

# Dynamics of Leadership in Public Service Theory and Practice

— SECOND EDITION —

Montgomery Van Wart

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# Preface to the Second Edition

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This book addresses leadership in public organizations from two perspectives. First, it examines—in detail—the competencies that organizational leaders at all levels need. Second, it offers a comparative review of the theoretical literature on leadership from a public sector perspective. Both of these elements have received remarkably little attention, despite the abundance of materials available for the private sector.

The book is written for scholars, instructors, students, and practitioners. Academics should appreciate that all discussions have a solid foundation in social science research. Although this study includes a thorough review of the literature, the author has also relied on his own studies (provided as appendixes) and extensive experience as a management trainer. Several of the analyses are original to this book. The applied model used as the basis in Part II is the most articulated action research model in the literature to date. The review of styles provides a coherent, state-of-the-art discussion that is innovative and should provide a useful advancement for an area that has become confused and fragmented. The comparative analysis of all the major schools of thought, including the new “shared leadership” school and integrated leadership theories, is also unprecedented.

Faculty seeking not only to teach practical management and leadership skills but also to relate the analytic and theoretical aspects should find this book particularly useful. The book lays out the theories of leadership in Part I and then proceeds to a pragmatic review of competencies in Part II. In some cases, instructors may find it helpful to change the order and introduce concrete competencies first, especially in practice-oriented classes. With seventeen chapters, the book fits well within a semester format as a primary or secondary text, and provides enough material from which instructors may readily pick and choose.

Trainers using the book as a resource for substantial leadership development programs will be able to provide the detailed feedback necessary for improvement plans. The competencies in this study can easily be keyed to the leadership elements in all the major leadership assessment instruments.

Practitioners and students will find the plan of the book simple to follow in that a leadership action cycle provides a single heuristic model of the leadership process. The model breaks leadership down into five major elements (with seventy subelements overall), including thirty-seven specific leadership competencies (leader characteristics and leader behaviors). The competencies are straightforward. Readers can use the assessment form in Appendix A for self-analysis as well as for distribution.

Reviewers have been unanimous in their praise of the book’s illustrative materials.

I have made an effort to provide a wide variety of examples, stories, and data for this enormously broad subject. In addition, I have blended a good deal of ancient, folk, and literary wisdom about leadership with the empirical analysis. Modern scholars in most fields including leadership like to ignore nonempirical knowledge, no matter how wise and respected. Yet, many of these ancient insights are no less true for being old, and readers will find such pearls and insights succinctly expressed and refreshing compared to drier, empirical analysis. For the most part, I do not use standard citation format for quotations from nonacademic sources. Most of these allusions come from Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*, Van Ekeren's *Words for all Occasions*, and Sherrin's *The Oxford Dictionary of Humorous Quotations*.

## CHANGES IN THE SECOND EDITION

The changes in the second edition are extensive. Some of the changes are improvements or attempts to fill in oversights in the first edition, while others cover the enormous research productivity and advances that have occurred since the first edition was sent out for review. The more important ones will be identified here.

The format of the book has also been changed. The theoretical chapters now precede the chapters discussing competency clusters. This is a more traditional organization and is in line with feedback received from those using the first edition.

Chapter 1 now includes an extensive discussion of postmodernism as it relates to leadership studies. Topics such as collaboration, horizontal leadership, and complexity theory are more fully discussed and much better situated in the contemporary intellectual and philosophical climate. A discussion of types of leadership (e.g., political vs. administrative) was also moved from the preface to this chapter.

Chapter 2 includes the substitution of one generic style with two, more specific, styles. That is, while the first edition discussed external leadership as a broad category, this edition follows the literature more closely and uses strategic and collaborative styles as analytically distinct and pragmatically quite different categories. While both have an external focus, the thrust of one focuses on competition and comparative position. The thrust of the other focuses on cooperation and the benefits of sharing. To some degree, they parallel the more internally focused achievement-oriented and inspirational styles.

The section on distributed leadership has been expanded to a chapter titled "Horizontal and Distributed Models of Leadership." Added to discussions in the first edition of superleadership, substitutes theory, self-leadership, and team theory are discussions of informal leadership, followership, and network leadership theory. The latter two areas have seen an explosive growth of interest and research recently. Shared leadership theory, as essentially an overarching model, was moved to be with other integrated theories.

The section on ethics and leadership was also expanded into a full chapter. That chapter now discusses five perspectives. It first lays out a model generally assumed by nearly all theories, a basic integrity model that emphasizes virtue. Four other models extend

the normative assumptions or responsibilities of leaders beyond basic virtue. The moral manager approach emphasizes the fostering of appropriate organizational and legal compliance. Authentic leadership focuses on self-awareness and development as a means of grounding oneself to make ethically balanced decisions. Spiritual or servant leadership celebrates the “other” focus of great leaders who epitomize compassion, empathy, and inclusiveness. It is also related to affective leadership and emotional labor. Finally, there is the ethical perspective that leaders are transforming agents for the common good in the vein of Burns (1978, 2003) and Heifetz (1994).

The chapter on specialized approaches still includes the topics of power and gender. Sections on leadership and world cultures, primarily based on the Globe studies, were added. It also includes the domestic parallel: a section on subcultures, diversity, and leadership.

The section on integrative theories was expanded to a full chapter with a much more robust discussion. Added to the array of integrative theories considered are shared leadership (moved from another chapter), strategic theory, social change theory, and complexity leadership theory. All of the chapters on applied leadership competencies have been updated and have additional contemporary examples.

The final chapter has a completely new and substantial discussion evaluating the public leadership research literature. It covers defining the boundaries of types of leadership, fundamental shifts in the field, advances in traditional research approaches, research gaps in leadership studies, and the status of public sector leadership research in general.

Overall, while the book still has a special focus on organizational leadership from an individual perspective, it has followed the field to give much more emphasis to collaboration, networking, diversity, citizen input, and the like. These perspectives do not so much replace authoritarian, hierarchical approaches that have been out of vogue for managers for decades, as add to the important complement of necessary perspectives for today’s leaders (Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey 2007; Raffel, Leisink, and Middlebrooks 2009). Ultimately, leadership for individuals is somewhat more challenging, no matter whether one is looking at managerial competencies (Van Wart and Berman 1999) or current inclusive leadership patterns. Although the focus of the theoretical review is still on the individual perspective, substantially more attention is now given to the process perspective as well.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The help of many along the way has been indispensable. Any work of intellectual value stands on the shoulders of other major scholars. I am particularly indebted to the fine integrative work of Bernard Bass, Gary Yukl, Jerry Hunt, Mary Uhl-Bien, John Bryson and Barbara Crosby, and Jay Conger, among others. I am also indebted to the research of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, which I have used extensively throughout this text. I wish to thank the managers in Arizona, Iowa, Texas, Florida, and California with whom I have worked; they have shared their experiences with me, and in some cases I

have actually used them as examples. And, of course, I have special thanks for my editor at M.E. Sharpe, Harry Briggs, who adopted this project and has been very patient during its development and refinement.

I am personally most indebted to Paul Suino. He has read and reread the book and he has patiently critiqued and proofed it. He also provided the encouragement necessary to complete such an ambitious task, while I was attempting to lead in my own organizations.

# Dynamics of Leadership in Public Service

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# Introduction

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Those wishing to study leadership in an effort to improve their effectiveness need to be aware of three related facts:

- leadership is a complex phenomenon;
- those embarking on a study must be willing to consider more sophisticated intellectual and applied models if more than platitudes are desired; and
- ultimately, leadership is such a vast subject that one must focus on the particular domain of leadership (e.g., leadership of organizations versus social movements) that one is interested in to provide concrete insights (Bass 1990).

