely to enhance women manager's earnings. This frequent business trip factor may reflect that workers have different tastes or job preferences, because it was not a significant factor in estimating men's earnings. If frequent business trips become an issue for women, then the exercise of their preference may result in lower earnings than men.

Table 6 further displays the independent sample test results about differences in group means of earnings between men and women. The equality hypothesis was accepted. It appeared that gender had no significant effect on earnings. Gender was not a significant factor in determining manager's earnings in this study. This may be due to job characteristics and not the individual characteristics that determine earnings. The introduction of job characteristics such as frequent business trip to the earning function reduces the male-female earning inequality. Moreover, responsibilities and effort required in managerial positions are the same regardless of gender. A

human resource management approach, therefore bases pay on the job requirements, rather than individual characteristics. Furthermore, there was no statistical difference in means between men and women managers in terms of education, years of work experience, number of hours at work and willingness to engage in frequent business trips.

Variables	Variances Assumed	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Y	Equal	.260	.611	.764	.446
	Not Equal			.793	.429
ED	Equal	.169	.681	1.287	.200
	Not Equal			1.249	.214
WORK	Equal	1.568	.212	.617	.538
	Not Equal			.610	.543
MSTATUS	Equal	9.855	.002	-2.019	.045
	Not Equal			-1.981	.049
JOBSAT	Equal	14.415	.000	1.764	.079
	Not Equal			1.839	.068
HRWORK	Equal	.007	.932	-1.035	.302
	Not Equal			-1.070	.287
HRHOME	Equal	4.989	.027	-2.201	.029
	Not Equal			-2.424	.017
FREQUENT	Equal	7.725	.006	1.338	.183
	Not Equal			1.352	.178

## CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper makes three important contributions in the literature on gender effect on earnings inequality. First, no existing research has studied earnings inequality at management level in Thailand. By controlling for similar observable dimensions, such as management level, educational attainment, work experience and race, it demonstrates that gender is not a significant factor in earnings inequality. Second, a newly created job preference factor, such as frequent business trips, was a significant factor in the women's earnings model. The introduction of job characteristics such as frequent business trips to the earning function reduces the male-female earning inequality. On the other hand, the exercise of this preference may contribute to lower earnings for women. Third, the results of testing for equality of means between men and women managers showed that the two

populations were indifferent in terms of earnings, educational attainment, years of work experience, work hours at office and willingness to engage in frequent business trips. However, men and women managers were significantly different in terms of marital status, job satisfaction and hours work at home.

### PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

For practical implication, a semi-logarithm of monthly manager's earnings (LnY) was estimated. Table 7 relates the predicted log on earnings to the independent variables, so that their coefficients can be expressed in percentage terms. Several studies (Becker & Chiswick, 1966; Mincer, 1974; Hanoch, 1967) estimated the rate of return to education in this fashion. For example, the education coefficient of 0.185 men's earnings (Model 4) indicated an 18.5 percent internal rate of return. If men increase education by 1 year, their earnings will increase by 18.5 percent. The education coefficient of women's earnings (Model 5) was 0.178 reflecting a 0.7 percent return below their male counterparts. In Beker's work (1975), the estimated rate of return in 1939, 1949 and 1958 was 14.5, 13.0 and 14.8 percent, respectively. Angrist and Krueger (1991) found a rate of return of 8 percent in 1980. A more recent study by Kane and Rouse (1995) reported a 9 percent rate of return for higher education in 1986.

Coefficients	Men		Women		Both	
	(4) LnY	VIF	(5) LnY	VIF	(6) LnY	VIF
CONSTANT	6.087*** (7.063)		6.536*** (9.399)		6.346*** (12.034)	
ED	.185*** (4.229)	1.376	.178*** (5.032)	1.084	.180*** (6.750)	1.162
WORK	.046*** (3.762)	1.309	.048*** (4.884)	1.275	.044*** (6.046)	1.222
MSTATUS	-.212 (-1.291)	1.800	-.223 (-1.600)	1.745	-.208** (-2.035)	1.700
JOBSAT	.216 (1.213)	1.220	.090 (.690)	1.327	.123 (1.250)	1.184
HRWORK	.009 (1.307)	1.038	.000 (-.009)	1.205	.003 (.632)	1.082
HRHOME	-.003 (-.328)	1.326	.004 (.794)	1.590	.002 (.573)	1.519
FREQUENT	-.084 (-.602)	1.095	.190 (1.605)	1.354	.106 (1.245)	1.173
GENDER					.082 (.943)	1.168
R Square	0.685		0.515		0.590	
F Statistics	9.930***		9.716***		18.520***	

Notes t statistics are in parentheses.  
 Significant level : \* 0.10, \*\* 0.05, \*\*\*0.01  
 VIF = Variance inflation factor, a measure of collinearity

However, work experience coefficients of men and women's earnings were 0.046 and 0.048, respectively. An increase in one year work experience among men will result in 4.6 percent higher in earnings. Women had slight advantage of 0.2 percent over men at 4.8 percent. In the USA, Duncan and Hoffman (1979) reported that the rate of return to a year of experience was between 5.4-8.5percent. Rosen (1982), using the same data set, found that after correcting for inflation, the real return on investment in on-the-job training (OJT) as measured by experience for college graduates was 12.6 percent and for non-college graduates was 19 percent. Groot and Mekkelholt (1995) employed a 1985 labor market survey of the Organization of Strategic Labor Market Research in the Netherlands with subset of male wage earners (1,339 observations). They discovered that the rate of return to OJT increased with the level of education. The rate of return to OJT for the least educated workers was 13 percent. At the intermediate level the rate of return to OJT was 36 percent, while at the highest education levels the rate of return to OJT was over 80 percent.

As found in Table 3, women managers overall spent more time than men taking care of domestic chores (9.83 VS 6.43 hours) and have less job satisfaction (0.69 VS 0.81). In particular, married women spent 17.94 hours as compared to 9.99 hours for married men on average to take care of work at home. This finding suggests more support for women as described below.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Improvements in women's labor work status coexists with deterioration in their relative economic well-being such as inhibiting fertility and dissolving marriage (Smith and Ward, 1989). Balancing efforts in the labor market and the family should be taken into account in formulating public policy on women's issues. In particular, policies should address how well they promote gender equity in the work force and what impact they will have on family. Nevertheless, it is imperative to address important policy implications of this result for business in the developing countries. In general, there appears to be a need to combine two types of policy action for women that promote progressive social change (Beneria, 2003). The first is a focus on the transformation of gender relations with policies that will enhance gender equality. These policies and actions can rely on a wide range of possibilities, from educational policies to the many dimensions of cultural transformation. Secondly, more structural policies aimed at socioeconomic change and the promotion of development models capable of incorporating progressive social change should be an integral part of this transformation. Both types of policy can complement each other and are interconnected in the organizational culture.

Our findings in this study provide a rationale for policy makers to encourage business organizations to support women managers, especially the married. O'Neill (2003) examined the trends and reasons of the gender-gap in wages in the United States. Gender gap was largely due to non-discriminatory factors that were unlikely to change unless the roles of men and women in the

home become more nearly identical. The dual role of women workers in Thai society should be recognized and every effort should be taken to facilitate women's contributions. Flexible working schedules and management practices, in-plant childcare nurseries, daycare operations and other nontraditional benefits are some examples found in a conventional work setting. A study by a multinational corporation showed that the rate of turnover in management position was two and a half times higher among top performing women than it was among men. A large producer of consumer goods reported that one half of the women who took maternity leave return to their jobs late or not at all (Schwartz, 1989). Thus, it is important to provide support for women who want to both raise children and pursue a career, and to promote women's freedom to pursue a career and a family.

Also noteworthy are the advances in technology that continue to increase competition in the job market. Automated technology enhances a firm's ability to accommodate employees in a non-conventional work setting, such as working from home. Thai business organizations should embrace the idea of flexible work schedules, including allowing employees to do some work from home. Women should equip themselves with computer skills and communication technologies to fully utilize home-based work environments. With these non-conventional work opportunities, government and business organizations should emphasize the importance of education and training in dealing with the highly competitive, global business, and provide financial and technical support to women. Equality in education is a necessary, but insufficient, condition to counteract gender-based and other forms of inequality due to discriminatory practices. Anti-discriminatory policies must also be implemented.

## CONCLUSIONS

Much of the earnings inequality literature has attempted to evaluate the impact of gender on earnings. This paper investigated the gender effect on earnings inequality at the administrative and managerial level in the private sector of Thailand. Factors that are important in explaining earnings inequality were explored. Contradictory to the popular findings, this study found no gender influence on earnings and no earnings inequality between men and women managers in Thailand. An avenue for further research might be to investigate other dimensions of gender inequality that likely exist in hiring, promotion and training. In addition, there is room for future research to include studies in other countries for generalization of these results. Such research will contribute significantly toward our understanding of the perceived value of human capital in different organizational cultures.

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# JUNGIAN PERSONALITY TYPES AND LEADERSHIP STYLES: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper proposes that personality types have an effect on the types of leader behaviors that an individual believes to be appropriate. This belief will impact actual leader behaviors. A review of the literature on Jungian personality types is conducted, followed by a description of leader behaviors using the Ohio State Framework, as modified by Schriesheim. The nature of these relationships and their potential impact on the workplace are discussed. The model is then tested on 128 actual supervisory employees, with results and implications presented.*

## INTRODUCTION

Research in the area of leadership has shown that leader behaviors are an important field of study (Bass, 1990; Tucker and Russell, 2004; Skinner and Spurgeon, 2005). Leader personality variables have been shown to impact organizational performance (Hough and Ogilvie, 2005). This paper looks at leader behaviors, using a modified version of the Ohio State leadership framework, and examines the role of personality, as conceptualized by Carl Jung (Jung 1923; Bridges, 1992) on perceptions of appropriate leader behaviors. We hypothesize that the personality of an individual will have a noticeable impact on their behavioral intentions, and therefore, on the actual behaviors that they engage in. We conclude with a discussion of the impact that these relationships may have in the workplace and offer suggestions for future research.

## PERSONALITY

The Keirsey Temperament Sorter II consists of four scales, based on Jung's (1923) Theory of Type. This theory is widely accepted, enjoys extensive support, and is applied through several questionnaires which are used to measure the scales. These scales include the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Keirsey Temperament sorter (Gauld and Sink, 1985; Gardner and Martinko, 1996; Sample, 2004). The four scales used by both of these are Introversion/Extroversion (I/E), Sensation/Intuition (S/N), Thinking/Feeling (T/F), and Judgment/Perception (J/P). The assumption underlying these scales is that "people have a preference for one or the other pole on each of four

indices, analogous to a natural preference for right- or left-handedness" (Carlyn, 1977, p.461). The first scale I/E refer to the preference for either the outer world, or internal, mental structures and processes (Hall and Norby, 1973; Myers, 1993).

The next two scales refer to Jung's (1923) four psychological functions. The first pair, (S/N) refers to a preferred method of perceiving things. Sensing types rely on direct information from the sense organs, or the concrete details of the situation, whereas Intuitive types deal with hunches, possibilities, abstract meanings, and leaps of faith (Carlyn, 1977; Myers, 1993; Opt and Loffredo, 2000). This pair was called the irrational functions, not because they are contrary to reason, but because they do not involve reasoning (Hall and Norby, 1973; Myers, 1993). The second pair, T/F, is called the rational functions because they involve reasoned decisions. Thinking types prefer decisions on whether there is a true connection between two or more ideas, and Feeling types make decisions as to whether an idea is pleasing or distasteful, beautiful or ugly, exciting or dull (Hall and Norby, 1973; Wheeler, Hunter and Bryant, 2004).

The fourth scale, J/P, never explicitly defined by Jung, but implicit in his writings, refers to an individual's preferred way of dealing with the outer world. Judging types prefer a planned orderly environment, and want to regulate and control life. Perceptive types are more curious and open minded, preferring adapting to life and responding spontaneously and flexibly (Carlyn, 1977; Rosenak and Shontz, 1988).

## **LEADER BEHAVIOR**

A popular model used in leader behavior research is the one proposed by Ohio State Leadership studies. This model suggests that there are two dimensions of leader behaviors: initiating structure and consideration (Hemphill and Coons, 1957; Halpin and Winer, 1957; Fleishman, 1957; Seeman, 1957). House and Dessler (1974) suggested that the initiating structure dimension (also called instrumental behavior) is a multidimensional construct, and cannot be adequately measured using a single unidimensional scale. Therefore, the initiating structure dimension was divided into the component parts identified by House and Dessler (1974) and later confirmed by Jermier and Burkes (1979), Schriesheim, House and Kerr (1976), and Schriesheim, Cogliser and Neider (1995).

The initiating structure dimension, as originally defined by Halpin and Winer (1957) and Hemphill and Coon (1957) refers to leader behavior which helps to define the relationship between leader and subordinate, and the degree to which a leader originates, facilitates or resists new ideas and practices. However, this dimension can be divided into three distinct categories of leader behaviors: role clarification, work assignment and specification of procedures (House and Dessler, 1974; Schriesheim, House and Kerr, 1976). Each of these types of behavior has been shown to be viewed differently by subordinates, and to have different effects on related organizational variables (Schriesheim and Bish, 1974; Schriesheim, Cogliser and Neider, 1995). The three types of initiating behavior were defined by Schriesheim (1978, pg. 49) as follows:

1. Leader role clarification: Leader behaviors which clarify what is expected of subordinates in their work roles.
2. Leader work assignment: Leader Behaviors which involve the assigning of subordinates to specific tasks.
3. Leader specification of procedures: Leader behaviors which specify rules, procedures and methods for subordinates to use or follow in the execution of their jobs.

The consideration variable also referred to as supportive leadership (House and Dessler, 1974), is characterized as behaviors which make a person "friendly and approachable, and considerate of the needs of subordinates" (p. 41). Others have associated this dimension with terms such as "humanitarian and helpful" (Haccoun, Haccoun and Sallay, 1978). Templer defined consideration as an "orientation towards the people in an organization" (1973, p.359). As Schriesheim (1978, 1995) points out, this variable has been found by the literature to be unconfounded and unidimensional. Schriesheim's conclusion have been supported by other leadership studies (Judge, Piccolo and Ilies, 2004).

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY AND LEADER BEHAVIORS**

In this section, we discuss the possible relationships between each dimension of Jung's theory of type and leader behaviors. We hypothesize that relationships may exist between each of these personality dimensions, and one or more dimensions of leader behaviors. The first personality dimension is Introversion/Extraversion. This dimension, in general, indicates a preference for either working alone, or in small groups (introversion) or working with many others (extraversion). Two relationships are likely to be related to this preference. First, extroverts may be more likely to engage in hands-on leadership (specification of procedures). Second, since extroverts enjoy dealing with people and are more focused on the world around them, they tend to give more attention to relationships. Therefore, the following two propositions are made:

P1: Extroverts will be more likely to engage in specification of procedures, than introverts.

P2: Extroverts will be more likely to engage in consideration behaviors, than introverts.

The second dimension of type is Sensing/Intuition. Sensing types prefer the concrete; that which they can see, hear, feel, smell and taste. They also are more likely to pay attention to their immediate environment, and spend less time "with their head in the clouds." This preference may cause Sensing types to focus more on job-related behaviors, rather than relationship building, since the latter has long-term effects. Therefore we propose that:

P3: Sensing types will be more likely to engage in work assignment, role clarification and specification of procedures than Intuitives

P4: Intuitives will be more likely to engage in consideration, or relationship building behaviors, than sensing types.

The third dimension, Thinking/Feeling is likely to be related to the use of consideration, or relationship oriented behavior. Individuals who are categorized as feeling, are likely to be more attuned to the emotions of others, and therefore may be more likely to engage in consideration behaviors. Therefore, we propose:

P5: Feeling types will be more likely to engage in Consideration behaviors than Thinking types.

The last dimension, Judging/Perceiving relates to a preference for order and/or a planned environment versus a preference for spontaneity and unplanned action. Therefore, by definition a Judging person would prefer things to be well planned, and therefore is likely to engage in specification of procedures, work assignment and role clarification. Therefore, we propose:

P6: Judging types will be more likely to engage in role clarification, job assignment, and specification of procedures, than perceiving types.

### **SAMPLE**

In order to test the above propositions, we administered a series of questionnaires to a sample of 128 individuals employed in supervisory positions at a light manufacturing firm, located in the southeastern United States. The sample consisted of 85 males, and 43 females. The minimum age was 23, and the maximum was 61, with a mean age of 39.83. Organizational tenure varied from a low of 1 month, to a high of 33 years, with a mean level of 10.86 years. Experience in a supervisory position ranges from a low of zero, to a high of 25 years, with a mean of 4.78 years. Of the 128 respondents in the sample, 44 identified themselves as white, 73 as black or African-American, 4 as Hispanic, two as "other" and 5 did not identify any ethnic/racial identity.

### **INSTRUMENTS**

Leader behaviors were measured using a modified version of a questionnaire developed by Schriesheim (1978). This questionnaire divides the initiating structure dimension of leadership into three separate dimensions consisting of role clarification, work assignment and specification of procedures. Due to the length of the original questionnaire (80 items) a short scale was developed. Based on Schriesheim's (1978) study, eight items from each scale that had the highest correlation with the scale score were chosen. The original questionnaire was developed to measure subordinate assessments of leader behavior. For our study, we modified the instruction set based on the LBDQ ideal to assess subjects' behavioral intentions as leaders.

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The Jungian personality or type variables were measured using the Keirsey Temperament Sorter II. This instrument has undergone a significant level of testing and validation and is shown to be a reliable and valid measure of Jungian type (Keirsey.com, 2002). This questionnaire includes seventy questions, which measure the four personality dimensions (types) discussed in earlier sections.

## STUDY

As a first step, we developed specific hypotheses based on the above propositions. Since our propositions were quite specific, we faced little difficulty in transforming each of these into a testable hypothesis. Next, to test the hypotheses, we conducted a field survey using questionnaires to collect data from individuals working in supervisory positions. Our hypotheses are as follows:

- H1: The Introversion/Extraversion scale will be positively correlated with the specification of procedures scale.
- H2: The Introversion/Extraversion scale will be positively correlated with the consideration scale.
- H3: The Sensing/Intuition scale will be positively correlated with the work assignment, role clarification, and specification of procedures scale.
- H4: The Sensing/Intuition scale will be negatively correlated with the consideration scale.
- H5: The thinking/Feeling scale will be negatively correlated with the consideration scale.
- H6a: The Judging/Perceiving scale will be positively correlated to the work assignment scale.
- H6b: The Judging/Perceiving scale will be positively correlated to the role clarification scale.
- H6c: The Judging/Perceiving scale will be positively correlated to specification of procedures scale.

## RESULTS

The questionnaires were administered to 128 supervisors working in a manufacturing organization who were attending a management-training seminar. The response rate was 100% due to the nature of interaction that the researchers had with the respondents and the ability to follow-up with no difficulty. The data were collected over a five-day period, in groups of approximately 25-30 people. Anonymity was ensured by instructing the participants not to write their names or any type of information that might reveal their identity. Data analysis was performed using a SPSSpc v11.0. The GLM procedure was used to specify personality variables as independent variables and leadership variables as dependent variables respectively. Initial examination of the data indicated that two of the surveyed dimensions, role clarification and job assignment were highly

inter-correlated. Using factor analysis we collapsed these two dimensions to create a new variable that we refer to as 'directing behavior.' However, for the purposes of this study, this change is of minimal importance, as the hypothesized relationships between this dimension (directing behavior) and personality is not supported (see results in Tables 1, 2, 3).

The multivariate tests supported a relationship between leadership and one of the personality variables--Judging/Perceiving. The Wilks lambdas for the other three personality variables did not indicate significance at the multivariate level. Based on these results, Hypotheses 6a and 6c are fully supported while others are not supported. In addition to the multivariate test indicating that there is a significant effect, the univariate effects are both significant and in the predicted direction. Results from this study indicate that Judging types are more likely to engage in both general direction, for example the assignment of a goal or task, and the more scrutinizing specification of procedures. Full multivariate and univariate results are reported in the tables below.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
GENERAL DIRECTION	4.19189	.401169	128
CONSIDERATION	4.0244	.50880	128
SPECIFICATION OF PROCEDURES	4.2061	.47904	128
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I/E	132	5.04	2.116
S/N	132	13.76	2.151
T/F	132	9.41	3.636
J/P	132	8.42	2.490

	Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Wilks' Lambda	.314	87.932	3.000	121.000	.000
I/E	Wilks' Lambda	.989	.448	3.000	121.000	.719
S/N	Wilks' Lambda	.999	.044	3.000	121.000	.988
T/F	Wilks' Lambda	.996	.172	3.000	121.000	.915
J/P	Wilks' Lambda	.938	2.689	3.000	121.000	.049



**Table 3: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects**

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	GD	1.351	4	.338	2.177	.075
	CONS	4.679E-02	4	1.170E-02	.044	.996
	SOP	1.178	4	.294	1.295	.276
Intercept	GD	36.244	1	36.244	233.552	.000
	CONS	28.305	1	28.305	106.045	.000
	SOP	36.425	1	36.425	160.208	.000
I/E	GD	9.549E-02	1	9.549E-02	.615	.434
	CONS	2.753E-02	1	2.753E-02	.103	.749
	SOP	6.441E-03	1	6.441E-03	.028	.867
S/N	GD	8.687E-03	1	8.687E-03	.056	.813
	CONS	4.202E-03	1	4.202E-03	.016	.900
	CLOSE	7.928E-04	1	7.928E-04	.003	.953
T/F	GD	2.184E-02	1	2.184E-02	.141	.708
	CONS	1.049E-02	1	1.049E-02	.039	.843
	CLOSE	7.819E-02	1	7.819E-02	.344	.559
J/P	GD	1.109	1	1.109	7.143	.009
	CONS	4.859E-03	1	4.859E-03	.018	.893
	CLOSE	.820	1	.820	3.605	.060

### IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study suggests that people who are diagnosed as a "judging type" are likely to engage in greater frequency of general supervision, as well as specification of procedures, or close leadership. While the first tendency is a good one, as it may lead to higher performance, the second, specification of procedure does not seem to be a positive leader behavior. Similar in construct to "close leadership" this variable focuses on the degree to which a manager forces his/her process and specific techniques on the employee, limiting their job autonomy. Many leadership studies (most of them conducted in the United States) have suggested that "close" leader behavior leads to lowered satisfaction, without enhancing performance (Brown, 1982). Leaders who exhibited high levels of specification of procedure behavior experienced lower employee job satisfaction and performance.

As Hofstede (1993) has stated, the bulk of leadership and management studies have been conducted in the United States and other Western countries where the dominant culture favors lower

power distance and higher degree of comfort with uncertainty. In such cultures, people prefer higher degrees of autonomy and flexibility and resist a rigid supervisory style. Naturally, people are uncomfortable with a close leadership style.

With increased diversity and globalization, one logical question would be if the "judging type" leaders with their desire for close and directive supervision would be effective in other cultures that are different than Western cultures. Gopalan and Rivera (1997) conclude that in India, the most effective leader was one who behaved like a "benevolent" patriarch with a high degree of supervision and structure towards their subordinates (similar to that of a "father-son" relationship). Similar types of leader behavior were found in countries like Turkey, Mexico, etc. where the prevailing cultures had high power distance and low tolerance for uncertainty (Romero, 2004; Pasa, 2000). Under these scenarios, subordinates are expected to be dependent on their leaders for all aspects of work. This raises the possibility that "judging type" leaders who specify procedures may be more effective in some cultures than others. Clearly, additional research has to be conducted in other countries to answer this question. One of the few studies conducted, comparing leadership behaviors across western (Australia) and eastern (Hong Kong) cultures (Lok and Crawford, 2004) found that culture did have an impact on the effectiveness of leader behaviors. However, the limited scope of this study (2 countries) leaves open much room for further research.

Another limitation of our study is that it was based in a manufacturing setting—our respondents were stating ideal leadership behaviors that were most compatible in this setting. It is entirely possible that different types of personality and leadership behaviors may be effective in non-manufacturing settings. As an example, Skinner and Spurgeon (2005), cite the growing importance of empathy and emotional intelligence as important leader behavioral traits to be effective in a health care setting. We recommend additional studies explore the personality-leader behavior relationship in a variety of occupational settings.

We would also encourage future studies to study the moderating impact of demographic variables such as age, education, and gender which were found to impact leadership behaviors and styles. According to Somech (2003), large disparities in age and education between leaders and subordinates results in non-participative leadership, poorer articulation of goals and performance strategies, unclear task-oriented communication, and decreased frequency of communication. The relationship between leader personality and behavior has a great deal of potential importance to the fields of leadership and management. Bass (1990) and Dansereau, Alutto, and Yammarino (1984) have concluded that consideration behaviors are likely to lead to increased employee satisfaction, while behaviors such as role clarification, and job assignment have a positive impact on job performance. From an organizational perspective, there is great interest in gaining a greater understanding of what personality types lead to greater frequency of specific behaviors. While it certainly would be premature to suggest that personality should be used for screening purposes, an instrument like the Keirseley temperament sorter may be valuable in selecting participants for management training, particularly in topics relating to leadership style, or leader behaviors.

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# DEVELOPING A MODEL OF LEADERSHIP IN THE TELEWORKING ENVIRONMENT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

*The study of leadership, leader's roles, and subordinate roles has evolved over time from focusing on traits and then behaviors and further into contingency and neocharismatic paradigms. This evolution was driven by both the advancement of knowledge and by changes in environmental factors such as personal values, laws, politics, economics, and technology. In the last fifteen years leadership paradigms have been especially influenced by technology advances in telecommunications and personal computing. These two technologies enable alternative work arrangement options such as teleworking. The role of the leader is seriously impacted by removing the physical contact between leader and the lead. This paper develops a model of leadership in this environment based on reviewing the existing research then tests that model with a case study of teleworkers and managers from four organizations.*

## INTRODUCTION

Leadership is one of the world's oldest preoccupations (Bass, 1990). The study of history has been the study of leaders - what they did and why they did it. Historians, philosophers and, more recently, social scientists have developed and explored paradigms of leadership that have evolved through time as organizational environments have changed. Yet the overall importance of leadership has remained unchanged. Napoleon has been widely quoted as saying he would rather have an army of rabbits led by a lion than an army of lions led by a rabbit.

In the last fifteen years, though, there has been a trend towards leaderless organizations. Group decision making, empowered teams, computer aided instruction, distance learning, virtual office, teleworking, etc. have all emerged to wage war against the heretofore accepted leadership roles. The drive towards these changes is influenced by the globalization of businesses, competition, employee unrest, and the need to operate efficiently. The enablers are primarily technological. Since 1980 inexpensive personal computing has become a reality. Telecommunications capabilities have allowed for high speed transmission of data to and from virtually every home, office, or other

work location. Client/server computer hardware architecture along with the software to drive it allows access to all company information from anywhere around the world.

In this new environment, students are studying and employees are working out of the sight of their teachers or managers. This can be uncomfortable to managers and teachers who have been managing attendance and now must manage outputs. Subordinates must deal with new methods of self-discipline and communication. Other family members also play a role in the success of the alternative work arrangement environment.

This paper will focus on teleworking (or telecommuting as some prefer) as it relates to the leadership role. The following section will discuss the nature and extent of teleworking in the US along with some of the research conducted in the field. Then a model will be developed reflecting the constructs uncovered in the literature review. These constructs are then related to current leadership theories. The next section will test the model through a case study involving four companies and 15 teleworkers and teleworker managers. The last section will present some conclusions and propose areas for further research.

### **TELEWORKING: AN OVERVIEW**

Although the International Telework Association and Council (1998) can trace the history of teleworking to the National Science Foundation in 1973, it has only been since the decade of the 90's that teleworking has gain significance as an alternative work arrangement. Teleworking is more than just working out of the home. It also includes working out of satellite offices, telework centers, on-the-road or some other alternate worksite. Telework is any work arrangement in which employees work at any time or place that allows them to accomplish their work in an effective and efficient manner.

According to a survey sponsored by AT & T as of October 2001 there were something under 30 million people in the US teleworking (Venkatesh & Johnson, 2002). This is a significant increase over estimates of 3 million in 1997. These figures do not include the 43.2 million (Holub, 1999) self-employed people who work out of their homes. The drivers of the telework movement are:

- The transition from the Industrial Age to the Information Age
- Sociological trends to better balance work and family life
- Organizational pressures to reduce costs and to improve the ability to recruit and retain workers
- Political pressures for environmental concerns

Realizing benefits from a teleworking program is not as easy as might seem. Some see telework as having the potential to actually blur the boundary between work and family life (Hill & Weiner, 1994). The virtual office can become a "cyberspace sweatshop" (Hill, Hawkins, & Miller, 1996). Pitt-Catsoupes & Marchetta (1991) found that telework can lead to increased levels



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of conflict in the family and negative spillover. Many researchers claim that combining dependent care with telework is ineffective and should be avoided (Christensen, 1992; Riley, 1994).

According to the Gartner Group one-half of all remote-access pilot programs will fail because of insufficient support infrastructure, data security concerns, productivity declines, decreases in employee morale, legal and insurance problems, and teleworkers' fear of management reprisals. Even in light of these negatives, evidence still abounds that telework should be considered a viable concept. Gartner predicted that 137 million workers worldwide would be involved in some form of remote work by 2003 (Manoochehri & Pinkerton, 2003). Computerworld in their June 28, 1999 issue of 100 Best Places to Work in Information Technology determined that 89 percent of these companies offered some form of a teleworking program.

According to Chaudron (1995) a successful teleworking program requires the "right reasons", the "right job", and the "right employee". The right reasons means that management should not just view it as an accommodation or benefit to the employee but should also expect increased productivity. The right job, he says, is one that involves individual versus team contributions. Although team projects can be accomplished with a mixture of at-home and in-office work. The right employee is one whose personal traits will be suitable for teleworking. To these three R's must be added the "right manager" and the "right environment". The personal traits of the manager are just as important as are the employee's traits. The manager's anxieties and inability to lead can undermine the potential benefits of a telework program. Environmental concerns include the at-home workplace distractions and available resources, the in-office accommodations, and the formal and informal communication channels. This paper will focus on the right employee, the right manager, and the right communications, as these are the major components of a leadership study.

### **TELEWORKER CONSIDERATIONS**

Ninety-four percent of homeworkers sampled said they wished to continue homeworking, but less than ten percent said they would want to continue for the rest of their working lives (Baruch & Nicholson, 1997). These statistics reflect the inner conflict facing the remote worker. Teleworkers can suffer from feelings of isolation, anxiety over career issues, negative spillover between work and family life, guilt, communication gaps, and reduced productivity.

According to participants at an ACM forum (1995), working electronically kills the most human qualities of an employee – the ability to interact both socially and professionally. These statements reflect the isolation that can occur in a teleworking environment. Teleworkers may feel left out of the loop of everything from office gossip to changes in Company policies, procedures, or activities. However, teleworkers and managers who are part of a program to interact informally, develop interpersonal organizational networks and create synergistic relationships have shown reduced feelings of isolation (Kurland & Cooper, 2002).

In a survey conducted by Huws (1984), 60 percent of respondents felt that isolation was the primary disadvantage of teleworking. Being a physically isolated teleworker is likely to reduce the amount of feedback received from supervisors, coworkers, and clients. Hamilton (1987) reported that most teleworkers miss the stimulation of exchanging ideas with colleagues. Additionally, because communication is primarily nonvisual, any feedback will be lower quality because of the reduced nonverbal cues (Norman et. al., 1995).

Conflicting studies have looked at the impact of "neighborhood work centers" as a mitigating factor for feelings of isolation. These work centers allow telecommuters to share resources in an office setting but one that is located near to their homes. These centers can cater to workers of a single employer (satellite or branch office) or of multiple employers. DiMartino and Wirth (1990) determined in their study that the neighborhood center did help to combat isolation and was the location of choice for the homeworker. On the contrary, Crossan and Burton (1993) in their case study found that although all the respondents saw isolation as a negative, only one wanted to leave the home as the primary work environment.

The Crossan and Burton (1993) study also gave support to the suggestion that the majority of teleworkers are married women with childcare responsibilities, who are not interested in promotion. More recent statistics are showing that this is no longer the case (International Telework Association and Council, 1998). Professional workers are becoming a more dominant part of the telework workforce. These people are interested in their career growth and have concerns about being out-of-sight/out-of-mind with their supervisors.

Another area of major concern to the telecommuter is the balance between work life and family life. As has already been discussed, it is one of the drivers toward adopting the telecommuting arrangement. But does it really work as conceived? Olson and Primps (1984) found that professional workers who were telecommuting had a tendency to become "workaholics" when they were highly involved in their jobs. Hill et. al. (1998) found inconclusive perceptions of improved work/family life balance. Hartman, Stone and Arora (1991) actually found a negative relationship between family relationships and satisfaction with telework. While others see that the flexibility of telework allows employees to balance their home/work responsibilities (Jenson, 1994). Galinsky et.al. (1993) determined that the flexibility in work arrangements could empower the employee with the ability to integrate and overlap work responsibilities and family responsibilities leading to positive spillover and achieving a healthy work/family balance.

The "right employee" suitable for a telecommuting job is one who is results oriented, self-disciplined, well organized, a good time manager, satisfaction comes from the challenge of the job not from managing others, and is trusted by the manager (Murphy, 1996). In other words, they are model employees who have the ability to get as much done at home as they would in the office. Most of the research applicable to the telework environment has been conducted in the area of self-discipline and more specifically, as related to self-managed work teams. However,

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self-management is also an individual characteristic and is key to an evaluation of leadership in the telecommuting environment.

In the collaborative work environment of today where organizations are adopting flatter organizational structures through employee empowerment, work teams, and enriched jobs; self-management may neutralize traditional concepts of leadership or render them ineffective or redundant (Castaneda, Kolenko & Aldag; 1999). In a similar vein, Manz and Sims (1980) have defended self-management as a substitute for leadership. Manz (1986) points out that the ultimate control for managing behaviors is to encourage employee's self-control systems rather than imposing organizational controls. Self-management by an individual involves using self-goal-setting, self-observation, self-reward, and self-punishment to control behaviors (Frayne, 1991; Tsui & Ashford, 1994).

An individual's self-efficacy has been shown to be recursively related to perceptions of self-management (Castaneda, Kolenko & Aldag; 1999; Frayne & Geringer, 1994). For example, training in self-management resulted in an increase in self-efficacy (Latham & Frayne, 1989). High self-efficacy and high self-management have both been shown to lead to high job satisfaction (Uhl-Bien & Graen, 1998).

Clearly then, the leadership paradigm for the teleworking environment must include aspects of self-management. Additionally, the "right employee" must be one who is capable of and desirable of self-management. When employee reactions are negative to the concept, resistance to self-management can result (Kirkman & Shapiro, 1997). Manz and Sims relate the story of an employee being put in a self-managed role who "banged his fist on a table and demanded his right to have a boss to tell him what to do" (1993: 18).

### **TELEWORK MANAGER CONSIDERATIONS**

The manager of teleworking employees is also faced with a new set of management challenges. First, there are the internal anxieties associated with the loss of physical control over the employee and, second the uncertainty of still being able to achieve productivity using new methods and leadership styles. Just as with the telework employee, there are personal traits and styles that have been found to be more effective in the telework environment.

Research has shown that managers facing a new telecommuting environment can have uncertainties and resistance to the change partially as a result of feeling that the program will fail or conversely fearing that the new program will be so successful that it will point out the failings of the past. Managers often perceive a threat of loss of power, influence and importance as they realize that their subordinates are becoming, to a large extent, self-managers. Managers also recognize that their own leadership skill sets may be on the verge of obsolescence to some degree (Manz, Keating & Donnellon; 1990).

As a consequence of these fears managers can react by micromanaging. Randolph (1995) found that whenever managers find themselves in the uncomfortable position of not knowing what to do, they tend to fall back into their bureaucratic mentality. Stewart and Manz (1995) found that leaders with low self-efficacy and negative outcome expectations will establish goals congruent with overpowering leadership.

In order to work effectively in a teleworking environment, it is important for the manager to develop a sense of trust in the teleworker. Trust is a dyadic relationship involving the attributes of both the trustee and the trustor (Jarvenpaa, Knoll & Leidner; 1998). The trustor must have the propensity to trust. This trait is a result of cultural, social, developmental experiences, and personality type (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman; 1995). The trustee attributes are his/her perceived ability, benevolence, and integrity (Jarvenpaa, Knoll & Leidner; 1998). Ability refers to the skills that enable a trustee to be perceived as competent in the domain. Benevolence is the extent to which the trustee is believed to feel care and concern, and the willingness to do good to the trustor. Integrity is adherence to a set of principles thought to make the trustee dependable and reliable.

The importance of the teleworker's ability to self-manage was discussed earlier. The manager, however, also plays a role in the self-managed environment. Specifically, in self-managed situations the role of the leader "is to provide the individual with clear task boundaries within which discretion and knowledge can be exercised" (Slocum & Sims, 1980:201). The manager is assisting the self-managed employee to engage in a form of self-leadership (Manz, 1986).

Organizational controls can become an obstacle to an effective teleworking program. These "objective" controls attempt to restrict behavior while the normative or self-controls attempt to induce a value of belief change (Leifer & Mills, 1996). A leader's role in a self-management situation lies in facilitating the development of self-controls by employees so that they can successfully manage their work with fewer organizational controls (Cohen, Chang & Ledford; 1997). According to Leifer and Mills (1996: 119) self-management "develops as one's cognitive map or schema is changed and organized to be consistent with the values and beliefs of the organization, thus resulting in behaviors consistent with organizational goals".

The teleworkers' perception of the bureaucratic obstacles can have serious, detrimental effects on morale and productivity (Tomaskovic-Devey & Risman; 1993, Uhl-Bien & Graen, 1998). Teleworkers are susceptible to electronic performance monitoring (EPM) which has made it possible for managers to obtain real-time records about performance, pauses in work, and behavior of their employees when they are out of sight. EPM, however, has been shown to decrease perceived job autonomy (Carayon, 1993) and therefore would negatively impact self-management. Similarly, Anderson (1990) suggests that increasing the frequency of job performance evaluations can cause self-doubt and erode self-regulatory skills.

On the positive side, teleworkers are usually given access remotely to more company information in order to perform their work. Research has shown that there is a positive impact from

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the trust the organization is demonstrating to the employee and that it generates an improved sense of ownership (Randolph, 1995).

The effective teleworker manager works with the telecommuter to establish goals. The manager no longer manages attendance, but must manage performance. Goal setting is widely recognized as a powerful motivational technique (Locke & Latham, 1990). Goals should not be viewed as an ends, but as collaborative milestones by which progress can be measured. They should be a collaborative agreement between the manager and the employee (Randolph, 1995).

Goal setting theory focuses on the question of why some people perform differently than others even though they have the same abilities and knowledge. The cause must be motivational (Latham & Locke, 1991). Two attributes of goals have been studied in relation to performance, namely content and intensity. From a content perspective, the goals must be specific. Specific goals have been found to lead to higher performance levels than vague goals such as "do your best". Goal intensity or commitment can operate as both a direct causal factor and as a moderator of performance. Managers can play an important role in goal commitment by persuading the teleworker that the goal is both attainable and important.