The complexity of the subject becomes apparent when trying to specify a focus or perspective on leadership. For example, is it only about political, social, and business leaders who change the world, or does it include those in charge who simply run things well? Are those who change the world for the worse nonetheless leaders? Does it have to be about executives exclusively, or can it include managers, supervisors, frontline workers, soldiers, or even volunteers? And when we have settled on an operational definition of leadership, do we want our theory to explain the best styles and behaviors to use in an “average” situation? In preparing for a controversial change or responding to a crisis? Do we want to explain how some leaders accomplish things by employing charisma while others do so with a quiet, life-long passion devoid of significant charm? Do we explain the totality of leadership or do we address certain traits, such as decisiveness, only when they appear to make a difference?

Because of the complexity of leadership, simplistic models have limited utility for those wanting useful intellectual or practical insights. Streamlined, overarching theoretical models of leadership certainly have the virtue of elegance. However, they also invariably fall prey to three problems. First, they can overgeneralize, meaning that occasionally good advice may be wrong in a given situation. Second, they can be incomplete, meaning that the advice may be detailed and accurate enough in a few areas but many critical elements of leadership are ignored. Finally, they can lack applicability, meaning that even if the principle is broad enough to be right, it falls short on advice about how to use it. An overview of schools of thought about leadership is provided in this chapter, with theoretical perspectives covered extensively in Part I of this book.

At the applied level, leadership is complex. It involves, among other things, an array of assessment skills, a series of characteristics (traits and skills) that the leader brings to a particular setting, and a wide variety of behavioral competencies. Furthermore, the



leadership skills needed in the same position may vary over time as the organization's environment and life cycle change. An applied model distilled from the theoretical and applied literature is provided in Part II. A leadership assessment instrument in the appendix of this book is keyed to this applied model. Part III looks at issues related to leadership development and evaluation.

Finally, types of leadership vary substantially, even though elements of leadership have some commonality at the most global level. For example, the followers of a general differ markedly from those of a religious leader. Likewise, the head of a successful accounting firm will need skills very different from those needed by the head of a troubled manufacturing firm whose bottom line is being undermined by international competition.

This chapter sets the stage for the theoretical, practical, and developmental analyses of leadership. It first defines the scope of study with a review of leadership types. It next reviews the leadership literature by focusing on traditional and contemporary themes, and follows up by contrasting the mainstream and public sector literatures. The chapter then concentrates on the perennial debates that weave throughout the mainstream leadership literature and again contrasts them with those in the public sector literature. Finally, some of the important nomenclature (terms) used in leadership studies are defined and discussed. It is from these discussions that one working operational definition of leadership (among many possible) is offered.

## **TYPES OF LEADERSHIP**

An important distinction to make when discussing leadership is to decide what type is involved. While types of leadership inevitably have some similarities, they have important differences, too. Consider organizational leaders, political executives, legislators, community leaders, and the range of opinion leaders. The organizational leader has a large number of defined followers (generally paid) and concrete services or products to produce. Rather than employees, the followers of a political executive tend to be an electorate, producing public policy and ensuring implementation compliance. Legislators are certainly leaders, but their followers are exclusively the electorate, and their major product is legislation. Local level community leaders (e.g., parent-teacher association presidents, volunteer fire chiefs, small nonprofit advisory board chairs), depending on their exact role, often have characteristics that coincide with those of political leaders and organizational leaders. They are often trying to influence policy, but just as often they are a part of the service delivery system, too, if only as volunteers. Opinion leaders (e.g., religious leaders, inventors, and ideological leaders without formal positions) are generally an entirely different sort; they lead others who are not accountable to them, and they affect policies or social trends that are not their direct responsibility. See Exhibit 1.1 for an analysis of the "followers" among different types of leaders.

The primary topic of this book is organizational leadership. Special attention is given to public- and nonprofit-sector settings. Generally, organizational leaders have been delivered authoritative assessments about which problems to address. This is particularly

Exhibit 1.1

**A Simplified View of Different Types of Leaders**

		Types of work		
		Execution	Policy	New ideas
Types of followers	Employees	Managers	Executives with policy responsibilities	Transformational leaders
	Constituents	Community leaders of volunteer groups	Legislators and advisory board members	Lobbyists and policy entrepreneurs
	Adherents	Small group leaders	Leaders of social movements	Philosophical zealots and social trendsetters

true in the public sector. Their concern is how to deliver services or products through their organization. Thus, organizational leaders will spend the bulk of their time assessing internal capacities such as task skills, role clarity, and other attributes that are of marginal interest to political leaders. Because of the mission orientation infused in public and nonprofit leadership, the book also includes community-change leadership. Although community-change leadership can have political ramifications, it is a reality for senior and midlevel public sector organizational leaders.

Even narrowing the focus to organizational leadership leaves a broad array of perspectives to consider. Some important distinctions include: leadership exercised at various levels of the organization (executive, management, supervisory, or even frontline employee), line leadership versus staff leadership, leaders in small or large organizations, leaders in old or new organizations, leaders in resource-rich environments versus those in poor environments, and leaders in relatively static organizational environments versus those in relatively dynamic environments.

## **HISTORY OF THE LITERATURE ON LEADERSHIP IN THE MAINSTREAM AND PUBLIC SECTORS**

A brief historical overview of the massive leadership literature is provided as an initial introduction to the subject. It begins with the traditionally dominant themes and then follows up with contemporary themes since the 1990s. Next, the discussion contrasts the distinctly different tones and emphases assumed in the public- versus the private-sector leadership literature.

### **Dominant Themes in the Modern Leadership Mainstream Through the 1990s**

It is certainly impossible to pigeonhole all the mainstream leadership literature<sup>1</sup> into distinct eras with clear demarcations; however, it is possible to capture themes and interests for a heuristic overview. An excellent, exhaustive review can be found in *The Bass Handbook of Leadership* (Bass 2008) for those interested in a detailed history and more complex analysis.

The nineteenth century was dominated by the notion of the “great man” thesis. Particular great men (women were invariably overlooked despite great leaders in history such as Joan of Arc, Elizabeth I, and Clara Barton) somehow move history forward due to their exceptional characteristics as leaders. The stronger version of this theory holds that history is handmaiden to men; great men actually change the shape and direction of history. Philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzsche and William James firmly asserted that history would be different if a great man were suddenly incapacitated. Thomas Carlyle’s 1841 essay on heroes and hero worship is an early popular version of this, as was Galton’s 1869 study of hereditary genius (cited in Bass 1990, 37–38). Such theories generally have an implicit class bias. A milder version of the theory is that as history proceeds in its irrevocable course, a few men will move history forward substantially and dramatically because of their greatness, especially in moments of crisis or social need. This sentiment was expressed by Hegel, who thought that the great man was an expression of his times, as did Herbert Spencer. Economic determinists such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, although not theorizing about leadership per se, imply that great men overcome obstacles of history more effectively and quickly than do lesser individuals.<sup>2</sup> Although these lines of thinking have more sophisticated echoes later in the trait and situational leadership periods, “hero worship” is certainly alive and well in popular culture and in biographies and autobiographies. It has as its core a belief that there are only a few, very rare individuals in any society at any time that have the unique characteristics to shape or express history. Although this thesis may serve sufficiently for case studies (essentially biographies), it is effectively nonrefutable and therefore unusable as a scientific theory, and it is equally unsatisfying as a primary leadership teaching tool.