The "right manager" in the teleworking equation is someone who (1) is capable of trusting the employee's integrity and abilities, (2) can manage by objectives, agreed performance standards and deadlines, (3) can evaluate performance by results and not attendance, (4) can reconstruct the conduct and self-image of employees by encouraging them to acquire the capacities and dispositions that will allow them to become self-managers (du Gay, Salaman & Rees; 1996), and (5) is generally flexible and understanding of employee needs to balance work and family life.

### **TELEWORK COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS**

The teleworking environment has a somewhat unique impact on communications within the organization. The critical element of good communication between the worker and the manager is significant in the in-office environment just as in the out-of-office environment. Communications with coworkers is also necessary to accomplish tasks and to maintain business and personal relationships. In the out-of-office environment this communication channel tends to take on a more electronic mode. E-mail or document handling systems become the method of communicating.

In a qualitative study, Weiner and Hill (1995) found that telecommuting had a negative influence on communication and peer interaction with coworkers and managers. Ramsower (1985) found that full-time telecommuters engage in less upward, downward, and horizontal communications.

Much of the work done in organizations is accomplished through communication as people exchange ideas and information and coordinate activities. Organizations are viewed as social systems whose basic structure consists of relationships between individuals (Fritz, Narasimhan & Rhee; 1998). Workers develop alliances, foster creativities, and learn through communication with

coworkers. Additionally, the communication between manager and worker is essential to developing an agreed upon performance goal.

Employees in the same physical location develop these alliances and shared learning through chance encounters "around the water cooler" and elsewhere (Allen, 1977; Kraut, 1995). Even the communication with managers is often on an informal basis. Sproull (1984) found that almost 50 percent of a manager's time is spent in unscheduled meetings.

The teleworker's feelings of isolation and anxiety over career development can be exasperated by having to rely on electronic communication channels. E-mail has been shown to be not as rich a communication medium as face-to-face interaction (Ngwenyama & Lee, 1997). The social cues cannot be conveyed electronically (Norman et.al., 1995). A study performed by Kraut et. al. (1998) indicated that social interaction via e-mail was positively related to social isolation, loneliness, and depression.

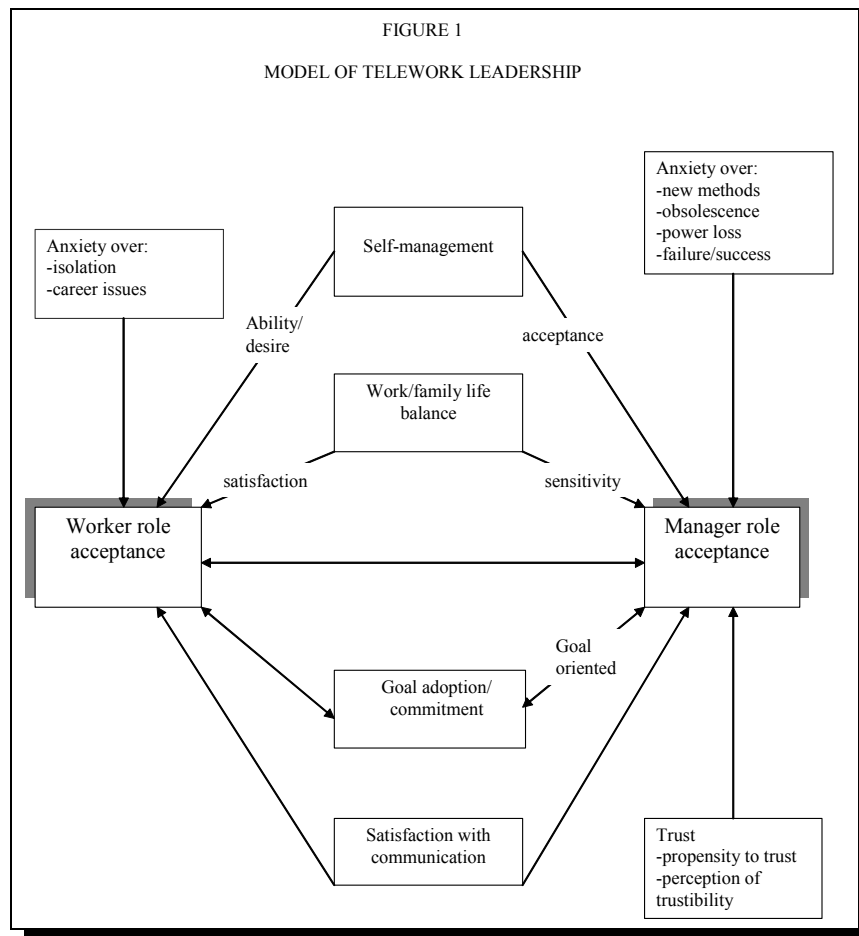
Leadership research has also suggested that organic systems (i.e. face-to-face) involve more two-way communication, more managerial information and advice rather than orders and decisions than mechanical (electronic) systems (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Weick, 1987). Generally it is a leadership style that more resembles consultation rather than command (Courtright, Fairhurst, & Rogers, 1989).

### **MODEL OF TELEWORK LEADERSHIP**

Combining all of the constructs identified in the literature review produces a schema of the leader role, subordinate role, and the leadership function as reflected in Figure 1.

The ultimate goal of an alternative work arrangement, such as teleworking, is to improve productivity, or at least not reduce it, while either improving worker job satisfaction and/or reducing organizational costs. Organizational constraints, economics, nature of tasks performed, dedicated resources at home and at the office all play a role in the overall job performance of the teleworker. However, this model is focused strictly on the leadership aspects. As such, the only antecedents to teleworker performance represented in the model are the level of acceptance by the teleworker with his/her role and the level of acceptance by the manager with his/her role in the telework environment.

Teleworker role acceptance is partially a function of the ability to deal with anxieties over feelings of isolation and concern for career advancement. Additionally, the teleworker must attain a level of satisfaction with the ability to balance the work life and family life aspects. Successful teleworking requires the teleworker to have both the desire for and the ability to self-manage. The degree to which this is accomplished is also a predictor of role acceptance. The importance of communication channels between the teleworker and the manager as well as with coworkers has already been discussed. The extent of satisfaction with the amount and richness of communication is also a predictor of role acceptance.



The telework manager role acceptance is also a function of the perception of satisfaction with the communication channels with the teleworker. In addition, the manager must deal with his/her own anxieties over perceptions of loss of power and resistance to new leadership techniques. Another important antecedent to manager role acceptance is the manager's propensity to trust the teleworker. The manager must feel comfortable with the teleworker's abilities, integrity, and dedication to the task. The adoption of certain leadership styles or attributes also will affect acceptance. The manager must be goal oriented rather than attendance oriented, must be understanding of the teleworker's need to balance work and family lives, and must be able to accept the concept of employee self-management.

In order to fit the pieces together, performance goals must be mutually agreed upon by the teleworker and the manager. The worker must be committed to attaining these goals and the manager must be committed to using them as the means of evaluating employee performance.

## COMPARISONS TO EXISTING PARADIGMS

The model shown in Figure 1 brings together the various variables and constructs in a relational diagram that can serve as a means of evaluating how the existing leadership paradigms and theories "fit" this framework. Bass (1990) documents over 3,000 studies of leadership. Almost all of these studies are based on American values, work situations, and perspectives.

House and Aditya (1997) have reclassified these theories into paradigms. The first they call the "leadership trait paradigm" which was the first direction of study but has more recently re-emerged with theories of new traits that have evolved over time. Lord, DeVader & Alliger; 1986) conducted a meta-analysis of previous studies and found four universal traits; intelligence, dominance, masculinity, and adjustment, all associated with follower perceptions of leadership. Looking at these traits in a teleworking environment does not appear to be as applicable. These traits are hard to convey in a remote, non-visual relationship. However, McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark & Lowell; 1958) although directed at the leader could be also viewed at the subordinate level. This theory is concerned with a non-conscious concern for achieving excellence in accomplishments through individual efforts. High achievement motivated people engage in a high degree of self-regulatory (self-management) behavior. According to the model in Figure 1, the ability to self-manage and the ability to accept self-management are two of the traits identified.

House (1977) defined the "charismatic leader" as someone with a high degree of self-confidence. He/she is also a strong advocate for change and challenges the status quo. These traits are also a part of the telework leadership model. These are the manager's traits necessary for dealing with the anxieties impeding manager satisfaction. Additionally, Kenny (Kenny & Zaccaro, 1983) added the trait of leadership sensitivity to the leadership trait literature. The telework manager needs to be sensitive to and understand the teleworker's need for work and family life balance.

The second paradigm of leadership according to House and Aditya (1997) is the leader behavior paradigm, which includes the contingency theories (Fiedler, 1967) and more specifically the path-goal theory. Path-Goal Theory (House & Mitchell, 1997) has its foundation in expectancy theory. Porter and Lawler (1968) developed the notion of expectancy theory as a means of understanding the relationships between motivation and performance behaviors. There are three concepts that are the building blocks for the theory, performance-outcome expectancy, valence, and effort-performance expectancy. Performance-outcome expectancy says that every behavior has associated with it, in an individual's mind, an expected outcome (rewards or punishments). The individual believes that if he/she behaves in a certain way then he/she will get certain things. Valence is the value, worth, attractiveness of an outcome to the individual. People put different values on a reward or punishment based on their own perceptions of relevance. Effort-performance expectancy represents the individual's perception of how hard it will be to achieve a behavior and the probability of successful achievement of that behavior.



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These concepts can be put together and reflect that motivation will be greatest when:

- A) The individual believes that the behavior will lead to outcomes (performance-outcome expectancy).
- B) The individual believes that these outcomes have positive value for him/her (valence).
- C) The individual believes that he/she is able to perform at the desired level (effort-performance expectancy).

Path-Goal Theory applies expectancy theory to the leader-subordinate relationship and implies that subordinates are motivated by the leader behavior to the extent that this behavior influences goal path (expectancies) and goal attractiveness (valence). The model of telework leadership in Figure 1 is founded on goal setting that is mutually agreed upon and also on the dyadic commitment to those goals. The teleworker commits to attaining the goals and the manager commits to using these goals as a means of measuring the teleworkers performance.

Leader-Member Exchange Theory (Graen, 1976) is another behavioral theory that can be applied to parts of the telework leadership model. The supervisor (leader) has a relationship with the subordinate (member) that is viewed as a negotiated transaction. The leader has a different relationship with each member under his/her control. It is an informally developed relationship that is wrapped up in communication, propensity to trust, worthiness to be trusted, latitudes of discretion on the part of subordinates, and interpersonal attractions. These variables are a part of the telework leadership model and are similarly challenged by the nature of the telework environment.

In Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) the "quality" of the exchange, which is the perceived satisfaction of one or both of the parties with the exchange, is a determinant of the outcomes of the joint efforts. The antecedents of a high or low quality relationship are not a part of the theory and are still being researched (House & Aditya, 1996). High-quality relationships can result from a number of leader and member attributes and behaviors and from the particular environment in which they are operating. Clearly though, a high quality leader-member relationship would be a part of an effective telework arrangement.

### **TESTING THE MODEL**

In order to test the applicability of the model to the actual teleworking environment, a grounded approach was undertaken. There are several reasons for using a grounded approach rather than utilizing a survey or experimental method. First, the model is emergent. It contains pieces of a number of leadership theories that have been individually tested and replicated by other researchers; however, this model is empirically untested and in order to test it in a holistic manner, the grounded approach would be more encompassing than a highly structured survey document. Benbasat, Goldstein and Mead (1987) stated that case study research is a particularly appropriate form of research when theories are at their early, formative stages. Second, there was no need to

manipulate variables in this study, as the purpose was not to develop a model for predictive purposes (Benbasat, Goldstein, & Mead; 1987). Third, the actual context or setting is important in order to gain a better knowledge of this area of research (Daft & Lewin, 1993; Darke, Shanks & Broadbent, 1998). Fourth, a grounded approach allowed for modifying the original scope as new information was uncovered during the interviews. The grounded method of research allows for action modifications (Eisenhardt, 1989).

The scope of the interviews covered a total of 15 teleworkers and teleworker managers working for four different organizations. Of the 15 interviewees there were six occurrences wherein a manager and at least one of his or her direct reports were interviewed separately. This allowed for examining both sides of those specific relationships. The remainder of the interviews involved only the teleworker or a telework manager who did not work with each other. According to Eisenhardt (1989) there is no ideal number of cases necessary to validate conclusions; however a number between 4 and 10 usually works well. It is believed that the scope of these interviews satisfies the need for richness and replication necessary for the results to be considered generalizable

The organizations represented in the study included a large information technology consulting and services company, a small software development and marketing company, a medium-size office equipment marketing company, and one of the author's own experiences marketing for a large information processing services company.

Each interview lasted between one and two hours. The interviews were conducted at the teleworkers' homes, where possible, otherwise at their office locations. Each interviewee was assured of anonymity by the authors and with the approval of the employers. Discussion points were prepared in advance for the author's benefit and were not shown to the interviewees in order not to channel the discussion or to influence the answers to the questions in any way.

### **ABOUT THE PARTICIPATING COMPANIES**

The information technology consulting and services company (Firm A) initiated a teleworking program in 1995 but only formally adopted a company policy statement in 1999. In 1995 a position paper was prepared that allowed employees to telework, at their own request, with the approval of their supervisor. The employee was responsible for purchasing all equipment other than the high-speed data lines. Employees purchased the equipment at a highly discounted price through a company program that utilized interest-free loans and the power of the company's purchasing volume. Employees had access to all company systems and data that they would have available to them at their offices. One of the teleworkers interviewed shared an office in the company's offices with another teleworker. Another interviewee worked out of the State and had no other office than the one in her home. All other interviewees retained a private office or cubicle in the company's offices.

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The company's purpose in making a teleworking program available to their employees is given in the policy statement.

In an effort to be more competitive in the job market, and to retain highly skilled employees, (Firm A), like other companies, considers teleworking a practical recruitment and retention resource. Additionally, teleworking is an alternative that accommodates balance between the personal and work lives of an employee.

The policy does state that other companies have experienced increased productivity and reduced office costs, but these potential benefits were not given as the primary driver of the policy. Firm B is a small software development and marketing company that allowed one of their technical programmers to telework from his home in Canada. There was no company policy because this was the only incident they had with a remote worker. All product design, testing, and other programmers worked full time out of the company's offices. The company supplied the programmer with a laptop, a modem, and all needed software.

Firm C, the office equipment marketing company, has a number of marketing offices across the US but wants to have a presence in other cities as well. In the more remote locations, they will set up an employee to work out of their home and report to a manager in one of the regional offices. The company provides the salespeople with all the office equipment necessary to communicate, place orders, review order status, etc.

Firm D, a previous employer of one of the authors, is a large information processing services organization which also has a national presence. There are service delivery and marketing offices in virtually every significant city in the US. Within a city the market territory is divided geographically among the salespeople. The author requested a territory that, due to the size of the city, was too far from the central office to reasonably commute. Although this was not the normal policy, the company agreed to a teleworking arrangement because they wanted to initiate service in this area. There was no equipment, other than a telephone, necessary at the home office.

### **ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEES**

The interviewees at Firm A covered several different job types. Five of the manager/teleworker direct report pairs occurred in this company. The people worked in accounting, technical support, systems development, and client systems implementation. All have been associated with teleworking for at least one year and as long as four years. In every case the telework experience that they are currently involved in is the only telework experience they have ever had. One of the manager level interviewees also teleworks herself. Specific teleworking arrangements varied from a few hours each day to full time out of State.

At Firm B the technical programmer and the lead design person he reported to both participated in the study. The employment agreement with the teleworking programmer was on a contract basis and explains why he negotiated a telework arrangement rather than a permanent(?)

move. The programmer would come into the office at key design stages for detailed discussion and review with the design person but do all the programming work from home. The project was in its ninth month at the time of the interview.

The salesman working for Firm C sold office equipment out of his home for five years before taking another job. Unlike the author's experience at Firm D, he did not have any co-workers because he was the only employee of his company working within a reasonable distance. His only company contacts were with the regional sales manager and various technical support personnel. At Firm D each day the salespeople would usually start at the office to check on the status of their new customer installations, set their appointments for future sales calls, and take care of paper work. A sales meeting was held every Tuesday evening for all salespeople. The purpose of these meetings was to self-motivate, compare any problems, and discuss future events. The author always attended these meetings for the year he worked for the company.

### **RESULTS OF THE INTERVIEWS**

As will be shown later in this section, the interviews substantiated the model in Figure 1 almost entirely. However, there were two other unexpected results that also came out of the interviews. The first has to do with productivity and the second with the effect of the extent of teleworking. The telework model does not address the concept of productivity improvement as this has been tested and quantified by other researchers (Kelly, 1985; Walters and Evans, 1984; Heller, 1981). However, every interviewee brought up productivity as part of their interview. It was interesting to note that all but one of the interviewees felt that they had no increase in productivity. Most saw it as an employee satisfaction and retention issue rather than a productivity issue. In other cases it was a matter of necessity that the employee telework. The one person who saw productivity increases was the person who was a telework manager and a teleworker herself. She saw improved productivity in her own work because of being able to get away from all the administrative duties that occur when she is in her office. At home, she was able to devote full concentration without interruption. The demographics of the teleworker have changed. It is no longer the female with child care responsibilities and no career ambitions performing repetitive, clerical work. Today's teleworker is a professional, technical person with a mixture of career ambitions performing non-repetitive work. Perhaps the productivity issue needs to be revisited in this new environment. The other area of unexpected findings concerned the amount of time spent away from the office and its impact on the telework model. Based on the interviews, if a person teleworks sixteen hours a week or less there are no real feelings of being in a teleworking mode on either the part of the teleworker or the manager. So many companies have adopted flexible hours work arrangements wherein they work varying hours each day or maybe 9 days in two weeks that co-workers and managers have grown accustomed to not seeing each other 8 to 5 Monday through Friday. However, this is another area where additional research is needed to determine the validity of these findings.

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## RELATING TO THE MODEL CONSTRUCTS

**Communication.** The primary means of communication between teleworker and manager was e-mail and telephone. Although interactive video is getting to be widely available, the cost, quality, and bandwidth requirements still make it impractical for this type of communication. Most of the interviewees felt that video would be a richer means of communication but none were dissatisfied with e-mail and phone contacts. The managers also felt that the communications channels were satisfactory. They had no problem getting information to and from the employee in a timely manner. One manager pointed out that e-mail and phone is the primary means he has to contact his in-office employees as well. Managers also have weekly and/or monthly staff meetings that all employees attend. Firm A has a formal performance evaluation and review program, which also allows for in-depth communication between the manager and the employee.

An interesting point came out in the teleworker interviews about telephone communication. Most of the direct phone work resulted from the worker calling into the office or calling clients. The calls from the office co-workers and clients tended to be into the voice mail at the office number rather than directly to the teleworker's home phone number. Apparently, people who knew that they were working at home prefer not to contact them through their home phone number.

**Goal adoption/commitment.** In Firm A, the performance review meetings serve as a good time to develop expectations and goals that are used to determine if the employee is accomplishing at home what is expected of them. The managers interviewed were comfortable with the concept of managing performance rather than attendance. The teleworkers for Firm A felt that they were in fact being measured by their performance and not by some other hidden agenda. The two marketing companies (Firm C and D) set sales quotas and measured performance against quota. This is the same means of evaluating salespeople's performance used for all their employees. Firm B also had no problem with using performance as the means to evaluate the programmer's productivity. The design manager was an experienced programmer himself and knew how long it took to program applications. The testing of the accuracy of the completed programs also revealed the quality of the work being performed.