The scientific mood of the early twentieth century fostered the development of a more focused search for the basis of leadership. What traits and characteristics do leaders seem to share in common? Researchers developed personality tests and compared the results of average individuals with those perceived to be leaders. By the 1940s, researchers had amassed very long lists of traits from numerous psychologically oriented studies (Bird 1940; Jenkins 1947). This tactic involved two problems. First, the lists became longer and longer as research continued. Second, and more important, the traits and characteristics identified were not powerful predictors across situations. For example, leaders have to be decisive but they must also be flexible and inclusive. Without situational specificity, the endless list of traits offers little prescriptive assistance and descriptively becomes nothing more than a long laundry list. In 1948, Ralph Stogdill published a devastating critique of pure trait theory, which subsequently fell into disfavor as being too unidimensional to account for the complexity of leadership (Stogdill 1948).

The next major thrust looked at the situational contexts that affect leaders, and attempted to find meaningful patterns for theory building and useful advice. One early example was the work that came out of the Ohio State Leadership Studies (Shartle 1950; Hempill 1950; Hempill and Coons 1957). These studies began by testing 1,800 statements related to leadership behavior. By continually distilling the behaviors,

## Exhibit 1.2

**The Administrator as Leader**

"If administration is to be leadership and not command, then it were well that the high echelons of hierarchy were Escoffiers or Rembrandts, sensitive to the flavor and shades of coloring in the group relationships. Such leadership requires not just an understanding of the organizational interrelationships of the hierarchy. It requires some knowledge of the psychological dynamics of group behavior, of belief systems, of status values, and of the learning process itself. The administrator who is a leader must also be a teacher. For such leadership he requires not only formal education in administration but also apprenticeship and on-the-job training."

*Source:* Marshall (1953, 13).

researchers arrived at two underlying factors: consideration and the initiation of structure. Consideration describes a variety of behaviors related to the development, inclusion, and good feelings of subordinates. The initiation of structure describes a variety of behaviors related to defining roles, control mechanisms, task focus, and work coordination both inside and outside the unit. Coupled with the humanist/human relations revolution that was occurring in the 1950s and 1960s, these (and similar studies) spawned a series of useful, if often simplistic and largely bimodal, theories. Arygris's maturity theory (1957), Likert's motivational approach (1959), and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y (1960) all implicitly encourage more consideration in all leadership behavior. Maslow's (1967) eupsychian management recommends that leadership be assigned based on the needs of the situation so that authoritarian tendencies (excessive structure) can be curbed. This line of thinking was further advanced and empirically tested by Fiedler (1967), who developed a contingency theory and related leader-match theory (Fiedler, Chemers, and Mahar 1976). Blake and Mouton's (1964, 1965) managerial grid recommends leaders be highly skilled in both task behaviors (initiating structure) and people-oriented behaviors (consideration). Hersey and Blanchard's life-cycle theory (1969, 1972) relates the maturity of the followers (both in terms of expertise and attitude) to the ideal leader behavior—telling (directing), selling (consulting), participating, and delegating. (For an early example of this insight, see Exhibit 1.2.)

These early situational theories were certainly useful for several reasons. First, they were useful as an antidote to the excessively hierarchical, authoritarian styles that had developed in the first half of the twentieth century with the rise and dominance of large organizations in both the private and public sectors. Second, they were useful as teaching tools for incipient and practicing managers who appreciated the elegant constructs even though they were descriptively simplistic. As a class, however, these theories generally failed to meet scientific standards because they tried to explain too much with too few variables. Of the major theories, only Vroom's normative-decision model broke out of this pattern because it self-consciously focused on a single dimension of leadership style—the role of participation—and identified seven problem attributes and two classes of cases (group and individual) (Vroom and Yetton 1973; Vroom and Jago 1988). Although

the situational perspective still forms the basis of most leadership theories today, it has largely done so either in a strictly managerial context (i.e., a narrow level of analysis) on a factor-by-factor basis or it has been subsumed in more comprehensive approaches to leadership at the macro level.

While ethical dimensions were occasionally mentioned in the mainstream literature, the coverage was invariably peripheral because of the avoidance of normative (value-laden) issues by social scientists. The first major text devoted to ethical issues was Robert Greenleaf's book, *Servant Leadership* (1977). He was ignored by mainstream theorists who were dominated by positivists, despite his affiliation with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard, Dartmouth, and the University of Virginia, and he ultimately founded the Center for Applied Ethics.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, James Macgregor Burns's book on leadership burst onto the scene in 1978 and had unusually heavy ethical overtones.<sup>4</sup> However, it was not the ethical dimension that catapulted it to prominence but its transformational theme, which is discussed below. Both Greenleaf (a former business executive) and Burns (a political scientist) were outside the usual leadership academic circles whose members came primarily from business and psychology backgrounds. A number of contemporary mainstream leadership theorists, both popular and academic, such as DePree (1989), Gardner (1989), Rost (1990), Block (1993), Bennis, Parikh, and Lessem (1994, in contrast with Bennis's other work), and Zand (1997), continue in this tradition, to one degree or another. For an example of the profound difference this one element can make, however, see Exhibit 1.3. This theme was covered earlier and more frequently (at least in terms of ethical uses of discretion) in the public sector literature, but that was not part of the mainstream literature and will be discussed separately.

Until 1978, the primary focus of the mainstream literature was on leadership at lower levels, which was amenable to small-group and experimental methods with simplified variable models, while executive leadership (with its external demands) and more amorphous abilities to induce large-scale change were largely ignored.<sup>5</sup> Burns's book on leadership dramatically changed that interest by introducing the notion that transactional leadership was what was largely being studied and that the other highly important arena—transformational leadership—was largely being ignored.<sup>6</sup> This struck an especially responsive chord in the nonexperimental camp, which had already been explicitly stating that nationally there was a surfeit of managers (who use a “transactional” mode) and a serious deficit of leaders (who use a “transformational” mode) (Zaleznik 1977). Overall, this school agreed that leaders have special responsibility for understanding a changing environment, that they facilitate more dramatic changes, and that they often can energize followers far beyond what traditional exchange theory would suggest.

Overstating for clarity, three subschools emerged that emphasized different aspects of these “larger-than-life” leaders.<sup>7</sup> The transformational school emphasized vision and overarching organizational change (e.g., Burns 1978; Bass 1985; Bennis and Nanus 1985; and Tichy and Devanna 1986). The charismatic school focused on the influence processes of individuals and the specific behaviors used to arouse inspiration and higher levels of action in followers (e.g., House 1977; Meindl 1990; Conger and Kanungo 1998).

## Exhibit 1.3

**Two Great Visionary and Entrepreneurial Leaders in the Public Sector—  
With One Big Difference**

Great cities must occasionally reinvent themselves, or else they get stuck in the notions and needs of past ages. The city of Paris is the most famous example. An ancient medieval city, Paris by the nineteenth century had become a ramble of narrow, winding streets. Napoleon III, none too graciously, commanded the redesign of the city to install major boulevards to ease traffic problems. Not only did this provide modern traffic flow and infrastructure, but in the minds of many it also established Paris as the most beautiful city in the world. New York City was another such example in the twentieth century. Despite its bedrock base for skyscrapers, a brilliant harbor, and financial preeminence, by the early twentieth century it had become a candidate for decline as an island city outgrowing its own infrastructure. Two public servants—Austin Tobin and Robert Moses—thoroughly reinvented the city to make it the greatest city (at least in terms of population, wealth, and power) on earth in the latter part of the century.