**Trust.** Every manager mentioned the issue of trust. As one manager said,

When an employee is working out of your sight it potentially could give them the ability to slack off and still get paid for it. Even though performance goals are agreed to, maybe the employee could have exceeded them. You just don't know. You have to be able to trust someone enough to not worry about this problem and believe that they are doing the best they can. If I didn't trust (teleworker) I never would have agreed to the arrangement.

**Work/family Life Balance.** The teleworkers were happy with the new balances they were able to achieve with this work arrangement. Several mentioned that the ability to telework plays an important part in keeping them from making a job change. One emphatically said,

I will never again work at a job that will not allow me to work from home.

The managers for the most part were sympathetic to the employee's needs for balance in their lives although one stated that,

The employee should look at teleworking as a privilege and not as a right.

The teleworkers all stated that they were not distracted by child or elder care problems at home. All but one had a separate room that they worked in and that it was understood by anyone else at home that they shouldn't be disturbed. The family life balance they were achieving had to do with transporting children, having the flexibility to attend school functions during the day, handling medical problems, and being available for deliveries, repairmen, etc. They all believed that they were putting in the proper work effort and possibly a little bit more. One did complain of maybe putting in a little too much time because they found it so easy to just sit down at the computer and start working.

Self-management. One teleworker said,

I had to learn how to manage my own time and plan out my daily work otherwise I wouldn't know if I had done too much or too little work. (Manager) helped me learn how to do that. Now each morning I list out everything that needs to be done and I don't finish my work day regardless of how times I have come and gone until everything on the list has been crossed off.

To be top performers and earn the trust of the managers a teleworker has to be a self-motivated person and be capable of managing their workflow. A human resources person at Firm A said that they would not even consider a person for a telework position unless they were top performers.

Teleworker Anxieties. The people who telework two days a week or less had no problems or feelings of isolation. Several of those stated that they really wouldn't want to telework more than two days because they might develop those kinds of feelings. Those that telework full or almost full time said that at times they feel isolated and "out of the loop" but that negative alone would not cause them to want to go back into the office. Teleworking is clearly not for everyone. Some people require human interaction and would have more severe anxieties with isolation. One full-time teleworker said,

There are times when I am not aware of some problem that one of my co-workers has found and was discussed in the coffee bar at the office. I then hit the same problem and fight through it without knowing that someone else has already solved it.

In the author's experience at Firm D, the Tuesday night sales meetings became very important. A salesperson is dealing with rejection virtually everyday. Meeting with co-workers

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who have common problems helps you deal with the rejections and "pumps" you up to go out again the next day to be rejected.

Feelings about career issues were quite diverse. The salesman for Firm C felt that his career was somewhat impeded by his remoteness. When he needed special pricing or help to close an important deal, he felt that he was not afforded the same treatment that the salespeople in the regional office got. He likened it to his time in Vietnam in charge of a helicopter squadron in a location remote from his commander in Saigon. He recounted,

It was a lot easier for the Colonel to give the guy that he almost never sees the worst jobs than it is to give it to someone he was side-by-side with every day.

Another teleworker at Firm A said that,

Sometimes I do feel that maybe because the company has already given me something (the right to telework) that maybe they don't feel I deserve anymore.

Again, the people who telework two days a week or less had no feelings that their careers were impacted by their work arrangement.

Manager Anxieties. Unfortunately, this case study was not able to address the manager's anxieties because no situation was found in the participating companies wherein a significant number of former in-office employees all reporting to the same manager had changed over to a teleworking role. In order for a manager to feel a power loss or worry about program success or failure there would have to be a sizable percentage of his or her reports working out of the office. Additionally, the managers were all young enough that they were not brought up being trained in management techniques of the fifties and sixties. Therefore anxieties over obsolescence of changing management styles also could not be measured. These people were all well versed in management by results rather than managing attendance.

## CONCLUSIONS

No existing theory of leadership is designed to directly relate to the teleworking environment. Although most areas of this leadership relationship are the same as in the face-to-face work arrangement, there are some unique areas that add a new dimension. These areas are primarily dealing with the anxieties that both the manager and the teleworker are facing. The teleworker is concerned with the isolation of working away from the peer group and misses the camaraderie and creativity that can be gleaned from the professional and social interaction with fellow employees. The employee is also concerned with the potential negative impact on his or her career from being out-of-sight of the manager. The loss of impromptu hallway greetings, the occasional after-work social, and the other chance encounters that regularly occur in the office are now missing.

The manager has anxieties in the telework environment as well. He or she worries about the obsolescence of their leadership style, loss of power over the employee, dealing with new leadership styles, reduced performance from the work unit due to failure of the program, and the possibility that if the telework program is too effective it would imply that the manager had historically been an impediment to better performance.

These anxieties form a template or lense through which the normal face-to-face leadership theories have to operate. Certainly theories of self-management, Path-Goal theories, and Leader-Member Exchange involve the same constructs as does the model of telework leadership in Figure 1. However, the anxiety template moderates the normal relationships.

Historically, the average teleworker was defined as a female with small child(ren) at home, and no career ambitions (Crossan & Burton, 1993). She was therefore not concerned about the impact of her absence from the office and after-work encounters with her boss. Her feelings of isolation were combated somewhat by her childcare responsibilities. But this is no longer the accepted demographic of the teleworker. Professionals of all disciplines are now preferring to work at home but do not want to jeopardize their careers. Further research into the career impact anxiety is now needed.

The anxieties faced by the manager and their impact on the propensity to trust is another area requiring additional research. Trust is closely tied to the ability of the manager to accept employee self-management and self-management is antecedent to teleworker satisfaction forming a triad of constructs key to teleworker success.

Finally, the entire model of telework leadership needs to be tested qualitatively and empirically. Hopefully, with proper validation, it could serve as a starting point for exploring this unique relationship. As technology advances, the teleworker will gain the capability to have interactive video imaging with coworkers and bosses. Once this occurs, and it is not very long away, the dynamics of the relationships will once again change significantly.

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# THE MODERATING EFFECTS OF LEADERSHIP STYLE ON SUBORDINATES' PERCEPTIONS OF DECISION EFFECTIVENESS: A PARTIAL TEST OF THE VROOM-YETTON MODEL

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## ABSTRACT

*To investigate if a manager's basic leadership style moderates subordinates' perceptions of decision effectiveness, an experiment involving 258 students was conducted. Leadership style (transformational or transactional) and decision-making behavior ("consistent" or "inconsistent" with the Vroom-Yetton contingency model) were manipulated. Managers profiled as transformational leaders were rated significantly higher than those in the transactional and control conditions were, even when they engaged in autocratic behavior when the Vroom-Yetton model prescribed a group approach to decision making.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Vroom and Yetton (1973) leadership model is perhaps the best example of systematic research focusing on situational determinants of participative decision making (PDM) (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1989a; Schweiger & Leana, 1986). The model identifies five approaches to decision making, which are gradations in the level of subordinate participation in decision making. These approaches range from autocratic through to joint decision making between superior and subordinate(s). Seven situational factors determine the conditions under which each of the five approaches to decision-making are considered appropriate.

By encompassing situational factors as moderating variables of the level of subordinate participation required in the decision-making process, the Vroom and Yetton (1973) leadership model has made a significant contribution to management theory and practice (Yukl, 1989b). In general, research has supported the model and its underlying premise that the situation moderates the PDM-decision effectiveness relationship (Field & House, 1990; Vroom & Jago, 1988). However, the model has been tested mainly using manager self-reports, with little support for the model coming from studies using subordinate self-reports (Field & House, 1990; Field, 1982; Field, 1979).

Field (1979) argues that relying on manager self-reports is problematic. Social desirability may bias managers towards over reporting use of participative decision-making approaches, when describing decisions that resulted in successful outcomes. This bias occurs because participative approaches to decision making are included in the Vroom-Yetton feasible set more often than autocratic approaches. In addition, studies show (e.g., Field & House, 1990; Jago & Vroom, 1975) that subordinates' perceptions of managerial behavior do not correlate significantly with their superior's own descriptions of the same behavior. Such findings also call into question the validity of manager self-reports.

A major threat to the utility of the Vroom-Yetton (1973) model is that it deals with only one facet of leader behavior – that that of selecting a decision process for a particular problem situation. As Vroom and Jago point out, "... it (does) not profess to deal with all of leadership or of what leaders do. Instead it concentrates only on those aspects bearing on power sharing by leaders and on participation and influence by those who work with them." (1988, p.54) As a result, the model assumes that the degree of participation is the sole leadership behavior that influences decision effectiveness.

Locke and Schweiger's (1979) model of participative decision making identifies three groups of intervening mechanisms that impact on the PDM-outcome relationship: subordinate value attainment, cognitive factors, and motivational factors. Some researchers have argued that participation alone is not sufficient to activate these intervening mechanisms (Latham, Erez & Locke, 1988; Locke, Feren, McCaleb, Shaw & Denny, 1980; Locke & Schweiger, 1979). Moreover, the Vroom-Yetton (1973) model ignores the managerial skills required to identify situational factors and use each of the decision-making approaches effectively. For example, Field argues, "autocratic decisions require leader task knowledge and communication skills, while group participation decisions require leader discussion and conference skills." (1979, p.254).

Sashkin and Fulmer (1988) argue that leaders vary in their cognitive capacity to perceive and deal effectively with given situational factors, suggesting that leadership styles are likely to play an important moderating role in the Vroom-Yetton framework. Transformational leadership theory has largely focused on subordinates' satisfaction, perceived leader effectiveness, and performance (e.g., Niehoff, En & Grover, 1990; Waldman, Bass & Yammarino, 1990; Avolio & Bass, 1988; Howell & Avolio, 1993). Unfortunately, development of theory concerning the impact of leadership behavior on links between subordinate participation in decision-making and decision effectiveness has not been forthcoming (Yammarino & Bass, 1990).

Transformational leadership also affects the three intervening PDM mechanisms identified by Locke and Schweiger (1979). With regard to subordinate value attainment, Locke and Schweiger (1979) suggest that PDM allows increased opportunity for subordinates to attain their personal goals. Transformational leader behavior has also been found to influence subordinates' goal attainment (Niehoff & Moorman, 1996). Howell and Avolio (1993) argue that transformational leaders



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encourage subordinates to transcend their personal role requirements and to cultivate a greater sense of community and shared values.

Concerning the cognitive intervening mechanisms, better upward communication and better understanding of both job and decisions have received strong research support as being facilitated through the implementation of PDM (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1989a). Transformational leaders exhibit interpersonal skills that ensure individuals are committed and willing to be involved in decisions, and are ready to share their skills and information with the rest of the group involved in the decision-making process.

Finally, for motivational intervening factors, an important component is greater ego involvement and identification with the organization. Shamir, House, and Arther (1993) suggest that the charismatic component of transformational behavior enhances the intrinsic valence of contribution by making participation in the effort an expression of a collective identity, thus making the effort more meaningful for the followers. Furthermore, subordinates transcend their own personal goals and agendas, instead focusing on those of the organization (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

Additional motivational factors in the Locke and Schweiger (1979) model include increased trust and sense of control. In a pilot study, Bass found "frequent reactions of followers to the transforming leader included trust, strong liking, admiration, loyalty, and respect" (1985, p.30). This was confirmed by Niehoff and Moorman, who found that a transformational leader "arouses excitement, involvement, commitment, and ultimately trust, in followers" (1996, p. 944).

PDM is also argued to increase subordinates' motivation by directly encouraging them to set higher individual and group goals (Yukl, 1989a). Transformational leaders set challenging goals, seek performance improvements, emphasize excellence in performance, and make clear the requirements expected from each subordinate (Bass, 1985). Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson, and Spangler (1995) found that by exhibiting these behaviors such leaders brought forth powerful messages that no goal is beyond the reach of the subordinate.

This brief review of the literature indicates the importance of transformational leadership on the intervening mechanisms of the PDM-outcome relationship. However, the possible moderating effects of leadership style on the Vroom-Yetton (1973) model remain untested. This study contributes to existing knowledge on PDM by investigating how leadership style moderates subordinates' perceptions of the effectiveness of various decision-making approaches as prescribed by the Vroom-Yetton model. Bass' (1985) theory of transactional and transformational leadership will be used in this study to operationalize different leader styles.

This study, therefore, tests the following hypotheses:

- H1: Given various hypothetical decision scenarios, leadership style will significantly moderate the relationship between subordinate participation in the decision-making process and decision effectiveness, as measured by subordinate self-reports.

While the focus of this study is on the moderating effect of leadership style, the following hypotheses regarding PDM, the Vroom-Yetton model, and transformational leadership will also be tested:

- H2: A significant positive relationship will exist between the degree of subordinate participation in the decision-making process and decision effectiveness.
- H3: The Vroom-Yetton situational variables will significantly moderate the relationship between the degree of subordinate participation in the decision-making process and decision effectiveness.
- H4: Transformational leaders will receive significantly higher ratings of decision effectiveness than transactional leaders.

The second hypothesis is consistent with past research into PDM (e.g., Tjosvold, 1987; Bass, 1990, Sagie, 1994). The third hypothesis tests the basic Vroom-Yetton situation contingencies, while hypothesis four is based on support for the augmentation effect of transformational leadership (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1993; Hater & Bass, 1988; Yammarino & Bass, 1990). In each case, decision effectiveness will be measured by the use of subordinate self-reports.

## **METHODS**

The research conducted in this study was survey-based. The target sample comprised 258 undergraduate and postgraduate students (132 men and 126 women) enrolled in five third-year commerce classes. During class the students were randomly assigned to one of the eighteen conditions in a 3 x 2 x 3 between- and within-groups factorial design, with leadership style (transformational, transactional, no profile) as the between-groups factor and scenario (autocratic or group) and decision-making approach (autocratic, consultative, or group) the within-group factors. Students were asked to complete the questionnaire from the perspective of subordinates in the company depicted in the survey instrument scenarios. Each questionnaire contained detailed written instructions and no discussion occurred once the questionnaire was distributed.

After reading the profile of their manager's leadership style, each respondent was exposed to six scenarios. Each scenario outlined an organizational problem arising from a particular situation that required their manager to make a decision. At the end of each scenario, subjects were told that their manager (as described in the profile) employed an autocratic, a consultative, or a participative decision-making approach to solve the problem described in the scenario. Finally, respondents rated both their satisfaction with the decision-making approach selected by their manager, and the likely effectiveness of the decision.

The manipulation consisted of three parts as represented graphically in Figure 1. Two extreme profiles were used: one that described the manager's leadership style as transactional and one that described the manager's leadership style as transformational. In addition, a third control

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questionnaire was used which did not provide a profile of the manager. The manipulations of leader profile were used to test the effect of leadership style on the respondents' perceptions of decision effectiveness. Therefore, as shown in Figure 1, this manipulation of the profile of the manager's leadership style made it necessary to have three versions of the survey instrument.

The theoretically prescribed optimal decision-making approach, autocratic or group, was introduced through situational problem scenarios developed by Yetton (1972) in accordance with the problem attributes of the Vroom-Yetton model. As shown in Figure 1, each of the three versions of the questionnaire (transformational, transactional, and control) contained the same set of six problem scenarios, three describing situations in which the Vroom-Yetton model prescribes the use of an autocratic decision-making approach ('autocratic scenario'), and three in which a group decision-making approach is prescribed ('group scenario').

At the end of each scenario, the manager was described as having made a decision using one of three approaches (autocratic, consultative, or group) associated with the Vroom-Yetton model of decision-making. The decision-making process employed by the manager is displayed in Figure 1 under the heading 'Decision Approach Used by Manager in the Scenario'.

As previously mentioned, three of the six problem scenarios described situations that Vroom and Yetton (1973) argue require an autocratic decision-making approach for optimal decision effectiveness, while the remaining three scenarios require a group decision-making approach. At the end of each scenario, respondents were told which of three decision-making approaches (autocratic, consultative, or group) the manager decided to use. As shown in the final column of Figure 1, there were only two scenarios in each questionnaire where the actual and prescribed approaches coincided; in the other four cases, they did not.

Decision effectiveness was assessed following each problem scenario using a series of nine 9-point bipolar adjective scales measuring subjects' perceived satisfaction with the decision-making approach used by the manager and their projections about the likely effectiveness of the decision.

This study used four criteria to measure projections of the likely effectiveness of each decision: decision quality, decision acceptance, decision creativity, and effect on team morale. These measures were originally developed by Field and House (1990). Heilman, Hornstein, Cage, and Herschlag's (1984) original evaluating scales were employed to measure subjects' perceived satisfaction with the decision-making approach adopted. This instrument uses five evaluating items: good-bad, appropriate-inappropriate, wise-foolish, effective-ineffective, and used time well-used time poorly to determine perceived satisfaction. Heilman et al. (1984) found these items to be highly correlated with a coefficient alpha of 0.945 and therefore combined them to create a single scale. Similarly, the five evaluating items were found to be highly correlated ( $r = 0.925$ ) in this study and thus were combined to form a single measure of satisfaction.

**Figure 1: Graphical Representation of the Experimental Manipulation and Survey Instrument**

Version of Survey Instrument	Profile of Manager's Leadership Style	Optimal Decision Approach Prescribed in Vroom-Yetton Situational Problem Scenarios		Decision Approach Used by Manager in the Scenario		Match Between Actual and Prescribed Decision Approach <sup>a</sup>	
Questionnaire I	No Leadership Profile (Control)		<i>Case One: Autocratic Situation (AI)</i>	→	<i>Autocratic Decision Process (AI)</i>		<i>Match</i>
			Case Two: Autocratic Situation (AI)	→	Consultative Decision Process (CI)	→	No Match
			Case Three: Autocratic Situation (AI)	→	Group Decision Process (GII)	→	No Match
		→					
			Case Four: Group Situation (GII)	→	Autocratic Decision Process (AI)	→	No Match
			Case Five: Group Situation (GII)	→	Consultative Decision Process (CI)	→	No Match
			<i>Case Six: Group Situation (GII)</i>	→	<i>Group Decision Process (GII)</i>	→	<i>Match</i>
Questionnaire II	Transactional Leadership Profile		<i>Case One: Autocratic Situation (AI)</i>	→	<i>Autocratic Decision Process (AI)</i>	→	<i>Match</i>
			Case Two: Autocratic Situation (AI)	→	Consultative Decision Process (CI)	→	No Match
			Case Three: Autocratic Situation (AI)	→	Group Decision Process (GII)	→	No Match
		→					
			Case Four: Group Situation (GII)	→	Autocratic Decision Process (AI)	→	No Match
			Case Five: Group Situation (GII)	→	Consultative Decision Process (CI)	→	No Match
			<i>Case Six: Group Situation (GII)</i>	→	<i>Group Decision Process (GII)</i>	→	<i>Match</i>
Questionnaire III	Transformational Leadership Profile		<i>Case One: Autocratic Situation (AI)</i>	→	<i>Autocratic Decision Process (AI)</i>	→	<i>Match</i>
			Case Two: Autocratic Situation (AI)	→	Consultative Decision Process (CI)	→	No Match
			Case Three: Autocratic Situation (AI)	→	Group Decision Process (GII)	→	No Match
		→					
			Case Four: Group Situation (GII)	→	Autocratic Decision Process (AI)	→	No Match
			Case Five: Group Situation (GII)	→	Consultative Decision Process (CI)	→	No Match
			<i>Case Six: Group Situation (GII)</i>	→	<i>Group Decision Process (GII)</i>	→	<i>Match</i>

<sup>a</sup> Italics are used to indicate cases where the actual manager behavior and the model-prescribed behavior are in agreement

<b>Table 1</b>					
<b>Mean Ratings and Post Hoc Tukey Tests / Protected t-tests for Behavior</b>					
Experimental Condition	Satisfaction	Quality	Acceptance	Creativity	Morale
Control Condition (no profile)					
Prescription: autocratic					
Autocratic behavior	3.21ab	3.22ab	3.29ab	2.82ab	2.71ab
Consultative behavior	3.77c	4.07c	4.18c	3.70c	3.39c
Group behavior	5.46	5.67	5.97	5.29	5.63
Prescription: group					
Autocratic behavior	2.53ab	2.93ab	3.05ab	2.64ab	2.06ab
Consultative behavior	3.96c	4.07c	4.05c	3.86c	3.48c
Group behavior	5.48	5.63	5.77	5.43	5.48
Transactional profile					
Prescription: autocratic	3.94b	3.88b	3.97b	3.66b	3.76b
Autocratic behavior	4.12c	4.48c	4.47c	4.29	4.26c
Consultative behavior	5.03	5.22	5.36	4.85	4.91
Group behavior					
Prescription: group					
Autocratic behavior	3.20b	3.29ab	3.35ab	3.35b	3.17b
Consultative behavior	3.71c	4.14c	4.17c	3.66c	3.55c
Group behavior	5.22	5.52	5.41	5.39	5.60
Transformational profile					
Prescription: autocratic	4.17	4.52	4.80	4.14a	4.02a
Autocratic behavior	4.43	4.80	4.95	4.54	4.51
Consultative behavior	4.22	4.72	4.85	4.31	4.39
Group behavior					
Prescription: group					
Autocratic behavior	3.36ab	4.14ab	4.13ab	4.16b	3.67ab
Consultative behavior	4.33c	4.76c	4.94c	4.45c	4.29c
Group behavior	5.32	5.82	6.02	5.63	5.74
Note: The higher the mean, the more favorable the rating.					
a Autocratic behavior mean score is significantly different to Consultative behavior mean score ( $p < 0.05$ ).					
b Autocratic behavior mean score is significantly different to Group behavior mean score ( $p < 0.05$ ).					
c Consultative behavior mean score is significantly different to Group behavior mean score ( $p < 0.05$ ).					

## RESULTS

Repeated measures analysis of variance for a combined within- and between-subject design was conducted (3 x 2 x 3 ANOVA with repeated measures on three factors). Tukey analysis was also employed to compare differences between individual cell means, thereby providing further clarification of the results. Additional analyses using protected t tests were also conducted to test whether they would yield identical results in terms of statistical significance as the Tukey tests. Table 1 summarizes the means, post hoc Tukey tests and protected t-tests for behavior, situation, and leadership style.

The results include a mix of main and interactive effects. Hypothesis 1 involves an interaction effect, but for simplicity of exposition, the main effects will be discussed first.

### **Subordinate Participation**

Analysis of variance revealed a main effect for behavior (i.e., the degree of subordinate participation in the decision-making process)  $F(2, 470) = 90.65, 97.64, 85.28, 114.72, \text{ and } 87.84$ , all  $p < 0.01$ , on decision quality, decision acceptance, creativity, morale, and satisfaction with the decision process, respectively (see Table 2). Subsequent Tukey tests clarified that as the level of subordinate participation in the decision-making process increased, subjects' ratings of the decision effectiveness variables increased. This result supports Hypothesis 2.

### **Situational Factors**

The F-values reported in Table 2 indicate that situational factors, as manipulated in the Vroom and Yetton (1973) problem cases, did not have a significant main effect on any of the decision effectiveness variables used in this study,  $p > 0.05$ . However, significant two-way interaction effects between situation and behavior for all dependent variables,  $p < 0.01$ , were found. Regardless of the scenario type (group or autocratic), a group approach to decision-making was rated most effective (followed by consultative and autocratic). This conflicts with the Vroom-Yetton model, which prescribes autocratic behavior as being most effective for autocratic scenarios.

Table 1 indicates that across all three leadership style conditions, an autocratic approach to decision making in group scenarios was rated significantly lower than consultative and group approaches. This finding reinforces the Vroom-Yetton prescription that autocratic behavior in response to situations calling for a group approach to decision making is regarded very negatively; in this case it significantly reduced ratings on all decision effectiveness criteria. In the case of autocratic scenarios, however, the participation-effectiveness relationship was moderated by leadership style. This is indicated by the significant three-way behavior x leadership x situation interaction in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Main and Interaction Effects**

Main / Interaction Effects	Quality	Acceptance	Creativity	Morale	Satisfaction
Behavior	90.65**	97.64**	85.28**	114.72**	87.84**
Situation	0.14	1.70	2.51	0.53	3.20
Leadership	8.21**	9.07**	9.35**	9.79**	2.62
Situation x Behavior	11.25**	10.32**	15.21**	20.95**	19.60**
Leadership x Situation	2.88	3.32*	5.82**	4.20*	1.97
Behavior x Leadership	7.86**	9.45**	9.68**	11.01**	8.28**
Behavior x Leadership x Situation	2.70*	4.78**	3.94**	5.45**	3.72**
* p < 0.05					
** p < 0.01					

In autocratic scenarios, subjects were more willing to accept autocratic behavior from transformational leaders than from transactional leaders. In addition, autocratic behavior was rated as significantly less effective than group behavior for transactional leaders. In contrast, regardless of the decision making approach (autocratic, consultative, or group) adopted by transformational leaders, no significant differences were found in the measures of decision effectiveness. Hence, transformational leaders were able to conform to the Vroom-Yetton model. However, subject ratings under the transactional or control conditions were not consistent with the Vroom-Yetton model.

This finding, therefore, gives partial support to Hypothesis 3, which states that the Vroom-Yetton situational variables will significantly moderate the participation-effectiveness relationship.

### **Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles**

The ANOVA results presented in Table 2 revealed a main effect for leadership,  $F(2, 235) = 8.21, 9.07, 9.35, \text{ and } 9.79$ , all  $p < .01$ , on decision quality, decision acceptance, creativity, and morale respectively. Tukey analysis was again conducted and revealed that managers described as being transformational obtained decision effectiveness ratings for decision quality, acceptance, and creativity that were significantly higher than those for managers who were profiled as being transactional were. The respondents in the control condition (i.e., no leader description provided) gave the lowest ratings. Tukey analysis also demonstrated that managers identified as being transformational and transactional obtained higher ratings of morale than the control condition.

No main effect of leadership,  $F(2, 235) = 2.62, p > 0.05$ , was found in relation to satisfaction with the decision process, indicating that leadership style did not significantly affect subjects'

satisfaction with the decision process chosen by their manager. However, two-way interaction effects and Tukey analyses indicate that this was due to respondents in the transformational condition rating group behavior in autocratic scenarios significantly lower than respondents under the transactional and control conditions did. In other words, subjects with transformational leaders recognized that their participation in the decision process (under autocratic scenarios) was not needed. This indicates that transformational leaders are able to follow the precepts of the Vroom-Yetton model without incurring negative ratings by subordinates.

Table 3 indicates that transformational leaders using autocratic or consultative decision processes elicited significantly higher ratings of decision quality, acceptance, creativity, morale, and satisfaction than managers in the transactional or control conditions did. Additional Tukey analyses found no significant differences between the three leadership styles for decision quality, acceptance, creativity, morale, or satisfaction with the decision process when managers used group behavior in group scenarios. However, when group behavior was used in autocratic scenarios, respondents in the control condition (i.e., no leader profile provided) rated all the decision effectiveness variables significantly higher.

Experimental Condition	Control	Transactional	Transformational
Prescription: autocratic	n.s.	n.s. abc	*
Autocratic behavior	n.s.	n.s. b	*
Consultative behavior	*	n.s. c	n.s.
Group behavior			
Prescription: group			
Autocratic behavior	n.s.	n.s. b	*
Consultative behavior	n.s.	n.s.	*d
Group behavior	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.

\* Ratings of dependent variables were significantly higher than the other two leadership styles,  $p < .05$   
n.s. Ratings of dependent variables were not significantly higher than the other two leadership styles,  $p > .05$   
a Ratings of creativity were significantly different from the other two leadership styles,  $p < 0.05$   
b Ratings of morale were significantly different from the other two leadership styles,  $p < 0.05$   
c Ratings of satisfaction were significantly different from the other two leadership styles,  $p < 0.05$   
d Ratings of satisfaction were not significantly different than the other two leadership styles,  $p > 0.05$

The presence of a three-way interaction and an examination of the means revealed that leadership style significantly influences the behavior-situation relationship. Mean variable scores across the three leadership conditions show that subjects with transformational managers rated group



scenarios more favorably than autocratic scenarios. Tukey tests show that this higher rating was due to subjects in the transformational condition rating both autocratic and consultative behaviors significantly higher in group scenarios, than respondents in the transactional or the control conditions. That is, managers profiled as transformational leaders were rated significantly higher than those in the transactional or control conditions were, even when their chosen approach to decision-making was in violation of the Vroom-Yetton model. Thus, leadership style significantly moderated the relationship between the degree of subordinate participation in the decision-making process and decision effectiveness. This provides support for Hypothesis 1. Furthermore, managers profiled as exhibiting a transformational leadership style received significantly higher ratings of decision effectiveness than those profiled as being transactional. This provides support for Hypothesis 4.

## DISCUSSION

### **Subordinate Participation in Decision Making (PDM)**

Increased use of subordinate participation in the decision-making process resulted in increased ratings of decision quality, decision acceptance, decision creativity, team morale, and subject satisfaction with the decision-making process. The scenarios used in the survey instrument were problems where the outcome of the decision directly affected the respondent. Thus, the findings of this study are consistent with Bass' (1990) observation that employees express the greatest interest in participating in decisions that are directly related to their jobs. However, the relationship between the degree of subordinate participation in the decision-making process and decision effectiveness was moderated by the other two independent variables: situation and leadership style. These moderating effects are discussed in the following subsections.

### **Moderating Effect of Situation**

Respondents in this study discriminated between managerial behaviors in a manner consistent with the Vroom-Yetton model only when confronted with group scenarios. This finding is clear and unambiguous: Acting autocratically when participative behavior was called for had a negative impact on subordinates' perceived satisfaction with the decision-making approach and their projections about the likely effectiveness of the decision. Thus, respondents' evaluations of autocratic, consultative and group behavior in group situations were consistent with the precepts of the Vroom-Yetton model. However, in situations for which the Vroom-Yetton model prescribed autocratic behavior, the findings were more complicated.

For autocratic situations, subjects under the transactional and control conditions provided ratings of decision effectiveness that were inconsistent with the Vroom-Yetton model. The subjects rated managers who used a group approach as being more effective than those who used an

autocratic approach. In contrast, subjects in the transformational condition were accepting of an autocratic decision-making approach when the situation called for such behavior. In other words, acting autocratically when autocratic behavior was prescribed by the Vroom-Yetton model was viewed by subjects with transformational leaders as having no detrimental impact on decision quality, decision acceptance, creativity, team morale, or subordinate satisfaction with the decision process. This was also reflected in the low ratings of satisfaction with group decision making when the situation favored an autocratic approach.

### **Moderating Effect of Leadership Style**

This study's finding that transformational managers received higher ratings than transactional managers is consistent with the findings of previous studies. For example, studies have found support for the augmenting effect of transformational leadership over transactional leadership, with transformational leaders being more positively rated by subordinates in regard to perceptions of supervisors' performance and effectiveness than transactional leaders (e.g., Bass, 1985, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Yammarino & Bass, 1990; Koh, 1990; Yukl, 1989b; Avolio & Bass, 1988; Hater & Bass, 1988).

The results also make it clear that leadership style does influence how subordinates evaluate decision quality, acceptance, creativity, effect on team morale, and satisfaction with the decision-making process. In particular, leadership style appears to alter the extent to which subordinates' ratings of decision effectiveness are consistent with the precepts of the Vroom-Yetton model. Subjects in the transformational condition, like subjects in the transactional and control conditions, evaluated effectiveness of the managers' behavior in accordance with the Vroom-Yetton model when the situation required a group approach. However, for autocratic situations, transactional leaders who acted autocratically received significantly lower ratings than when they used a group approach, while subjects with transformational managers gave autocratic behavior the same effectiveness ratings as group behavior.

Interestingly, subjects of transformational managers rated satisfaction with the decision-making process significantly lower than subjects under the transactional or control conditions, when the managers acted participatively in situations requiring autocratic behavior. This suggests that subjects were indeed evaluating each of the situational problems described, and were not rating decision effectiveness solely on decision approach or leadership style. However, for autocratic situations, only subjects of transformational managers felt that autocratic decisions would be effective. This finding is consistent with the Vroom and Yetton model in which situation moderates the degree of subordinate participation needed in the decision-making process in order to achieve optimal decision effectiveness. Furthermore, this finding is consistent with Bass' (1985) theory of transformational leadership that suggests that such leaders have the ability to provoke changes in the attitudes, beliefs, and goals of followers, getting them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the team.

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Transformational leadership is advocated as effective in initiating rapid change (e.g., Bass, 1985, 1990; Yukl, 1989a; Sashkin & Fulmer, 1988). The findings of this study support this viewpoint and offer possible additional reasons as to why this form of leadership is so powerful in times of change. This study showed how transformational leaders were able to act autocratically while still obtaining decision effectiveness ratings comparable to those of transactional leaders using a consultative approach. Thus, transformational managers could make swift decisions, without engaging in participative approaches that are generally more time consuming, while not jeopardizing subjects' perceptions of decision effectiveness.

It should be noted that subjects acting as subordinates never rated autocratic behavior as more effective than group behavior. The moderating effects of leadership style may provide an explanation for this finding. Under the transactional and control conditions, subjects may have believed that their managers lacked the ability to make effective decisions without subordinate input. Consequently, increasing the level of participation (and therefore the amount of subordinate input) was seen to overcome differences in perspectives, thus increasing decision effectiveness ratings. This view is shared by Kuhnert and Lewis (1987) who assert that subordinates with transactional managers may believe that their manager is making decisions based on his or her own personal goals or agendas, and not in the best interests of either the subordinates or the organization. On the other hand, subjects in the transformational condition may have had greater trust and faith in their manager's ability, and thus they were more willing to accept an autocratic approach to decision-making. This would be consistent with past research, which found that subordinates place greater trust and faith in their supervisor's performance and effectiveness when they display transformational qualities (e.g., Bass, 1985; Niehoff & Moorman, 1996; Avolio & Bass, 1995).

One more finding is of note. The Vroom-Yetton model is designed to determine the most effective level of subordinate participation in the decision-making process for a given situation. Therefore, this study's finding that subjects under transformational managers rated autocratic behavior significantly higher than under either the transactional or control conditions is of importance. Additional Tukey analyses indicated that transformational leaders could behave in an autocratic manner, while still achieving ratings of decision effectiveness that were equal or better than autocratic and consultative behavior under the transactional or control conditions. In previous studies testing the Vroom-Yetton model, autocratic behavior was found to decrease the decision effectiveness ratings of subordinates' (Heilman et al., 1984; Vroom & Jago, 1988). Thus leadership style appears to moderate the effect of situation and level of subordinate participation on decision effectiveness. In situations requiring a group approach to decision making, subordinates of transformational leaders will accept lower influence over the outcome of the decision because of their apparent loyalty and faith in their transformational leader. Transformational leaders, therefore, appear to have greater leeway in their choice of participation levels than is prescribed by the Vroom-Yetton model.

To summarize, transformational leaders who behaved consistently with the Vroom-Yetton model when autocratic decision-making was prescribed received significantly higher ratings of

decision effectiveness and satisfaction from subordinates than managers in transactional or control (no profile) conditions did. Even when transformational managers engaged in autocratic behavior when the Vroom-Yetton model called for a group approach, decision effectiveness and satisfaction were still rated highly. These findings suggest that leadership style does moderate subordinates' perceptions of decision effectiveness and a manager's effective application of the Vroom-Yetton model.

The findings of this study must be viewed in the light of the disadvantages associated with the employment of a convenience sample, and the use of paper-and-pencil stimulus materials and measures. Nonetheless, the fact that this study obtained differential patterns of reactions to leaders with such a low impact manipulation of leader profile is suggestive of just how potent this variable may be in determining subordinate attitudes towards decision effectiveness.

The literature on contingency theories of leadership suggests that leadership personality is not nearly as important to leader effectiveness as selecting the right approach to decision making for a given situation. However, the findings of this study are consistent with Lord, DeVader, and Alliger (1986) and Bass (1996) who argue that the relationship between personality and leadership is stronger and more consistent than many contemporary writers believe is the case. The fact that this current study found that subordinates' strong and systematic bias in favor of participative decision-making was moderated through heightened leader personality and interpersonal skill indicates further research is warranted into the combined impact of situation, behavior, personality and their interaction.

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# **SILENT MESSAGES IN NEGOTIATIONS: THE ROLE OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN CROSS-CULTURAL BUSINESS NEGOTIATIONS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study specifically explored the perceived importance of the following nonverbal factors in the negotiation process: proxemics (location and negotiation site), physical arrangement (seating and furniture arrangement), and kinesics (eye contact, facial expressions and gestures). The participants are professional business negotiators of different nationalities. The findings show that the negotiators' perception about the three factors and their roles in negotiation are consistent with the nonverbal communication literature.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Negotiation with China is a topic which has received more and more attention in recent years (Chang, 2003; Palich, Carini, & Livingstone, 2002; Tinsley & Pillutla, 1998, Chen & Faure 1995, Leung & Yeung, 1995; Pye, 1982; Gordon, 1986). Although it has been studied in terms of negotiation styles (Pye, 1982) and intercultural differences (Mente, 1992; Gordon, 1986), there has been a scarcity of studies (Wheeler & Nelson, 2003; Mayfield, Martin, & Herbig, 1998; Stettner, 1997; Kharbanda & Stallworthy, 1991; Johnson, McCarty, & Allen, 1976) that examine the role of nonverbal communication in the negotiation process. Furthermore, no empirical studies were found which examine specifically the role of nonverbal communication in multi-national business negotiations by collecting data from the real world professional business negotiators. It is worth pointing out that the participants in this study are the real world professional business negotiators who report more precisely about what the negotiators' perception than the student sample and simulation method used in the past.

## **THE CURRENT PROBLEM**

As we enter the 21st century, cross-cultural concerns and business will become more and more significant (Chu, Ma, & Green, 2004; Chu, 2003). "One reason is indicated by such terms as

world economy, global village, and spaceship earth which indicate the interdependence facing all of us on this planet. The ozone layer and global warming are a concern of all countries. ...Today more than ever, no country can isolate itself from the rest of the world" (Terpstra, 1993, p.3). The nature of this article is necessary given that increasingly there is a move toward a multi-national economy in this century. Therefore, since nonverbal communication is a critical component of negotiations, it is important to examine its role within the context of multi-national negotiations. This article will specifically explore the perceived importance of the following nonverbal factors in the negotiation process: proxemics (location and negotiation site), physical arrangement (seating and furniture arrangement), and kinesics (eye contact, facial expressions and gestures).

The rest of this paper is organized as follows: First, the paper provides the theoretical background and research questions. Second, presents descriptions of data, instrument and methodology. Third, discusses the empirical results and findings. Finally, points out the managerial implications of this empirical study, its limitation and the suggestions for future research.

### **HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS**

Negotiation is "a broad conflict management process involving discussions between and among individuals who are interdependent and need to come together for a decision or course of action; frequently associated with the need to compromise effectively" (Shockley-Zalabak, 1988, p. 247).