Austin Tobin (1903–1971) joined the Port Authority of New York (later called the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey) not long after its creation in 1921 and became its executive director in 1942. Although a lawyer by training, he mastered the internal and technical dynamics of leading a large organization. He inherited an agency that was largely independent because it was self-funding through fees; he was able to expand his legal purview over the years through his political connections and knowledge of the law; and he was able to use the variety of projects and responsibilities of the Authority as a great source of power. During his tenure as executive director, Tobin was responsible for the inclusion of all three major airports in his agency—Newark, LaGuardia, and Idlewild (now Kennedy)—added the Newark seaport, created the Elizabeth seaport, added terminals in Brooklyn, two tubes to the Lincoln Tunnel, and a second tier to the George Washington Bridge, built the largest bus terminal in the world, and set the stage for the building of the World Trade Center. His vision of New York as the leading commercial center in the world was not diminished by the extraordinary challenges of managing across the various jurisdictions of many mayors, borough presidents, and two very powerful governors. His entrepreneurial flare helped him create massive projects that were brilliantly executed and stood the test of time.

Robert Moses (1888–1981) had no less impact on New York than his sometimes rival, Tobin. Moses became the city parks commissioner in 1934 as well as chairman of most of the major bridge and tunnel authorities in New York (which ultimately included the Triborough Bridge, Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, and the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge with their immense revenue base). He further added to his power later by becoming the city construction coordinator and a member of the City Planning Commission. During his career he masterminded and built the immensely successful Jones Beach State Park, the East Side highway (FDR Drive), the crucial Cross-Bronx Expressway, the 1964 World's Fair, and many of the modern port facilities. Just as Tobin's vision was New York as a commercial powerhouse, Moses's vision was New York as a great metropolis of fluid movement and great parks. A genius of detail and the creation of timeless projects, he was a virtuoso of power, able to defy mayors and governors with relative ease.

Plutarch noted that “the most glorious exploits do not always furnish us with the clearest signs of virtue or vice in men; sometimes a matter of less moment informs us better of their character and inclinations.” So it can be argued about these two “great” men. Tobin was known for his stand on diversity in an age when such notions were not popular and had no legal weight. He promoted Jews and women in the mid-1940s (over opposition) and fought extremely hard for the integration of the trade unions in the 1960s. He provided internal development programs, had a widespread reputation for equitable treatment of the rank-and-file employees, and inspired great loyalty despite his toughness and occasional rigidity. Finally, his tenant relocation programs were considered models of compassion and integrity. On the other hand, Moses was a thoroughgoing

*(continued)*

Exhibit 1.3 (*continued*)

elitist in the worst sense. His staff was as ethnically pure and male dominated as any other of his age. He worked with the white-dominated labor unions to keep Puerto Ricans and African Americans out. Lastly, his tenant relocation programs—affecting tens of thousands of citizens over the years—were legendary uses of brutal state force that provided no state assistance, even in an era of severe housing shortages.

So we are left with a question about the greatness, and perhaps even about the leadership, of these two extraordinary men. Both were technically brilliant, entrepreneurial geniuses; both had great visions that they were able to execute. Both transformed the New York City miniregion into a leading world commercial and community center. Yet, Tobin's "underside" reveals a caring for employees, a sense of social fairness, and a compassion for those affected by his projects that is totally lacking in Robert Moses. It is unlikely that anyone would argue that Austin Tobin was not a great leader, but do you consider Moses a great leader, just a leader, or neither?

Less articulated in terms of leadership theory was an entrepreneurial school that urged leaders to make practical process and cultural changes that would dramatically improve quality or productivity; it shared a change emphasis with the transformational school and an internal focus with the charismatic school (Peters and Austin 1985; Hammer and Champy 1993; and Champy 1995).

The infusion of the transformational leadership school(s) led to a reinvigoration of academic and nonacademic studies of leadership as well as to a good deal of initial confusion and ultimately to multifaceted approaches by the 1990s. Was the more transactional leadership that the situationalists had so assiduously studied really just mundane management? Or was the new transformational leadership just an extension of basic skills that its adherents were poorly equipped to explain with conventional scientific methodologies? Even before the 1980s some work had been done to create more integrative models that tried to explain the many aspects of leadership (Yukl 1971; Winter 1979). Yet, it was not until the 1980s that work began in earnest and conventional models incorporated transactional and transformational elements rather routinely. Bass's work is a good example in this regard. Even his original work on transformational leadership (1985) has strong transactional elements (transformational leaders being those who not only master transactional skills but also are able to capitalize on transformational skills),<sup>8</sup> that were further strengthened in later work (Bass and Avolio 1990; Bass 1996). In the third edition of *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, Bass was able to assert that the field "has broken out of its normal confinement to the study of [leader group] behaviors" to more studies on executives, more inclusion of perspectives from political science, and more cross fertilization among schools of thought (Bass 1990, xi).

From the 1990s, three major themes developed. First, there has been an interest in integrating the proliferation of perspectives to the degree possible. Second, there has been a better appreciation of horizontal leadership, for example, team leadership. Third, there have been arrays of postmodern perspectives that have challenged the dominance of leader-centric and even organization-centric leadership perspectives.

*Contemporary Theme 1: Integrated or Comprehensive Leadership Models*

The urge for integrative theories in the popular literature has been relatively constant and has tended to lead to prescriptive, normative, universalistic, and relatively simplistic models. Though they may be inspiring and provide numerous useful tips, they are not generally particularly rigorous, especially from a contextual perspective. The most rigorous and relatively elegant integrative model from the scientific community is generally considered to be Bass's "full range" leadership model (1985), which merges both transactional and transformational approaches. It has found wide support and has been reported to include up to 70 percent of the variance of leadership factors in some studies. Essentially it says that one starts with good management in which employees are monitored and incentivized at the transactional level. Performance exceeds expectations, however, at the transformational level with personal/group consideration, the ability to inspire the transcending of self-interest, leadership that has vision and promotes creativity, and leaders who are themselves somewhat charismatic. As powerful as this may be at a macro level, it is still highly universalistic (noncontextual) and simplistic (it does not account for numerous factors not in the model nor does it predict the proportion of emphasis of the various factors in different situations).

Recently there has been a call from the traditional empiricist perspective for better, descriptively precise theories, as well as a call from the newer postmodern theorists for more complex and relational theories. Avolio (2007) suggests that integrative theories must contain five elements: cognitive elements of leaders and followers, individual and group behaviors, the historical context, the proximal or internal context, and the distal or environmental context. This is a tall order because it involves so many simultaneous spheres, each with numerous factors, that it is nearly impossible to represent in more than a descriptive framework. Some examples of such models from the mainstream are Yukl's flexible leadership theory model (2008), Hunt's extended multiple organizational level model (1996), Boal and Hooijberg's integrated strategic leadership model (2001), Pearce and Conger's shared leadership model (2003a and b; Pearce, Conger and Locke 2008), Chemers's integrative model (1997), and Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey's complexity adaptive systems theory (2007).

One of the great challenges in organizing leadership research as well as teaching it to practitioners is the enormous situational variety related to different sectors, organizing structures, levels of analysis, and focus of analysis. Even narrowing the focus to organizational leadership, is one addressing the private or public sector with their different emphases on profit maximization and competition versus the public good and governance, examining a hierarchical or a team-based organization, distinguishing among the competencies for a frontline supervisor or an agency head, or focusing on managing-for-results versus the effects of gender, power, or ethics on leadership? While normal science and deep understanding is built upon individual cases, ultimately classes of cases are aligned into categories and types and midlevel theories, which are further aggregated into macro-level theories. While mainstream leadership research has been strong at the empirical and midlevels, leadership research has had difficulty agreeing to frameworks in order to incorporate the disparate theories referenced earlier (i.e., transactional, transformational, distributed, servant, etc.). As mentioned earlier, the most successful broad approach is



probably Bass's widely cited full range theory, which is relatively successful at integrating transactional and transformational leadership theory (Bass 1985, 1996).