The process of negotiation involves exchanging messages, both verbal and nonverbal. It is argued that the ability to analyze these nonverbal behaviors adds to a negotiator's overall negotiating ability. Nonverbal signals are deemed as important tools, for they can imply a meaning without verbally committing the negotiator to a particular action, i.e., nonverbal cues cannot be interpreted as promises in the same way that verbal messages can (Smith, 1998). In addition, careful observation of these critical communication elements may yield indications that the message senders are nervous, frustrated, bored, angry, or unsure. Johnson (1993) mentions that negotiators who are proficient at observing and using nonverbal information are more likely to achieve their goals in negotiations than those who have difficulty reading people. In addition, by understanding how nonverbal messages function and knowing what they can expect to learn through the reading and sending of these messages, negotiators are more likely to attribute greater meaning to the subtle nuances of the negotiation process.

### **CATEGORIES OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Nonverbal communication refers to communication effected by means other than words (assuming words are the verbal element). It includes three categories. First, there is the communication environment which consists of the physical environment and spatial environment. Second, there are the communicators' physical characteristics: physique or body shape, general



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attractiveness, height, weight, hair, skin color, tone or odors (body or breath), physical appearance (clothes, lipstick, eyeglasses, wigs and other hairpieces, false eyelashes, jewelry), and accessories such as attaché cases. Third, there are the body movements and positions. These can include gestures, posture, touching behavior, facial expressions, eye behavior and vocal behavior (Knapp & Hall, 1997). In this research, each of these nonverbal communications is referred to as silent messages.

There are primarily two areas of nonverbal communication with which negotiators are concerned: proxemics (including physical arrangement) and kinesics, which are defined as three categories of nonverbal communication in this article. The conceptual definitions for these follow.

First of all, proxemics is defined as "the study of the ways in which space is handled (related to Latin *proximus*, nearest)" (Clark, Eschholz, & Rosa, 1972, p. 457) and "how man perceives, structures, and uses space. ...how you arrange the furniture" (Burgoon & Saine, 1978, p. 89). Finally, kinesics is defined as "the study of movement (related to Greek *kinesis*, movement)" (Clark et al., 1972, p. 457), and "refers to all the forms of body movement, excluding touch." (Burgoon & Saine, 1978, p. 54).

Proxemics (Location and Site) in Negotiation. Lewicki & Litterer (1985) state that the physical environment can contribute to the tone and mood of negotiations, and the anticipated mood of a negotiation can lead parties to prefer one site over another. The site selection was considered a critical variable for the intercultural negotiation process (Mayfield et al., 1998). Negotiators should be aware of the impact that a particular site has on a negotiation, and consciously choose sites that create the desired mood. Most of the site characteristics have their strongest impact on a bargainer's perceptions of the environment, rather than actual, tangible, substantive effects on the negotiations themselves.

Johnson (1993) declares that the sense of personal space influences people's behavior regardless of whether or not they are conscious of it. By watching how people use space, a negotiator can find clues about his or her opponent's intentions and strategies. If one side suggests a change of the seating arrangement of the negotiations, it might be a sign of attitude change for "our use of space (our own and others') can affect dramatically our ability to achieve certain desired communication goals" (Knapp & Hall, 1997, p. 154).

Johnson (1993) believes that negotiators structure their territory to make others comfortable or uneasy. A negotiator may be able to learn more about members of the other side by meeting in their territory or may feel more in control by meeting in his or her own territory. Johnson (1993) also states that thinking about territory and considering the impact of each negotiation setting helps a negotiator overcome the manipulation of territory by the other side. Those with control over the arrangement of the room usually want to minimize the amount of direct confrontation and to keep the other side talking as much as possible. Those who make members of the other side feel comfortable, free, and somewhat trusting have gained command over the environment, for territory can be used to express power. Lewicki & Litterer (1985) declare that sites are not inherently neutral, they are perceived as neutral; a lounge is not inherently "warm" or "cold", but rather perceived that

way by virtue of the decor that is used. In order to handle messages from "territory", negotiators should not allow the setting to intimidate or seduce them. If one must negotiate on the other side's turf, one should not be awed by the environment; otherwise, one may lose his or her best deal in the negotiation.

Lewicki & Litterer (1985) state that cold, sterile, and formal surroundings are generally related to competitive interactions. A very large and formal wooden table, formal chairs, white walls, muted colored carpets and curtains, and a businesslike atmosphere tend to be the location for formal talks and deliberations. These rooms tend to create a "no nonsense" tone for people, and suggest that cold, hard, businesslike transactions are to be carried out within them. In contrast, cheerful, bright-colored rooms, overstuffed chairs, "living room" arrangement of furniture, soft lighting, and artwork create a significantly more comfortable environment in which parties are more relaxed, and can make people feel comfortable. The parties let down their guard and relax, creating an affable mood, which may cause participants to act more cooperatively.

Griffin & Daggatt (1990) assert that the location of negotiations also can favor one side or the other. In order to make sure no side can take advantage of the location, negotiations are usually carried out at a neutral site. Johnson (1993) also suggests that a neutral site is ideal for negotiations because it can be agreeable and comfortable for both sides and advantageous to neither. Griffin & Daggatt (1990) argue that for a diplomatic activity, negotiators tend to prefer a neutral setting, e.g., Malta for the 1989 meeting between Presidents Bush and Gorbachev, Paris for the Vietnam peace talks, Panmunjom for the Korean War talks, and even a raft in the middle of the Neman River when Napoleon Bonaparte and Czar Alexander I met in 1807. A successful negotiator, therefore, does not ignore the important function of the negotiation location and site.

Proxemics (Physical Arrangement) in Negotiation. Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall (1996) state that humans are affected by their physical surroundings. Lewicki & Litterer (1985) find that furniture may be used to communicate status and power. Chairs, tables, interior design, or even the number and size of ash trays are specifically equalized between both parties to assure that no side is seen as "bigger", "better", more important, or how much power each may have. Lewicki & Litterer (1985) state that in more formal negotiations such as international deliberations, status may be communicated by the size of flags and nameplates, the degree of comfortableness of a chair, the height of the back of a chair, or the number of parties at the table. On the other hand, in more informal negotiations, status is most commonly observed through office decor. The decoration of the office reflects the owner's personality and the message he or she would like to communicate. It provides home-turf advantage and an additional group of symbols that enhances the occupant's perceived status and power as well. Lewicki & Litterer (1985) mention that if the occupant chooses to seat his or her visitor across the desk from him or her (a competitive location), and on a chair lower than his or her own (so that there is no eye-to-eye contact, but the visitor is "looking up at" the occupant), the scene is well set for a competitive negotiation that places the visitor at a significant disadvantage. In contrast, if the office occupant moves out from behind his desk, seating himself in a "conversational grouping" of chairs, maintaining level eye contact, and minimizing the

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number of status symbols within the office, he will help to create an environment that encourages more equal-status communication.

Knapp & Hall (1997) claim that leaders and dominant personalities tend to choose specific seats, but seating position also can determine one's role in a group. Johnson (1993) says that choosing where to sit (even if it means moving a chair, or even deciding whether to sit) may help make a negotiator feel more confident. Anderson (1993) states that leaders and powerful people take up more space than others do. By taking up more space, they appear to be taking charge. Johnson (1993) maintains that the manipulation of the seating arrangement is one way that a negotiator can give or receive this type of clue. Negotiators often vie for a "power" position such as head of the table, center of a large delegation, back against a wall, and so on. Some negotiators gravitate toward the most prominent seat. On the other hand, those who want to avoid a show of power will want to have an alternative plan. A skilled negotiator will de-emphasize any single act that could be interpreted as a bid for power and focus greater attention on the other side's patterns of behavior.

According to Johnson (1993), those who are perceived to have strong personal power may be met with resistance if they demonstrate additional power with nonverbal clues. In contrast, they gain greater acceptance when they attempt to diffuse resistance by sending signals showing that they are "just part of the gang."

Sommer (1965) shows that parties who are cooperatively disposed toward one another seem to prefer seating arrangements that are side by side; while parties who are competitively oriented tend to prefer seating directly across from one another. Directly opposing seating, on the other hand, allows each party to "keep an eye on the other" and "keep the opponent at arm's length" – common colloquialisms that, in fact, express the competitive sentiments of each party. Lewicki & Litterer (1985) show that competitive parties seek greater physical distance from one another, and/or are more likely to place "barricades" of furniture between themselves and the other person. Thus, cooperative parties may be very comfortable sitting next to one another (twelve to eighteen inches apart); competitive parties may place tables of all sizes and shapes or other barriers between them in order to prevent the others from encroaching on their territory.

Kinesic Messages (eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures). Even if one keeps silent, one is still saying something. Albert Mehrabian (1981) finds that 55 percent of a message comes from facial expressions and 38 percent comes from vocal tone, which only 7 percent comes from verbal cues. Johnson (1993) recommends that if negotiators want to cool down a particularly hostile exchange, they can reduce the tension of their words, but they will also want to ease back with their bodies, lower their volume, and soften their facial expressions. Nierrenberg (1986) mentions that facial expressions are obvious means of nonverbal communication. However, the "poker face" confronts us with a total lack of expression, a blank look. This very lack of expression tells us that people do not want us to know anything about their feelings. In spite of the assumed mask, we can read their intent. Knapp & Hall (1997, p. 332) state: "The face may be the basis for judging another person's personality and that it can (and does) provide information other than one's emotional state."

Former United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold says: "The unspoken dialog between two people can never be put right by anything they say" (Burgoon, 1996, p. 297). Hendon, Hendon & Herbig (1996) find that in negotiation, what is not said is in many cases more important than what is openly expressed by the parties involved. This matches the perspective of Knapp & Hall (1997) that how something is said is often more important than what is being said. Hendon, Hendon & Herbig (1996) find that most important, emotional messages at the negotiating table are expressed nonverbally by gestures, tone of voice, or facial expressions. The other side's interpretation of your statement depends on the nonverbal behaviors more than what is actually said.

Hendon et al. (1996) find that effective negotiators are particularly good at controlling (consciously or subconsciously) their kinesic messages and at the same time adjusting to the many nonverbal signals they receive from the opposing negotiator(s). Illich (1980) states that personal power is conveyed primarily by nonverbal channels and understanding by identifying nonverbal clues. However, Anderson (1993) finds that to make one powerful, one should avoid unnecessary gestures, make every movement count, and slow down one's movements. When one's movements are deliberate and thoughtful, people will perceive the speaker that way as well. Griffin & Daggatt (1990) emphasize that it is a good idea to simplify your actions and gestures, while still being yourself. This minimizes the risk that your gestures are contradicting your words.

Anderson (1993) suggests that people perceived as powerful shift their position occasionally, making themselves appear relaxed, confident, and in charge.

When you know your naturally happy, confident, and powerful poses, you can adopt them even when you are feeling unhappy or weak. This keeps you from being at a disadvantage in a time of negotiation and may actually make you feel better (p. 98).

Lewicki & Litterer (1985) state that the eye is universally regarded as the lens permitting us to look into a person's soul, and dishonest people and cowards are not supposed to be able to look us in the eye. Knapp & Hall (1997) find that during fluent speech, speakers tend to look at listeners much more than during hesitant speech. We seem to gaze more at people we like (Knapp & Hall). Burgoon, Buller & Woodall (1996) conclude that those who were more persuasive used more eye contact, longer gazes and spent a greater amount of time gazing, thus promoting more attitude change and improving the overall effectiveness of a persuasive presentation. Moreover, gaze has been shown to be a powerful influence on other people's willingness to help someone or to comply with a request. Finally, Burgoon et al. add that when the nature of the problem and solution were clear, a stare increased the probability of a bystander's offering help.

Hendon et al. deem that nonverbal communication can be quite telling as it can help one determine the exact meaning of what the other side is saying and also can help the negotiator get his own message across. Liking and disliking, tensions, and appraisal of an argument are shown by numerous signs such as blushing, contraction of facial muscles, giggling, strained laughter, or just silence. Whenever a party negotiates, the negotiator must see and observe the other party. While

seated, people may lean forward when they like what you are saying or are interested in listening, or they may sit back in their seats with crossed arms if they do not like the message. Nervousness can manifest itself through nonverbal behavior, and blinking can be related to feelings of guilt and fear. The more simple and direct the language, the more precisely a position is defined, the stronger the commitment is likely to be. However, Griffin & Daggatt (1990) deem that the more subtle and less direct your explanation, the more likely one is to succeed. People are more likely to be convinced by reasons they discovered themselves than by reasons pointed out to them by others. Sparks (1993) verifies that it is great advice for negotiators to be economical with words, for that helps people understand what is said. It saves time, too.

Nierenberg (1986) says that to the negotiator, as the old song has it, "every little movement has a meaning all its own." Kinesic messages have a tremendous impact on the negotiation process. Hendon et al. argue that everything counts during the negotiation: the time of the negotiation (morning, lunch time, late in the evening), the table (round, square), the lights (white, in the middle of the room), the use of microphones, the breaks, the phone calls, the space between the chairs, the way the negotiators dress, and so on. Everything is important. Effective negotiators are fully aware of the existence of all these factors and of the fact that they are able to use them to their advantage. Nierenberg (1986) emphasizes that the slight movement of an eyebrow, the tilt of the head, the sudden movement of the hand—all are messages that an individual who deals with people must understand and continue to study.

Based on the above review of the literature this manuscript will explore three research questions.

1. How do negotiators of different nationalities perceive the role of proxemics in the negotiation process?
2. How do negotiators of different nationalities perceive the role of physical arrangement in the negotiation process?
3. How do negotiators of different nationalities perceive the role of kinesic messages in the negotiation process?

## METHODOLOGY

**Subjects.** Three samples were collected for this study. The first sample pool was obtained from a multi-national company in China. Participants included 50 individuals from seven different nationalities: Chinese, German, British, Italian, French, Canadian and Pakistani. The second sample pool was obtained from a Chinese textile company and a Mexican company. The 22 participants were Chinese nationals whose first language is Chinese, and Mexican nationals whose first language is Spanish. Some of the participants also speak English as their second language. The last samples were randomly gathered from the business people in the U.S. The nine participants were American nationals whose first language is English. All the participants in the sample were required to have

had business negotiation experience. Both male and female participants ranging in age from twenty-six (26) to seventy (70) took part in the study.

**Survey Instrument.** The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the faculty of the Communication Department at a southwestern university and from the review of the literature. It was piloted on a group of students from various departments across campus. Revisions were made based on the feedback received. The questionnaire in the Chinese version was crosschecked by two professional translators to see if the questions make sense to the Chinese participants. A cover letter was attached to each questionnaire upon distributing to the participants, which clearly stated that their participations were completely voluntary and confidence. A five-point Likert scale (strongly agree 1, agree 2, uncertain 3, disagree 4, and strongly disagree 5) was used in the study.

The final questionnaire consists of 46 questions both in the English version and the Chinese version, which addresses the two nonverbal dimensions of negotiation under study: proxemics (location and site), physical arrangement (seating and furniture arrangement) and kinesics (eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures). See Table 1 below.

Proxemics		Kinesic Message
Location and Site	Physical Arrangement	
Q 22 – Q 31	Q1-Q 21	Q 37 - Q 44
Q 45- Q 46	Q 32 – Q 36	

**Data Collection Procedures.** The first batch of questionnaires was distributed by the researcher during a business negotiation meeting in Culiacan, Sinaloa, Mexico. The chief negotiator for the Mexican company and a representative of the Chinese delegation were each entrusted to distribute the questionnaire to 22 employees from their respective companies. They were instructed to mail the completed questionnaires back to the researcher as expeditiously as possible. The participants from the Chinese textile company received the questionnaires in Chinese.

The second batch of questionnaires was mailed via Express Mail to a negotiator in a multi-national joint venture company located in China. He was instructed to distribute them to 50 employees of various nationalities. In all cases, employees completing the questionnaire were advised that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any time.

The third batch of questionnaires was sent to a business people in the U.S. He randomly distributed nine questionnaires to the business people from various businesses. The participants were asked to finish the questionnaires within two weeks and mail them back to the researcher.

There were totally eighty-one questionnaires passed out, three questionnaires from Hong Kong and one from the multi-national company were not returned, and two of the nine questionnaires from the U.S. were considered as unusable. There was some missing data from

demographic part that did not cause problem. Altogether seventy-five questionnaires were analyzed for this study.

Analysis. Two analyses were conducted in this study. First, in order to test the reliability of the instrument and scale (questionnaire), the correlation coefficient test and reliability coefficient test were employed accompanying with the test of Homogeneity of Variances and multiple comparison. Second, to find out how the professional business negotiators perceived the role of the three nonverbal categories in the negotiation and averages across these negotiators, the means from three groups of subjects were computed. Each of the two results are reported and discussed below. Results. The correlation coefficient test was employed to test the degree of relationship between two sets of scores. The overall strength of correlations in the three categories is above .433 ( $r > .433$ ) and significant at the 5% (.05) level. The items with low correlation coefficients ( $r < .433$ ) were eliminated. The correlation coefficient of Location and Site is from .527 to .702; Physical Arrangement is from .434 to .693; and Kinesic Message is from .433 to .505. Overall strength of the correlations in the three categories falls in the moderate range (Bartz 1999, p. 184), as shown in Table 2.

Test ( $p < 0.05$ )	Location & Site	Physical Arrangement	Kinesic Message
Correlation Coefficients	0.521~0.702	0.434~0.693	0.433~0.505
Reliability Coefficient	0.7983 (9 items)	0.8227 (12 items)	0.4293 (6 items)
Homogeneity of Variances	0.083	0.866	0.418
ANOVA	F=1.629, sig.=0.203	F=4.390, sig.=0.016	F=.055, sig.=0.947

The reliability coefficient test was employed to assess the consistency of the entire scale. The reliability coefficient for Location & Site is .7983 with 9 items. The alpha for Physical arrangement is .8227 with 12 items. The reliability coefficient of the Kinesic Message is .4293 with 6 items. The generally agreed upon lower limit for Cronbach's alpha is .70, although it may decrease to .60 in exploratory research, therefore among the three categories, Kinesic Message had a low reliability coefficient and the reliability coefficient of the other two categories fell in desirable range. Altogether twenty-seven out of forty-six items were left for further analysis.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances showed that the three groups (Chinese, British, and the Other) had the same variances. The test of homogeneity of variances in all three categories showed that the same variances existed among the three categories ( $p > .05$ ). One-Way ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference among the three groups in Physical Arrangement ( $p < .05$ ), not in the other two categories. The Post Hoc Tests (Scheffe test) showed that there were significant differences among Chinese versus British ( $p < .020$ ), Chinese versus Other ( $p < .079$ ); British

versus Chinese ( $p < .020$ ) in Physical Arrangement. There were no significant differences among the three groups in Location & Site and Kinesic Message, as shown in Table 3.

Category	(I) Nationality	(J) Nationality	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Composite Location	Chinese	2	-6.419	3.56	0.204
		3	-4.277	3.774	0.529
	British	1	6.419	3.56	0.204
		3	2.412	3.319	0.812
	Others	1	4.277	3.774	0.529
		2	-2.142	3.319	0.812
Composite Physical	Chinese	2	-18.562	6.469	0.02
		3	-15.73	6.859	0.079
	British	1	18.562	6.469	0.02
		3	2.832	6.031	0.896
	Others	1	15.73	6.859	0.079
		2	-2.832	6.031	0.896
Composite Kinesic	Chinese	2	-0.134	4.491	1
		3	-1.35	4.762	0.961
	British	1	0.134	4.491	1
		3	-1.26	4.187	0.961
	Others	1	1.35	4.762	0.961
		2	1.216	4.187	0.959

The results of mean average showed that the three nonverbal categories were believed important and the Agree mean percentages of all the three categories exceeded Disagree. The findings are reported in the following.

## FINDINGS

When the focus of the research is on averages across people or group behavior (as in this study), a 3-point scale is sufficient, which reduces the complexity thereby increasing the accuracy (Dant et al., 1990; Lehmann & Hulbert, 1972). For the analysis and in order to find out how the negotiators perceive the three nonverbal categories, the two categories of "strongly agree" and "agree" were combined, to represent an "agree" response rate. Also, the categories of "strongly



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disagree" and "disagree" were merged into a "disagree" response rate. The findings of Scheffe test and mean comparison are discussed in the following.

Proxemics (location and site). The Scheffe test shows that the Chinese negotiators think the Location and Site are more important for a sound negotiation than the British negotiators, and the British negotiators think it is important, whereas the negotiators from the group of the Other nationalities think it is less important than both the Chinese and British negotiators. Overall, the differences among the three groups are not statistically significant. It is not consistent with the literature or theory, which indicates that it is important for a successful negotiation.

The total percentage of the responses in the "location and site" category shows that 50% of the participants believe the location and site are important for a sound negotiation. 19% of them do not think the location and site are important; and 31% are not certain about it.

Physical arrangement (seating and furniture arrangement). Both the Chinese negotiators and the British negotiators deem the seating and furniture arrangement important for a satisfactory negotiation. The group of the Other shows no statistically significant and they may not think the seating and furniture arrangement play an important role in negotiation. Overall this category is statistically significant and is consistent with the literature and theory.

The total percentage of the responses in the "physical arrangement (seating and furniture arrangement)" category is less significant than "location and site" category. This category shows that 46% of the participants deem the seating and furniture arrangement important for a satisfactory negotiation. 24% of them do not think the seating and furniture arrangement play an important role in negotiation, and 30% are not certain about it.

Kinesic Messages (eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures). Overall the Kinesic Message category is not statistically significant. However, both the Chinese negotiators and the British negotiators think that the "eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures" are less important for a successful negotiation than the group of the Other nationalities for they believe that the "eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures" are important for a successful negotiation. The finding of this category shows an inconsistent with the literature and theory.

The total percentage of the responses in the "Kinesic Messages (eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures)" category is less than the other two categories. The Kinesic Messages category shows that 45% of the participants believe that the "eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures" are important for a successful negotiation. 21% of disagree with the major role the "eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures" played in negotiation, and 34% are not certain about it.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of two out of three groups are inconsistent with the literature and theory from Scheffe test. I would assume that the negotiators from these two groups might think the Location & Site and Kinesic Message are both important in their daily life or social life, however, in their professional life, they respond differently. It might be true that "Business is business", and they

might ignore the roles of Location & Seating and Kinesic Message in their professional interaction with the other people.

All participants in three groups – Chinese, British and Other believe that Physical Arrangement is important for a satisfactory negotiation. The finding of Physical Arrangement is the only category showing consistent with the literature and theory. Burgoon, Buller & Woodall (1996) have argued that humans are affected by their physical surroundings. Lewicki & Litterer (1985) state that furniture may be used to communicate status and power; furthermore they find that face to face seating arrangement creates competition and places the visitors at a significant disadvantage. In this case, the parties seek greater physical distance from one another. Sommer (1965) shows that parties who are cooperatively disposed toward one another seem to prefer seating arrangements that are side by side. Knapp & Hall (1997) claim that leaders and dominant personalities tend to choose specific seats. Johnson (1993) says that choosing where to sit may help make a negotiator feel more confident. In addition, negotiators often vie for a "power" position and gravitate toward the most prominent seat.

However, the results of mean average show us a different picture from Scheffé test. After data analysis, the results of mean average show that the findings are consistent with the theories covered in the literature review. The three categories discussed here are deemed to have the strongest impacts on a successful negotiation.

Proxemics (location and site). Johnson (1993) declares that a negotiator may feel more in control by meeting in his or her own territory. Furthermore, Lewicki & Litterer (1985) believe that if one negotiates on the other side's turf, one should not be awed by the environment; otherwise, one may lose his or her best deal in the negotiation. Johnson (1993) also finds that a neutral site is ideal for negotiations because it can be agreeable and comfortable for both sides and advantageous to neither. "Our use of space (our own and others') can affect dramatically our ability to achieve certain desired communication goals" (Knapp & Hall, 1997, p. 154). The above argument is strongly supported by the participants in this research.

In this study, 71% of participants who feel they have a greater advantage in the negotiation when that negotiation occurs on their own turf. 71% of the participants also feel more "comfortable" when they are negotiating on their own turf; 66% feel more "confident" when negotiating on their own turf; 59% of them feel that they "perform more effectively" when negotiating on their own turf. Moreover, 56% of participants feel a "greater challenge" when negotiating on the other's turf. 69% of participants believe that the person who designates the negotiation site has an advantage in negotiations, and 50% of participants regard the home site in negotiation as equivalent to a home team advantage in sports.

Physical Arrangement (seating and furniture arrangement). Burgoon, Buller & Woodall (1996) have argued that humans are affected by their physical surroundings. Lewicki & Litterer (1985) state that furniture may be used to communicate status and power; furthermore they find that face to face seating arrangement creates competition and places the visitors at a significant disadvantage. In this case, the parties seek greater physical distance from one another. Sommer

(1965) shows that parties who are cooperatively disposed toward one another seem to prefer seating arrangements that are side by side. Knapp & Hall (1997) claim that leaders and dominant personalities tend to choose specific seats. Johnson (1993) says that choosing where to sit may help make a negotiator feel more confident. In addition, negotiators often vie for a "power" position and gravitate toward the most prominent seat.

In this category, the data are consistent with the literature about furniture arrangement as mentioned above. 62% of participants report feeling calm when they negotiate in a room with paintings of countryside scenes on the walls. 74% of participants feel "more pleasant" when they sit at a table decorated with flowers, 60% of them feel more at ease when there are soft drinks on the table when they negotiate, and 56% think the arrangement of furniture should receive more attention from negotiators. 75% of the participants believe that seating arrangement should receive more attention from negotiators. In regards to a round table, 57% of participants believe a round table eases tension, 54% generally prefer round tables to square tables in negotiations, and 53% of them deem that a round-table seating arrangement makes an atmosphere more conducive for discussion. Also, 50% of the participants say that notebooks and pens neatly arranged on a large table encourage them to reach an agreement in a negotiation. A room equipped with a large screen TV, VCR, and computer is deemed more professional when negotiating by 51% of participants.

Kinesic Messages. Even if one keeps silent, one is still conveying messages. Knapp & Hall (1997, p. 332) state: "The face may be the basis for judging another person's personality and that it can (and does) provide information other than one's emotional state." Knapp & Hall (1997) find that how something is said is often more important than what is being said. In addition, Anderson (1993) suggests that people perceived as powerful shift their position occasionally, making themselves appear in charge. Burgoon et al. conclude that those who were more persuasive used more eye contact, longer gazes. Gaze has been shown to be a powerful influence on other people's willingness to help someone or to comply with a request.

The responses in the kinesic messages category show less consistency with the theory than the last two categories. However, 51% of the participants say that they move physically closer to emphasize the importance of their point in negotiations. In addition 66% believe that people who smile more get greater cooperation in negotiations. 49% of participants think that people who look straight into the other's eyes gain power in negotiations; and 44% of them believe that people who can tolerate silence longer have more power in negotiations. Finally, 44% of the participants lean back in their chairs as a gesture of encouragement to respond to their proposals.

## **LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Overall the validity of nonverbal theory is strengthened by the findings because all the agreed responses exceeded the "not important" level. However, the percentage is a little less than what researcher anticipated. The mean showed that the tendency is toward not certain (2.66, 2.77, and 2.74). It is not clear which genders and age groups favored "important", "uncertain" and "not

important". Future research will be needed to distinguish the differences among each demographic group. Since all the participants are experienced negotiators instead of a college population, the generalizability of the research findings may be increased and broadly applied to business negotiations. However, another limitation of the study is that the sample (i.e., the subject pool) was too small. This made it difficult to distinguish the differences among each gender and age group. The number of female participants was also too small. The questionnaires will need to be examined according to the different nationalities. The researcher might have obtained different results if she would have interviewed or observed the negotiators. Future research will need to focus on the responses from these dimensions. High context cultures and low context culture may respond differently to the nonverbal messages in negotiation. Different genders may respond differently, and negotiators may respond to nonverbal messages differently in social life and professional life.

Since this study is the first empirical research on nonverbal communication in cross-cultural business negotiation by collecting data from the real world professional business negotiators, its implication to practitioners and contribution to nonverbal theory is evidently. Besides culture factors and negotiation styles, silent messages play the role in successful business negotiations too.

### **CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

With the increase of international business and globalization cross-cultural business negotiation becomes more important than ever. It is estimated that global managers spend more than half of their time negotiating, and negotiation is often ranked as one of the most important skills for global managers to possess (George, Jones, & Gonzalez, 1998, p. 750). Moreover, China's economy has been growing at an annual rate of 7.7 percent, more than double the world average of 3.3 percent (china-embassy.org, 8/18/00). "Western observers thus confront the paradoxical possibility that by the year 2010, if it maintains just two-thirds of its current rate of growth, China could have become at one and the same time, the world's largest capitalist and Marxist-Leninist state (Boisot, 1996)." The implications of this study provide guidance to cross-cultural negotiators, and offer them advice as well.

Overall it was found that the averages of the means of the three nonverbal communication categories are consistent with the literature, demonstrating that nonverbal communication is important for business negotiation. On the other hand, the findings show that not all three groups of negotiators view nonverbal communication as important in their professional area. The implications for managers from the three categories are addressed as follows.

**Location and site.** The findings of this study indicate that most negotiators feel that they have a greater advantage in negotiation when they do so on their own turf. Negotiating on their own turf can make them feel more comfortable, confident, and perform more effectively because they believe that the home site in negotiation is equivalent to a home team advantage in sports. They also feel a greater challenge when negotiating on the other party's turf, for they believe that the person who designates the negotiation site has an advantage in negotiations. Therefore, negotiators might try to

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select their own location or a neutral site. If the meeting does not occur on your own turf you should not be awed or influenced by the location and site. On the other hand, when you are confident about negotiations and would like to cooperate with your counterparts, you will make them feel comfortable when negotiating at the site of their choosing. And you might get more cooperation than when negotiating on your own turf.

**Physical arrangements.** The findings of this study indicate that paintings of countryside scenes on walls and a table decorated with flowers and soft drinks will make negotiators feel calm, more pleasant, and at ease. They prefer round tables to square tables in negotiations because they believe that a round table eases tension, and a round-table seating arrangement makes for an atmosphere more conducive for discussion. Thus, when negotiating on your own turf, decorate the room with paintings of countryside scenes on the walls, use a round table decorated with flowers and put soft drinks on the table. This physical arrangement will ease tension and make your counterparts feel calm, more pleasant, and at ease. The setting will be more conducive for discussion, and you will get more cooperation from them too.

**Kinesic message.** The findings indicate that people move physically closer to emphasize the importance of their point in negotiations, and that people who smile more get greater cooperation. To bargain effectively it is important to determine the counterpart's priorities and goals. Therefore, you might observe when they move physically closer that they are emphasizing the importance of their point. Moreover, you may obtain greater cooperation in negotiations when you smile more; a straight face might not be a good cue in cross-cultural negotiations.

If negotiators work out a satisfactory agreement or want to terminate negotiations, employing silent messages might be more effective than direct confrontation. If negotiators pay attention to the three nonverbal categories the results will be cooperative, constructive, effective, and reach a desirable end.

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# JABLIN'S ORGANIZATIONAL ASSIMILATION THEORY AND HUMOR: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ONTOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ISSUES OF HOW HUMOR CAN BE USED TO ASSIMILATE INTO AN ORGANIZATION

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## ABSTRACT

*When a new member is trying to gain acceptance into an organization that s/he is working for, it can be difficult as the organization is an unfamiliar place with new cultural practices, new faces, and an overall new environment. Similarly, when an organization is assimilating new members, it can be an awkward period of introducing cultural beliefs, norms, and values. New members can use the communicative phenomenon of humor as an effective strategy when trying to assimilate into an organization to help ease a possible uncomfortable situation. Moreover, organizational assimilation and humor can be used together in theory and practice because it can help a new member assimilate into an organization with less difficulty or help an organization assimilate its new members more effectively. In this article, I contribute to theoretical discussion by examining the process of organizational assimilation and its connection with humor through ontological and epistemological issues.*

## INTRODUCTION

Assimilating into an organization is a process that takes careful consideration on the part of new members and the organization itself. That is, this particular process communicates many messages that can aid/hinder an employee's perception of an organization, or aid/hinder an organization's perception of its new members (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991). Humor is one type of interaction in the organizational assimilation process that can be problematic. If used carefully, humor is a communicative strategy that can help members assimilate into an organization with less difficulty. A new member's humor, an organization's overall humor, and/or an existing organizational member's humor need careful consideration as these factors are important in the overall assimilation process. If humor is not used with consideration, it can offend another member or cause disruption within the organizational culture (Collinson, 2002; Smith, Harrington,

& Neck, 2000). Humor issues related to organizational assimilation require diplomacy to ensure an efficient transition.

The organizational assimilation process and humor have an interrelated connection that needs greater detailed examination. There has been much germinal research on organizational assimilation and similar theories (e.g., acculturation, organizational learning, organizational socialization, etc.) within business, industrial psychology, and management (Duncan & Weiss, 1979; Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv, & Sanders, 1990; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). However, no researcher has examined humor as an assimilation strategy, especially from a communication perspective. Although Jablin is at the forefront of organizational assimilation research in our discipline (Jablin, 1980, 1982, 1984, 1987, 1994, 2001; Jablin & Krone, 1987; Jablin & McComb, 1984), he along with other researchers in various fields have failed to examine each particular kind of interaction at each stage using humor. Humor is a psychological construct that involves communication because how a function of humor (e.g., joking, teasing, practical jokes, satirical humor, etc.) is communicated, relies heavily on how it is interpreted. Furthermore, communication scholars need to further this topic of inquiry because it can help members in their respective assimilation processes. In this article, I make an effort at contributing more towards the realm of theoretical discussion. If used strategically, as this article attempts in demonstrating, humor can be a way of assimilating with more ease. In addition, organizations can benefit from learning more about the connection between assimilation and humor. In other words, learning more about the respective connection can help ease the partnership between organizations and new members.

To serve this purpose, I first explain the organizational assimilation process, as particularly identified by Jablin (1982). Second, I explore the phenomenon of humor by describing humor and its respective theories. In doing so, this outlines characteristics and theories of humor that researchers can apply towards organizational assimilation. Third, I describe the organizational assimilation process and its connection with humor through ontological issues. Finally, I describe the organizational assimilation process and its connection with humor through epistemological issues.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL ASSIMILATION PROCESS**

Jablin (1982) introduced a pattern of assimilating in stages to the communication discipline. His attempt at identifying specific stages is very important to communication research because he examines how each stage is distinctly marked, yet interrelated. Jablin's four step process is an important model because it identifies communication as a key factor in successful assimilation.

The organizational assimilation process "consists of both the explicit *and* implicit attempts by organizations to influence their employees, that is to teach them the values, norms and required behaviors which allow them to participate as members of organizations" (Jablin, 1994, p. 31). Organizational assimilation specifically includes affective, behavioral, cognitive, and

conscious/unconscious processes that affect members who join, assimilate, and exit an organization (Jablin, 1994). In addition, the process helps a member go through individualization. Individualization is how individuals negotiate their roles in an organization (Dienesch & Linden, 1986; Graen, 1976). Overall, organizational assimilation identifies the roles that help new members assimilate within an organization and with its existing members.

The first stage of organizational assimilation is *anticipatory socialization*. When an individual enters an organization for the first time, s/he has preconceived notions of how to adapt to the new role. This also includes entering the organization and then adapting to the behavior that is set forth from initial contact of entry. This is a crucial step in the process because how or how often new members communicate with existing members shows the organization what kind of individual has been chosen, and how well s/he will assimilate into the new organization. In addition, this step communicates to the organization's existing members who and maybe how they have chosen a new individual, and what the new member's role will be within the organization.

The second stage of organizational assimilation is the *encounter phase*. This stage is where an individual is in the preliminary phase of working (i.e., initial weeks or months of employment) for an organization, and where preconceived notions of assimilation and initial ways to adapt are usually inaccurate. The organization and its members may perform differently initially than after time has passed and everybody knows everyone and everything more clearly. The period becomes more comfortable for the individual over time when s/he can get to know the organization and its members further.

The third stage is *metamorphosis*. This stage is very significant in the process because it shows acceptance. During this stage, the new person becomes an accepted member because s/he has learned the specific behaviors and attitudes associated with that particular organization (Jablin, 1994). Metamorphosis is the culmination of the first two stages along with the end result of adjusting to the organization and its members. It is where the member knows how to behave with/for the organization because time has allowed the individual to engage in the assimilation process. For example, an individual who has been working for an organization for one week is not going to know the attitudes and behaviors needed to follow through to the metamorphosis stage. An individual who has been working for one month has a better idea of attitudes and behaviors needed in order to assimilate with less difficulty, because s/he has been involved with the organization and its members over a longer period of time of one month versus one week.

The final stage of the organizational assimilation process is *disengagement or exit*. This stage is the "process of leaving the job/organization, whether it is moving to a new organization and position, a transfer to a new location in the same organization, retirement from work, or a job layoff" (Jablin, 1994, p. 32). It is the (un)official end to belonging to an organization (e.g., in the department, in the building, moving to a new location, moving to a new organization, retirement, etc.). It is also the final stage of the four-step process and if chosen, a time for a recycling for the individual with a new organization. While disengagement marks the end of one cycle, a new cycle begins with anticipatory assimilation when a member moves on.

Effective assimilation by a new member heavily depends on the organization's culture. If the new member's organization implicitly deems that humor is meaningful to the members and the organizational structure, then using humor to assimilate can be an effective strategy. An organization's members and their interactions within the organization generally construct organizational culture (Littlejohn, 1996). Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982, 1983) argue that organizations are fundamentally comprised of uncovered cultural patterns. These cultural patterns are different types of performances. Performances include social rituals, organizational rituals, sociality, organizational politics, and enculturation. Sociality and enculturation are most relevant to the assimilation process and humor. Sociality is reinforcing propriety amongst members and behaving with proper decorum. Humor is a large component of sociality because it is learning what constitutes accepted and unaccepted humor within the organizational culture. Using humor within an organization is a context based phenomenon that is inherently relational (Graham, 1995; LaFollette & Shanks, 1993; Mallet & A'Hern, 1996). That is, it is a phenomenon that is content dependent on what the organization accepts and not accepts from its members. Additionally, other variables (e.g., gender, power, roles, structure, etc.) have an impact on members when they communicate within the organization (Holmes, 2000; Schein, 1968; Van Maanen, 1975). Enculturation is teaching the organizational culture to the member. This is also crucial in the assimilation process because it is where a new member can learn/adapt the humor used within the organization. But, organizational cultures vary and not all organizations have the same culture. It is very important that new members do not generalize the process to different organizations as individual organizations are unique entities. While I ultimately choose Jablin's organizational assimilation theory for this essay, it is an area that needs further exploration in our discipline.