Starting with a community leadership basis, Crosby and others have provided a wide variety of publications related to integrative leadership (Crosby and Bryson 2005; Crosby and Kiedrowski 2008). Integrative leadership focuses on cross-boundary problem solving that elevates the community in the tradition established by Burns (1978) of "transforming" leadership (raising the consciousness of followers to solve problems through enlightenment as much as self-interest) rather than merely transformational (i.e., change-oriented) leadership. It tends to be executive, policy, and ideologically oriented.

Van Wart (2004) frames leadership from an individual and organizational perspective using a "leadership action cycle" to integrate transactional, transformational, and distributed approaches with particular reference to public sector settings. His model includes five major leader domains—assessments, characteristics, styles, behaviors, and evaluation/development—which ultimately incorporate seventy factors. His framework aims to be useful as a tool for relating research studies to an overarching context and as a teaching matrix of concrete leadership and management mechanics.

Matthew Fairholm (2004; Fairholm and Fairholm 2009) follows in the tradition of Gilbert Fairholm (1991) in framing leadership more broadly from a public values perspective. He emphasizes "five leadership perspectives (ranging from leadership as equivalent to scientific management, to leadership being a whole-soul or spiritual endeavor) held by public managers and discusses their implications for public administration" (Fairholm 2004, 577). In doing so, he provides a classical apology for administrative leadership. Fernandez (2005) looks at the critical factors leading to superintendent success (educational performance) using an integrative framework and a large data set of Texas school districts. He found that over half of the variance in organizational performance could be explained by six variables: community support, task difficulty, experience, promotion of change, choice of style, and internal management. While community support had a direct, positive relationship with performance, in other cases variables had nonlinear effects, such as task difficulty, which moderated the choice of style and internal management emphasis, and promotion of change, which had a short-term negative effect because of disruption. Fernandez and Pitts (2007) followed up with a study of leadership change using the same data set. These and other comprehensive perspectives are elaborated in chapter 7.

### *Contemporary Theme 2: Distributed Leadership*

Even as the focus on the role of "big picture" and change leadership was being emphasized by transformational leadership following the 1980s, contemporary trends forced many organizations to rethink overreliance on strong leaders. Of course an acknowledgment of followers has been a theme of leadership since its inception, with approaches such as early attribution theory, which studied leaders' power and effectiveness as affected by followers' perceptions, and Hollander's (1958) idiosyncratic credit theory, which noted that leaders build up and lose psychological support that they use in their initiatives.

However, the traits of leaders, their daily practices (transactions), and the ability to inspire change have tended to be center stage.

Contemporary trends have increasingly placed followers in their various guises in an equal light, and have given them far more research attention. Pearce and Conger's (2003a) important work, *Shared Leadership: Reframing the Hows and Whys of Leadership*, crystallized the new rethinking about non-leader-centric forms of leadership by incorporating elements of vertical leadership with horizontal leadership (i.e., self, self-managed teams, and various types of empowering leadership). Horizontal leadership is often called distributed leadership; *Leadership Quarterly* devoted a special issue to it in 2006, as well as one that included followers in 2001. Examples in the follower-distributed vein are numerous; a few noteworthy ones are Kellerman's book on followership (2008), Drath and associates' call for an "increasingly peer-like and collaborative" framework (2008), and Van Vugt, Hogan, and Kaiser's (2008, 182) historical-evolutionary analysis for why leadership research "tends to ignore the central role of followers." Calls for more emphasis on followers and collective action in public sector settings have become more common around the globe (Dunoon 2002; Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe 2005; Lawler 2008; Lemay 2009).

Teams started to become important in the 1980s (e.g., Scholtes 1988), but research lagged until the 1990s as did leadership functions in particular (Burke et al. 2006). The different types of teams (senior management, functional, cross-functional, self-managed, etc.) with their different emphases on regular production, communication, and innovation, as well as vertical versus horizontal (distributed) modalities have made research in this area complex. Today, with the increased importance of distributed leadership, leadership in teams has become an important topic (Day, Gronn, and Salas 2006). Transformational leadership effects have been formally studied (Schaubroeck, Lam, and Cha 2007; Purvanova and Bono 2009), and transformational approaches have been encouraged in the popular literature as well (Logan, King, and Fischer-Wright 2008). Significant work has been done on different types of teams such as senior management teams (Wageman et al. 2008), comparing the importance of vertical and shared leadership elements (Ensley, Hmieleski, and Pearce 2006; Pearce, Conger, and Locke 2008), the role of empowerment (Chin et al. 2007), representative teams and organizational democracy (Clarke 2006), and the effects of formal leadership roles on individual performance (Day, Sin, and Chen 2004), among other topics. Distributed-leadership theory is discussed more fully in chapter 5.

### *Contemporary Theme 3: Postmodern Perspectives on Leadership*

A third trend has been an attempt to provide a paradigm shift from the modernist approach, which has tended to be relatively uncritical of leaders, power systems, and the methods of traditional social science at "discovering knowledge." By critiquing or refuting modernist assumptions, it offers fresh perspectives. It will be discussed more fully here because its subtle but profound effects are discussed in numerous chapters (especially chapters 5, 6, and 7).

Several characteristics have tended to dominate the mainstream regarding the overall approach. First, until recently, leadership research followed "modern" trends regarding

the emphasis on empiricism, rationalism, positivism, and reductionism. Empiricism holds that all knowledge comes from the senses, and that the metaphysical is not an interest of science. Rationalism asserts that the mind organizes knowledge of the external world by observation and contemplation. Positivism (built on empiricism and rationalism) holds that science is testable, cumulative, and neutral, and that things are ultimately measurable. Reductionism attempts to reduce complexity to the fewest elements or variables, and to explain science at the most fundamental level (e.g., reducing classical genetics to molecular biology, Sarkar 1992).

Second, and flowing from the first, the study of leadership (overall) has tended to be objectivist, leader-centric, and status-quo-oriented. The objectivist trend was manifested by the effort to break leadership down into its constituent parts (traits, skills, behaviors, attitudes, etc.) and analyze the empirical relationship among them, with the hope that increasingly abstract general rules could be interpolated from microlevel studies. Research tended to be leader-centric because the leader in the leadership process has tended to be the major object of study. How does the leader relate to follower? How does the leader maintain order, control, and productivity? How does the leader use different styles in different situations to achieve what ends? How does the leader use her/his values, or change the organization's values? Finally, leadership studies have tended to assume that leadership forms are inherent and that individuals and organizations need to discover and master those forms (sometimes called realism).

Incipient challenges to some of the tenets of modernist research began as early as the late 1970s with the work of people like Burns (1978) with the introduction of social values and Greenleaf (1977) with the introduction of individual values and a denial of instrumentalism. The two earliest journals on leadership, the *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* (started in 1980) and *Leadership Quarterly* (started in 1990), both hoped to promote more positivist (and thus modernist) research, although they allowed eclectic approaches. Since 2000, leadership studies have been increasingly affected by calls for approaches that reflect postmodern research trends. The newer journals of *Integral Leadership* (2000) and *Leadership* (2005) reverse the modernist emphasis by appeals for more eclectic, relational, and holistic approaches.

While the tenets underlying modern research will not be abandoned, they are likely to be overtaken by a radically different perspective from many leading researchers in the longer term. Postmodern thought asserts that science is not neutral, science is not necessarily cumulative, sensory knowledge is only one form of knowledge and nonsensory knowledge can be studied, and that the structure of knowledge is a form of power, and thus accepting that structure is to reify the status quo. An alternative way of knowing and perceiving is constructionism (aka constructivism), which challenges the supremacy of empiricism, rationalism, positivism, and reductionism. It holds that all knowledge is constructed, truth is relative to our purposes (i.e., based on intersubjectivity), the notion of "progress" is largely a myth, and that far from being a neutral observer of "facts," scientists are active participants in creating reality or distorting it for our (generally unintentional) ends. It also points out that differences are often as or more important than similarities.

Postmodernists assert that the myth of neutrality allows personal assumptions to go unchallenged; it is better to state one's values and incorporate them in the research endeavor explicitly than to purport to be unbiased. The scientific theory underlying postmodernism is complexity and chaos systems theory to the degree that it emphasizes the importance of understanding the whole as much or more than the dissected parts, the prospect for external perturbations, and the unexpected effects of seemingly tiny incidents (e.g., tipping points and butterfly effects). Examples of research reflecting strong elements of postmodernism in leadership research are identified below related to discourse (aka discursive) theory, gender and ethnic studies, complexity and relational theory, integral leadership studies, organizational learning and time. Some public sector examples of these trends follow.

Discourse theory has its roots in Foucault (1970, 1972), who examined the reification of social structures through language and extended usage. For example, calling guerilla military activists in another country either "freedom fighters" or "terrorists" entirely changes the terms of debate. In leadership studies in particular, an interest in discourse theory "began with a more general dissatisfaction with the results and lack of coherence in trait and style based psychological research" (Kelly 2008, 764). Those with a discourse theory perspective tend to question traditional definitions of leadership (Barker 1997, 2001), question and challenge traditional leadership studies as excessively involved in the psychology of leaders (Fairhurst 2007), emphasize the importance of studying followers in context (Gronn 2002; Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003; Collinson 2005, 2006), and ask for longer ethnographic studies (Kelly 2008). L. Chen (2008, 547) notes that the more traditional positivist research tradition of leadership psychology and more constructionist discursive leadership "appear to have little in common." Nonetheless, she "finds ample room for coexistence . . . when one takes into consideration the enormous complexity of the subject matter, coupled with the multiplicity of perspectives for study" (L. Chen 2008, 549).

Gender theory in leadership is loosely aligned with discourse theory. Gender theory has used a variety of critiques to understand the glass ceiling, but discourse theory is particularly powerful at describing and studying the subtle structures of power that do not necessarily block women from power in the contemporary world, but tend to create amorphous cultural challenges for women to reach the highest levels (Eagly and Carli [2007] use the labyrinth metaphor). Other critiques exploring the difficulty of women as leaders include work by Chin et al. (2007), Heilman (2001), Heilman and Okimoto (2007), Powell, Butterfield, and Parent (2002), and Powell and Graves (2003). Hogue and Lord use complexity theory (2007) to understand gender bias.

Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey (2007, 298) suggest that "leadership models of the last century have been products of top-down, bureaucratic paradigms. These models are eminently effective for an economy premised on physical production but are not well suited for a more knowledge-oriented economy. Complexity science suggests a different paradigm for leadership—one that frames leadership as a complex interactive dynamic from which adaptive outcomes (e.g., learning, innovation, and adaptability) emerge." Unlike the rather monolithic general systems theory that underlies most of modern social science, complexity theory is a type of general systems theory that appreciates the mas-

sive complexity and interconnectedness of all phenomena, particularly in human social processes such as leadership. Because of this complexity, it points out that the most successful organizations are often ones that have evolving structures that bubble up from below and percolate in from the environment—often called complex adaptive systems (Schneider and Somers 2006; Osborn and Hunt 2007). Complexity theory is very good for studying the multidirectional relational nature of leadership (Uhl-Bien 2006), and the emergence of new organizational and leadership forms (Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009). This approach has reached the popular literature in many subtle and not-so-subtle ways. For example, in defining leadership, Goffee and Jones (2009) say—to lay audiences—it is relational, nonhierarchical, and contextual, a far cry from many earlier definitions focusing on leaders' influence, power to change for better or worse, leader traits, and so on.

Integral leadership tends to focus on leadership as a community process, democratizing and decentralizing leadership as much as possible. This is the focus of the *Integral Leadership Review*. One example is McCrimmon (2007, 1), who asserts that “leadership needs to be reframed for a digital, postmodern age. The world is losing its stable and hierarchical character. Life is now more dynamic, chaotic; final authorities have vanished.” Edwards (2009) is another good example of this emphasis, as illustrated in the title of his essay, “Seeing Integral Leadership Through Three Important Lenses: Developmental, Ecological, and Governance,” which incorporates a focus on followers, the environment, and community. Integral leadership themes are common in the popular literature because of the concern for corporate social responsibility among leaders and private organizations, as well as in the public administration literature because of its focus on serving the community and doing good.

As Gary Yukl (2009, 49) points out, “organizational learning is an important determinant of long-term performance and survival, but many companies seem unable to master the learning process.” Yet as Waldman, Berson, and Keller (2009, 1) note, despite the obvious overlap, “there has not been much work attempting to specifically link leadership and organizational learning phenomena.” The seminal work in connecting the literatures was Vera and Crossan (2004), who explore the relationship of organizational learning in terms of transactional and transformational styles. They propose that a transformational leadership style will be particularly critical in creating the right environment for the creation and diffusion of useful knowledge. Yukl (2009) is more inclined to think that organizational learning can be enhanced through multiple styles, including transactional ones properly utilized.

Certainly all of these themes have been expressed in the literature regarding public sector organizations, but in many cases the theoretical or ideological specification has been substantially more muted and related trends are intermingled more freely. An excellent example of discourse (and gender bias) theory is by Ford (2006, 77), who “examines contemporary discourses of leadership and their complex inter-relations with gender and identity in the UK public sector. . . . Accordingly, this article questions dominant hegemonic and stereotypical notions of subjectivity that assume a simple, unitary identity and perpetuate andocentric depictions of organizational life.” Crosby and Kiedrowski (2008) provide four levels of integral leadership spanning the individual, group, organization,

and society. Schweigert (2007, 325) provides a concrete example in a community setting in which “leadership is rooted in the authority of the followers” and further asserts that “leadership development must focus less on the qualities of individual leaders and more on the social settings, processes, and needs that require and facilitate authoritative action.” Critique of the limits of hierarchy and measurement have suggested more integrated and values-oriented public sector leadership models (Loveday 2008). Some analysts examining the overarching models of leadership with a public sector context have found that they are excessively managerial and pay too little attention to appropriate values (Fairholm 2004), and lack an agenda defining public sector distinctiveness (Van Slyke and Alexander 2006). Some work has been done in trying to provide more specified models (Fernandez 2005; Thach and Thompson 2007).