Although Jablin (1982) has done well in conceptually introducing and updating the organizational assimilation model over time, there are some flaws that need definite strengthening in order for the process to be more accessible. My main concern with assimilation is that everyone does not have access to similar information to negotiate each stage. Researchers have deeply noted that the four stage assimilation process leaves out marginalized groups (e.g., minority groups, various races and ethnicities, women, etc.) because these populations cannot be generalized along with dominant cultures (Bullis, 1993; Smith & Turner, 1995; Bullis & Stout, 2000). In addition, organizational assimilation, as described by Jablin, is not a clear conventional process. While the process of assimilation is a general pattern, it does not mean that individuals have similar experiences. For instance, Bullis and Bach (1989) posit that the assimilation process is not as linear as described for all. Rather, it is an interpretive frame that researchers can mold differently for each individual. In order to illustrate the connection between organizational assimilation and humor, I now define humor and three of its major theories. By defining humor, it will be easier to conceptualize the ontological and epistemological connections between assimilation and humor that I later discuss.

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## HUMOR DEFINED AND THEORIES

There is much research on humor in a variety of focuses (e.g., appreciation, creation, orientation, reception, stimulus, etc.) that lead to understanding it more clearly. Generally, humor is a biologic characteristic of the human race that is a part of every person from birth (du Pre, 1998; Fry, 1994). More specifically, we can view humor as a distinctive trait that has potential to expand as one gets older, as one goes through new experiences (e.g., places of work, social life, etc.), and as one learns throughout life.

Many scholars have attempted in pinpointing humor (Bateson, 1922; Cooper, 1922; Freud, 1905/1960; Fry, 1994; Goldstein & McGhee, 1972; Grotjahn, 1957; Lefcourt, 2001; McGhee, 1979; Morreall, 1983, 1987; Mulkay, 1988; Raskin, 1985; Ziv, 1984). However, in more recent years, Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, and Booth-Butterfield (1995) define humor in the clearest manner for me. They assert that humor is a phenomenon that occurs in all stages of relationships. Relationships progress and digress in different stages. Humor is one phenomenon that is ever-present in relationships, but changes in level of degree, depending on stage and how members within the relationship socially constitute it. In sum, humor is ubiquitous. We can use it as a strategy in a variety of contexts. We can strategically use humor in compliance gaining, saving face, and seeking affinity (Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 1995).

Because humor is a “mystery” (Veatch, 1998), there are over one hundred documented theories (Ziv, 1988). Several scholars have attempted in explaining these theories, (Foot, 1991; Goldstein & McGhee, 1972; Lynch, 2002; McGhee, 1979; Meyer, 2000). Berger (1987) argues that there is no absolute theory of humor, but each theory contributes to our understanding of it. However, many humor theories are smaller derivatives of three broad areas that are common across humor research (i.e., incongruity, relief/arousal, and superiority theories).

First, the incongruity theory involves a difference between what we anticipate and what one receives back (Bateson, 1972; Berger, 1987; Bergson, 1956; Hatch, 1993, 1997; Kant, 1961; Schopenhauer, 1960; Suls, 1972). Furthermore, examples of this theory are deep in content as they involve processing information to focus on illogical humor aspects. For example, a scene in a play can be set up to convey that what is going on in the particular scene is allegedly humorous. While an audience member may expect that the message to be conveyed is serious, the scene can be set up to show something that as humorous.

Second, the relief/arousal theory “includes a variety of theories that fall into the psychological and physiological domains. The common ingredient among these theories is the belief that laughter is a release of repressed or unused energy” (Graham, Papa, & Brooks, 1992). Several key scholars have adopted this theory as a way to typify humor (Grotjahn, 1957; Freud, 1905/1960). Freud (1905/1960) is the most influential relief/arousal theorist in humor research. Freud’s ideology of humor and jokes defines it interrelated with human emotions. Humor is a way of trying to suppress or heal those agonizing emotions. For example, if I am in a one on one meeting with my supervisor and I say “I can’t do it man” instead of “No sir, I am sorry I cannot do it at this

time,” I may feel embarrassed as he is my superior. As a result, I may try to suppress my feeling of embarrassment by laughing out loud.

Third, the superiority theory of humor makes us feel superior to others or superior to a previous point in life (Berger, 1987; Cooper, 1922; Feinberg, 1978; Grotjahn, 1957; Hobbes, 1996; Zillmann, 1983). This theory is complex because researcher’s base it in making yourself better. For example, a member who has been working for three years may feel superior to someone who has been working at the same organization for two weeks. The person working for three years may find superiority as a humorous situation because s/he has experienced more. As all basic theories of humor (i.e., incongruity, relief/arousal, and superiority) contribute to an overall composition of humor, which we can also apply to daily work life interactions. Specifically, using humor in the workplace strategically can help members of an organization assimilate.

For example, Foot (1991) theorizes that people use humor six different ways during social interaction, which can also apply to interpersonal situations in the workplace: “As a means of searching for information about others, as a means of giving information about oneself, in interpersonal control, in group control, in managing anxiety and in changing and sustaining social servitude” (p. 7). These six social interpersonal skills of humor (c.f., Miller & Jablin, 1991) can benefit a new member, as the member can use them in assimilating into the organization. First, the member can use humor to search for information about others when trying to gain acceptance into the organization. For example, using humor to lighten the mood may make individuals more talkative, thus helping in searching for information. Second, new members can make small talk while using humor with existing members because it is a way of giving information about one’s self. In addition, new members who are using humor when responding to others members’ questions about her/himself is also way of giving out information. Third, humor is a communicative strategy that can help to gain interpersonal control (Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980; Kipnis & Schmidt, 1982). For example, if the new member can find others who also have the same sense of humor, then s/he may be able to use it to her/his advantage to persuade others and make the assimilation process less difficult with those same people.

Fourth, new members can use humor during organizational assimilation as way of gaining group control. That is, if a new member is trying to assimilate into an organization, s/he can use it in the same manner as gaining interpersonal control by finding others who have the same sense of humor, and use it to her/his advantage in assimilating with a particular group. Fifth, if a new member is having difficulty in assimilating into an organization, then s/he can use humor to alleviate and manage stress. S/he may want to use humor to make the situation less stressful, which may aid that person in gaining acceptance. Sixth, we can use humor in changing and sustaining social servitude during organizational assimilation. That is, if a new member is having difficulty in assimilating, then s/he can use it as a strategy that aids in changing another member’s mind about that person. For example, if a new member is having a hard time gaining acceptance with a coworker, then s/he may want to use humor as a way of changing that person’s mind (e.g., tell jokes,

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tease others, etc.). Using this strategy would help to gain acceptance with her/his coworker and possibly change the coworker's mind of the service that person contributes to the organization.

While humor can potentially create positive interpersonal significance within organizations, there are also negative effects of using it within the workplace. First, if new members continually use humor that is not consistent with the existing humor used within the organization, it could cause serious problems (Meyer, 1997). If new members continue to use unappreciated humor within the organization, it may help to castigate them with other members and within the overall organizational culture. It is very crucial for new members to learn the organizational culture first and the respective humor used in order to assimilate more effectively. Second, humor can divide employees between upper personnel with authority and lower personnel without authority when entering an organization (Coser, 1959, 1960; Dwyer, 1991; Linstead, 1985). For example, there maybe certain exclusive jokes or information available to people in power positions. These particular jokes or information may not be told, be accessible, and be of significance to those who are of low-status personnel. This could easily be vice-versa as well. The effect is negative because the use of humor divides two subcultures (i.e., high status personnel and low status personnel) and makes them exclusive groups within the larger organization (in-group versus out-group).

Third, humor can create stress because of its ambiguity (Grugulis, 2002). For example, Pogrebin and Poole (1988) discover that lower-ranking police officers test the limits of their humor and poke fun at sergeants. This is somewhat problematic as poking fun requires flexibility in understanding the language used, as well as patience, while at the same time maintaining a level of quality work expected from employees (Boland & Hoffman, 1986). Some outsider's may perceive the ambiguity of poking fun negatively, but from the insider's perspective it is accepted because the idea of poking fun has been socially accepted and understood. Fourth, we use humor sometimes to trivialize the issue of sexual harassment within organizations. That is, some members use humor to cope with the situation (Berryman-Fink, 2001). This is a strategy to help mitigate the stress of a threatening situation in an organization, but also problematic, as it does not solve the problem of sexual harassment within the workplace. That is, humor is not a cure-all to the problem of sexual harassment, nor is it a way to solve gender problems prevalent in organizations.

While I present humor more from an interpersonal acceptance standpoint, there is much research on we use it for coping and therapeutic relief (c.f., Berryman-Fink, 2001; Grugulis, 2002; Morreall, 1991; Safferstone, 1999; Schrock, 1999, Trumfio, 1994). But, this area of interest is outside the scope of this article. The following sections move into the ontological and epistemological issues of organizational assimilation and humor.

### **ONTOLOGICAL ISSUES OF ORGANIZATIONAL ASSIMILATION AND HUMOR**

In order to understand the ontological connection between humor and organizational assimilation, we need to first define ontology. Ontology deals with the nature of being. More

specifically, it deals with the nature of the things we seek to know (MacIntyre, 1967). This concept is important to understand because “the way a theorist conceptualizes communication depends in large measure on how the communicator is viewed” (Littlejohn, 1996, p. 35). The ontological issues of organizational assimilation and humor are important to analyze as they help the researcher study how a function of humor (e.g., jokes, teasing, etc.) is used among groups in organizations. Specifically, organizational assimilation is a predictable and reoccurring process because there are four general steps involved in that process. Researchers can use organizational assimilation to examine the phenomenon of humor as the concretized communicative process. For this article, the repetitious process of organizational assimilation in regards to the phenomenon of humor is the reality that is being examined.

The organizational assimilation process is evident and recurring because it outlines a general course that a new member faces when involved in an organization. This process is comprised of four steps that can recycle once a member leaves an organization. For example, when a new member enters an organization for the first time (also known as the first stage in the process), then s/he anticipates and conceptualizes patterns of organizational behavior (e.g., how to act, what to expect, what to say/not to say, etc.). When some time has passed, the member goes through the second stage, which entails making sense of the new work environment(s) and letting go of mistaken expectations preconceived before entering the organization for the first time, and during the first few days of work. During the third stage, when some more time has passed and if permitted, the organization accepts the member and understands how to behave in the within the organization. Finally, during the final stage, the member leaves the organization (i.e., leaves whatever setting that s/he has become accustomed to) and then the pattern can start all over again. The new pattern starts when the individual chooses to enter a new organization. The process of assimilation restarts and can vary in time and length from the previous experience of the process to a new experience.

By keeping in mind patterns of organizational assimilation, it is easier to conceptualize the phenomenon of humor. Humor can help to display the process of organizational assimilation. Moreover, examining each stage with a particular interaction helps in determining a better understanding of reality and relationships, as related to organizational assimilation and humor. By using patterns we provide humor, which is a phenomenon that is hard to describe (Duncan & Fesial, 1989; Freud, 1905/1960; Fry, 1987; Lynch, 2002; McGhee, 1979; Morreall, 1991; Veatch, 1998; Vinton, 1989) concretized evidence that helps to prove it as a mode of communication in that moment.

For example, if a new member enters an organization and the existing members view her/him as humorous on the first day during the anticipatory socialization stage (e.g., telling jokes, making fun of other employees, or sending riddles on email to her/his department colleagues), then this member will be viewed as an amusing (or possibly annoying) person in the organization to some individuals (i.e., this individual may not be the only entertaining person in the organization, but has established her/himself as amusing). While the member has to test which function of humor works within the organization, once it is known, s/he can use it to be humorous with other members on a



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regular basis. Even though this member may be a hard worker dedicated to the organization and her/his job, this person will be viewed as humorous. After sometime, it may become annoying to some members if the person is doing the same thing over and over to be humorous. But, this individual will more than likely make jokes while at work even though while completing her/his work. This is not only the beginning stages of organizational assimilation, but also the beginning stages of predicting this individual's behavior. If this member during the encounter stage is continuing the same behavior, then s/he will still be viewed as humorous if not more humorous than during the first stage.

While in the metamorphosis stage, if the member continues the same behavioral pattern as in the previous two stages (e.g., still telling jokes, making fun of other employees or sending riddles on email to her/his department colleagues) and if the member's fellow workers still find this member humorous, then we can confirm a pattern. That is, this member will be known in her/his organization as a humorous person. This is because of two reasons. First, this member establishes a predictable and repetitive pattern of humorous behavior from day one. Second, this particular member establishes and maintains a predictable pattern through the first three stages of organizational assimilation. If this member can continue this predictive and repetitive pattern of humorous behavior through disengagement or exit, then s/he establishes and maintains a full cycle of predictable and repetitive behavior. If we don't recognize the period or time frame of humor, the humor will be trivial. Given that the nature of assimilation stages is observable, new members use humor in this situation as an assimilation strategy.

### **EPISTEMOLOGICAL ISSUES OF ORGANIZATIONAL ASSIMILATION AND HUMOR**

In order to understand the epistemological connection between humor and organizational assimilation, we need to first define epistemology. Epistemology focuses on knowledge (Goldman, 1999). More specifically, it deals with how people know what they claim to know (Anderson, 1996; Littlejohn, 1996). Researchers can analyze the epistemological issues of organizational assimilation and humor through three different lenses. These issues of organizational assimilation and humor are important to analyze as they help researchers study how members use a function of humor (i.e., jokes, teasing, etc.) among groups in organizations. First, new members can use humor to adapt to new organizations and to find out about the organizational culture. Second, organizations can use humor to assimilate new employees into their organizational culture. Finally, certain groups of employees can use humor for organizational assimilation when referring to other groups of employees within the organization. These three lenses are epistemological because they aid in determining the nature of knowledge between organizational assimilation and humor.

First, new members can use humor to adapt to new organizations as a way of assimilation and finding out more about the organizational culture. New members can use humor to assimilate

because it is a universal language that can ease a possibly tense/awkward situation. Humor is a universal language because all cultures (including organizational cultures) use humor (Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999; Chapman & Foot, 1976; Feinberg, 1978; Kreps, 1993). No culture has ever been discovered to have a lack of humor (McGhee, 1979). When first entering an organization during the anticipatory socialization stage, tense/awkward situations can provide self-conscious moments, as the environment(s) is new to the member. To help ease this situation, a new member can utilize humor to “break the ice” and help relieve the discomfort that arises with the first stage in the process. The relief/arousal theory of humor best describes this situation. That is, using humor to try and make a situation more comfortable aids in alleviating distress. Serious or shy individuals tend to be less effective in assimilating into a new environment. At the same time, new members can use humor as a strategy to find out more about the organizational culture and its members’ personalities (Graham, Papa, & Brooks, 1992). Specifically, new members can observe people’s humor by using different types of humor to see which one matches successfully with the organization and its members.

For example, when a new member is in the encounter stage where s/he first establishes impressions and preconceived notions, s/he can use different functions of humor (e.g., joking, teasing, practical jokes, satirical humor, etc.) to see if one or more of the functions are successful with the organization and its members. If the new member has success with one of the functions, then that could be the proven function to use time and time again until metamorphosis. The metamorphosis stage of organizational assimilation is theoretically similar to what Weick (1969) terms as the double interact. That is, there is an act followed by a response, and then followed by an adjustment. For instance, the new member first uses different functions of humor to see which one works. Second, the organization’s existing members respond with negative and positive feedback. Finally, the new employee follows by appropriately choosing the function of humor that helps her/him to assimilate positively in the organization. The member negotiates through the first three stages and uses humor to assimilate and also as a strategy to find out how others feel about different functions of humor (e.g., joking, teasing, practical jokes, satirical humor, etc.).

Second, organizations can use humor to assimilate new employees into their organizational culture (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Barsoux, 1996; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Organizations can use humor to relieve awkward tension associated with new members who arrive and establish a relationship with an organization (Miller, 1997; Morreall, 1991). This issue is similar to a new member using humor as a strategy because both issues use humor as a way of making a situation less tense. Once again, the relief/arousal theory of humor is utilized. The relationship established between the organization and its new members is also how an organization can obtain more information about its employees: this is sensemaking (Weick, 1969, 1979, 1995).

For example, “Janet” (a hypothetical example) has just started working for a well established consulting company as a manager in the human resources department. She is nervous about her new job. During the formal organizational socialization program (which lasts during the first week), Janet learns more about her company. But, her company also learns more about how well she can

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handle stress and how well she will assimilate. Everyday, Janet's company composes a series of case study scenarios that she may encounter while working as a manager. But, before each day of the socialization program begins, her company asks Janet to share something funny that happened the previous day. This helps Janet to reduce stress and to lighten the mood before she works on each scenario. In addition, her company gathers as a large group for lunch to get to know each other where members exchange stories and relax. During the final day of the socialization program, Janet's company asks all members (new and old) to dress up in funny clothing (e.g., funny t-shirt, goofy hat, tacky dress, ugly tie, etc.). While this takes casual Friday to another level, it helps to make the atmosphere fun and exciting while Janet finishes her last day of the socialization period. Overall, the company learns that Janet is a good fit for the organization, as she performs well during the formal period. The company also realizes that she takes her job seriously while balancing a positive, fun, and responsible work atmosphere.

Finally, certain groups of employees in organizations can use humor to refer to other groups within the organization. Moreover, certain members may align into one group/cliq̄ue that makes fun of another group within the same organization (i.e., office, department, building, corporation, etc.). In this case, the members use the superiority theory of humor to make one group feel better about themselves over another group. For example, "Mike" (a hypothetical example) works in the accounting department for a small organization that builds computer software. Mike works well with his colleagues in the accounting department. Mike is also in the metamorphosis stage of organizational assimilation (i.e., he has been accepted into the organizational culture and he and his colleagues converse about topics that are not work related). Mike and his fellow workers do not like the marketing department of the company. From time to time, Mike and his colleagues make fun of the marketing department by using specific functions of humor. First, they joke about members of the marketing department as being less bright than members of the accounting department. Second, Mike and his colleagues tease the marketing departments' members about their ideas to promote the computer software that the organization builds. Specifically, Mike and his colleagues think that the marketing strategy for selling the computer software is dull. They feel the strategy needs more details in order to achieve higher sales profits for the company. With these two functions of humor (i.e., jokes, teasing), Mike and the accounting department poke fun at the marketing department.

Although members of both departments work for the same organization, Mike has assimilated more closely with the department he works for on a daily basis. Furthermore, the humor used by Mike and the accounting department is unique to his culture within the larger culture of the small computer software company. Mike has assimilated within his accounting department and also assimilated into the larger culture of the computer software company. The use of humor by Mike and the accounting department to poke fun at the marketing department is a method of assimilation, as Mike has assimilated with the department he works for within the larger paradigm of the computer software company. Furthermore, the joking and teasing utilized by Mike makes him feel superior (Duncan, 1985; Hobbes 1651/1996) to the marketing department. The example is

epistemological because the nature of humor in organizational assimilation demonstrates using humor in a situation of acceptance.

## CONCLUSIONS

We can use humor and organizational assimilation together in theory and practice because humor is a communicative strategy that can help a new member assimilate into an organization. Similarly, organizations can utilize humor to learn more about new members and help ease the assimilation process. One future recommendation for research is to do a qualitative study of humor as an assimilation strategy. Personal accounts by new members and narratives of how organizations use humor to assimilate can further extend my claims by providing concretized examples and real stories of humor as an effective assimilation strategy. A second future recommendation is to analyze corporate training videos' usage of humor during the encounter stage. By analyzing videos, we would see exact strategies used by corporations to help assimilate new members.

Depending on the member and the organization, humor use will vary in degree and which function of humor commonly used by the member or the organization. (Un)fortunately, humor use by the member or the organization can also lead to negative outcomes (e.g., cultural tension, firing, lack of collegiality, negative productivity, suspension, withdrawal, etc.) if used too often or inappropriately. Organizational assimilation is a process that takes time and preemptive plans in order to assimilate effectively. Humor is a powerful strategy that can make first impressions last with good thoughts, or make them last with negative thoughts.

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