The interconnectedness of problems, the regionalization and globalization of solutions, and the decrease in government resources have emphasized the need to move increasingly from government to governance and from hierarchy to networks (Maak and Pless 2006). This requires that leaders have a new worldview, different competencies, and additional tools. Several sets of literature have evolved that overlap with organizational leadership, which is our primary focus here. One important example relates to a special issue on collaborative management in *Public Administration Review* in 2006. The symposium editors provide two helpful definitions. “Collaborative public management is a concept that describes the process of facilitating and operating in multiorganizational arrangements to solve problems that cannot (readily) be solved by single organizations. Collaborative means to colabor, to cooperate to achieve common goals, working across boundaries in multisector relationships. Cooperation is based on the value of reciprocity” (O’Leary, Gerard, and Bingham 2006, 7). They further note that “participatory governance is the active involvement of citizens in government decision making. Governance means to steer the process that influences decisions and actions within the private, public, and civic sectors.” Don Kettl (2006, 10) discusses the historical importance of boundaries and how the contemporary imperative is to collaborate. He notes: “Working effectively at these boundaries requires new strategies of collaboration and new skills for public managers. Failure to develop these strategies—or an instinct to approach boundaries primarily as political symbolism—worsens the performance of the administrative system.” Thompson and Perry (2006) dissect collaboration into five variable dimensions that leaders have to understand and master for maximum effectiveness: governance, administration, organizational autonomy, mutuality, and norms of trust and reciprocity. Researchers even point out when collaboration is less than ideal (McGuire 2006). Sometimes these issues are looked at through the lens of networks, as analyzed in a symposium in *Public Performance and Management Review* that looks at a “myriad of cross-agency networks, partnerships, consortia, alliances, joint ventures, contracts and other collaborative ventures” (Agranoff 2008b, 315). What are the most critical aspects for networks to function successfully? In his empirical study, B. Chen (2008) suggests that the answer is resource sharing and trust. Excellent case studies of collaboration and citizen involvement are common in the field (e.g., Callahan 2007), as are theoretical pieces that probe and challenge the limits of collaboration (Bevir 2006).

(See Exhibit 1.4 for a summary of the eras of mainstream leadership theory and research.) This cursory review cannot cover the full range of perspectives on specific leadership topics such as the types of leaders, leader styles, the types and effects of followers, and the relevance of societal and organizational cultures on leadership, but most of these topics will be covered throughout the text.

### **The Public Sector Literature on Leadership Theory and Research**

Although the literature on leadership with a public sector focus is a fraction of that with a private-sector focus, it has nevertheless been substantial, albeit relatively unfocused. One way to begin a brief review is to look at the track record of *Public Administrative Review* (PAR). In the course of an informal content analysis of the journal since its inception, and using a rather loose definition of leadership that includes the broader management topics, most executive topics, much of the explicit discretion literature, and the part of the organizational change literature that has a strong leadership component, the author found 110 articles relating to the topic, published over sixty-one years. However, using a stricter criterion, namely, that leadership was an explicit focus of the article, only about twenty-five articles qualified, or about four per decade on average (see Van Wart [2003] for a full discussion of this study and the literature).

In the 1940s, articles by Finer (1941) and Leys (1943) defined the administrative discretion debate—how much discretion should public administrators have and under what conditions?—which was taken up again so vigorously in the 1990s. Donald Stone's 1945 "Notes on the Government Executive: His Role and His Methods" is as good an equivalent to Follett's "The Essentials of Leadership" (1933/1996) or Barnard's *The Functions of the Executive* (1938/1987) as ever appeared in the journal.

There was a trickle of high-quality pieces with a generalist and nonscientific approach in the 1950s (Lawton 1954; Dimock 1958). A piece based exclusively on empirical evidence was published in this period, which brought together the literature on small groups in public sector settings (Golembiewski 1959).

In the 1960s, only one empirical study examined the variation in the motivation of public and private leaders (Guyot 1962). One commentator observed that federal managers had wholly inadequate management training (Fisher 1962). The editor in chief of PAR, James Fesler (1960), provided a superb editorial comment on the importance of studying leadership and its many contexts. Other topics addressed were influence and social power (Altshuler 1965; Lundstedt 1965).

No important articles appeared in the 1970s, which reflects the low profile of leadership publications in the popular literature. Yet, the lacuna is made up by the resurgence of interest in leadership topics in the 1980s. DiIulio (1989) reasserted the importance of both leadership and the management component. Probably the three best articles on the training and development of leaders were written during this time (Likert 1981; Flanders and Utterback 1985; and Faerman, Quinn, and Thompson 1987). Stone (1981) and Dimock (1986) wrote essays regarding how important it is for leaders to nurture innovation and creativity in organizations. Empirical pieces also

## Exhibit 1.4

**Eras of Orthodox Leadership Theory and Research**

Era	Major time frame	Major characteristics/examples of proponents
Great Man	Pre-1900; continues to be popular in biographies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on emergence of a great figure such as a Napoleon, George Washington, or Martin Luther who has substantial effect on society</li> <li>• Era influenced by notions of rational social change by uniquely talented and insightful individuals</li> </ul>
Trait	1900–1948; resurgence of recognition of importance of natural talents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on the individual traits (physical, personal, motivational, aptitudinal) and skills (communication and ability to influence) that leaders bring to all leadership tasks</li> <li>• Era influenced by scientific methodologies in general (especially industrial measurement) and scientific management in particular (e.g., the definition of roles and assignment of competencies to those roles)</li> </ul>
Contingency	1948 to the 1980s; continues as basis of most rigorous models but with vastly expanded situational repertoire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on the situational variables with which leaders must deal, especially performance and follower variables. Shift from traits and skills to behaviors (e.g., informing and analytic skills versus consulting and motivating). Dominated by bimodal models in its heyday</li> <li>• Era influenced by the rise of human relations theory, behavioral science (in areas such as motivation theory), and the use of small-group experimental designs in psychology</li> <li>• Examples emphasizing bimodal models include Ohio State, Michigan, Hersey-Blanchard, managerial grid, leadership theory involving maximal levels of participation (generally with three to seven major variables) includes Fiedler, House, Vroom</li> </ul>
Transformational	1978 to present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on leaders who create change in deep structures, major processes, or overall culture. Leader mechanisms may be compelling vision, brilliant technical insight, and/or charismatic quality</li> <li>• Era influenced by the loss of American dominance in business, finance, and science, and the need to reenergize various industries that had slipped into complacency</li> <li>• Examples (academic and popular) include Burns, House, Bennis, Iacocca, Kouzes and Posner, Senge, Tichy and Devanna, Bass and Conger</li> </ul>
Servant	1977 to present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on ethical responsibilities to followers, stakeholders, and society. Business theorists tend to emphasize service to followers; political theorists emphasize citizens; public-administration analysts tend to emphasize legal compliance and/or citizens</li> <li>• Era influenced by social sensitivities raised in the 1960s and 1970s</li> <li>• Early proponents include Greenleaf and Burns. Contemporary and popular proponents include DuPree, Covey, Rost, Autry, Vaill, Gardner</li> </ul>
Multifaceted approaches	1990s to present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated models with emphasis on search for relatively sophisticated comprehensive models within organizational leadership (Hunt, Yukl, Chermers)</li> <li>• Distributed leadership with emphasis on understanding leadership as a horizontal process involving teams, follower empowerment, and development of leaders (Manz, Pearce and Conger)</li> <li>• Postmodern perspective with emphasis on critique of status quo leadership structures, positivist methodologies, progressive assumptions, and reductionism (Wheatley, Uhl-Bien, Kiel)</li> </ul>



appeared on followership (Gilbert and Hyde 1988) and leader action planning (Young and Norris 1988).

Because leadership is so highly related to reform, and because of the debate regarding the appropriate reforms to make that occurred throughout the decade, leadership is discussed at least indirectly in nearly every issue of *PAR* after 1992. This is particularly true of the debate about administrative discretion, which largely pitted an “entrepreneurial” camp against a “stewardship” camp. Although they cannot do justice to the full range of topics in these two idealized perspectives, good examples are provided in Bellone and Goerl’s “Reconciling Public Entrepreneurship and Democracy” (1992) and Terry’s “Administrative Leadership, Neo-Managerialism, and the Public Management Movement” (1998). Some of the best and most focused empirically based studies in *PAR* have appeared since the 1990s (Hennessey 1998; Moon 1999; Considine and Lewis 1999; Borins 2000; Javidan and Waldman 2003; Trottier, Van Wart, and Wang 2008).

Using generalization about the leadership literature in *PAR* as one barometer of the field, the following observations can be made. First, until the past decade, leadership was considered largely an executive phenomenon, and thus when small group and lower-level leadership were the focus of the mainstream leadership literature in the 1960s and 1970s, leadership topics were lightly covered. Second, there was only a handful of empirical pieces on leadership in the first fifty years of the journal. Finally, in terms of the “thoughtful essay” tradition, many of the best examples occur in book reviews; Donald Stone, John Corson, and Paul Appleby were frequent contributors. Though important, *PAR* is but one source; what other contributions were being made to a distinctively public sector leadership literature?

In the first half of the century during the trait period, public sector sites were frequently examined, although no distinctive public sector perspective emerged (Jenkins 1947). The first in an important genre of executive studies was done by Macmahon and Millett, in this case regarding federal administrators (1939). The tradition of biographies and autobiographies of important administrative leaders was also established (e.g., Pinchot 1947). In the 1950s, a series of good leadership studies in the administrative realm was produced, most notably by Bernstein (1958). However, Selznick’s 1957 classic, *Leadership in Administration*, is probably the single best overall treatment of the subject in terms of timelessness. The tradition of examining administrative leaders was sustained in the 1960s (e.g., Graubard and Holton 1962; Corson and Shale 1966). Downs’s (1967) well-known book on bureaucracy is notable for its popular, if negative, typology of leaders. Again, the 1970s produced little of special note with the exceptions of the administrative role in iron-triangle politics (Heclo 1977) and several good studies of military and quasi-military leadership (Winter 1979; Jermier and Berkes 1979).

The resurgence of more general interest in leadership with the introduction of the transformational and charismatic literatures in the 1980s was mirrored in the administrative leadership literature as well. The concept of the administrative leader as entrepreneur was introduced by Eugene Lewis (1980) and expanded upon by Doig and Hargrove (1987). Kaufman provided a definitive executive study (1981); Cleveland (1985) and Gardner (1989) provided masterfully well-rounded essays in the Selznick tradition. The more

specialized studies on public sector leadership continued to be primarily for the military (Taylor and Rosenback 1984; Van Fleet and Yukl 1986).

The volume of materials produced since the 1990s requires more selectivity for the present purpose. Many public sector leadership books have elements that are applicable for administrative leaders, but really focus on local and national policymakers (such as councils, mayors, state legislators, etc.) and civic leaders (Chrislip and Larson 1994; Heifetz 1994; Svava 1994; Henton, Melville, and Walesh 1997; Luke 1998). Some emphasize specific elements of leadership such as planning (Bryson and Crosby 1992), complexity (Kiel 1994), problem focus (Terry 1993), public service values (Rost 1990; Fairholm 1991; Riccucci 1995), and frontline leaders (Vinzant and Crothers 1998). Larry Terry (1995) provided a full-length argument supporting leadership as stewardship (which he calls “conservatorship”). Much of the more narrowly focused leadership literature continued to be for the military (e.g., Hunt, Dodge, and Wong 1999). The *International Journal of Public Administration* sponsored a symposium on transformational leadership in 1996 that was edited by the distinguished leadership expert Bernard Bass. In 2001, Rusaw provided the first book that was designed as an overarching textbook with a review of the literature, which has since been followed by Van Wart (with Suino 2008; Van Wart and Dicke 2007) and the Fairholms with a universal organizational perspective (Fairholm and Fairholm 2009). Morse and his colleagues have provided excellent books on leadership theory with a public sector thrust (Morse, Buss, and Kinghorn 2007) and development (Morse and Buss 2008).

## PERENNIAL DEBATES IN LEADERSHIP THEORY

Another way to analyze the leadership literature is to examine the major debates that have shaped both leadership paradigms and research agendas. For simplicity, only four of the broadest are discussed here: What should leaders focus on? Does leadership make a difference? Are leaders born or made? What is the best style to use?

### **What Should Leaders Focus on? Technical Performance, Development of People, or Organizational Alignment?**

We expect leaders to “get things done,” to maintain good systems, to provide the resources and training for production, to maintain efficiency and effectiveness through various controls, to make sure that technical problems are handled correctly, and to coordinate functional operations. These and other more technical aspects of production are one level of leadership focus. This focus is implicit in much of the management literature from scientific management and classical management, the productivity literature, and the contemporary measurement and benchmark literature. It is also one of two explicit elements of most of the situational literature with its focus on task (initiating structure) and people (consideration). It is particularly relevant for leadership at the lower levels of the organization closest to production.

Another perspective is that leaders do not do the work; they depend on followers to

actually do the work. Therefore, followers' training, motivation, maturation and continued development, and overall satisfaction are critical to production and organizational effectiveness. This insight is not new. As Lao Tzu said 2,500 years ago: "A good leader, one who talks little and listens much, when his work is done and his aim fulfilled, they will all say, we did this ourselves." Popular writers today echo these thoughts: "The signs of outstanding leadership appear primarily among the followers" (DePree 1989, 12). Indeed, as stated by foremost researchers studying the stumbling blocks for leaders: "Many studies of managerial performance have found that the most critical skill for beginning managers, and one most often lacking, is interpersonal competence, or the ability to deal with 'people problems'" (McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison 1988, 19). While this train of thought was present (if underrepresented) in the first half of the century among commentators like Follett (1933/1996) and Barnard (1938/1987), it blossomed during the humanist era, starting with Maslow in the 1940s and peaking during the 1960s with writers like Argyris, McGregor, and Likert. In the situational leadership research of the 1970s and 1980s, the other half of the task-people dualism was studied (particular schools of thought are reviewed more fully below in the literature section). It is still very popular today, especially in team leadership literature (Katzenbach and Smith 1993), excellence literature (Peters 1994), and charismatic elements of the transformational leadership literature.

The emergence of the transformational leadership paradigm in the 1980s brought the idea that "the essential function of leadership [is] to produce adaptive or useful change" (Kotter 1990, ix). (This notion was, in reality, resurrected from the great man theories in political science and Weberian charismatic theory in sociology.) Similarly, Edgar Schein asserted that "*the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture*" (1985, 2, emphasis in original). Indeed, it was popular to assert that "true" leaders delegated management issues and focused squarely on the "big picture" and big changes. By the end of the millennium the shrillness of the more extreme perspective that management was not an important element of leadership subsided, but it has not disappeared as a perspective.

Certainly not a major theme in the mainstream, if not altogether absent, was the additional notion that leadership is service to the people, end consumers, society, and the public interest (rather than followers per se). While it is common for biographies of religious and social leaders to advance this most strongly, exemplars in public service do so nearly as strongly (e.g., Cooper and Wright 1992; Riccucci 1995). This notion does not displace technical performance, follower development, or organizational alignment, but often largely downplays these dimensions as "givens." Although much less common in the mainstream until the emergence of the postmodern perspective, it has long been a prominent element of scholarly discussion in the public administration literature.

Lastly and logically, leadership can be seen as a composite of several or all of these notions. When we think of great leaders, we typically think of people who contribute in all domains. Alexander the Great not only reinvented warfare and realigned the world, but his men happily followed him as he conquered previously unknown lands. Napoleon, whose empire building was ultimately unsuccessful despite extraordinary popularity

among the French, nonetheless rebuilt the modern administrative state. George Washington, a technically talented general and a capable president, was trusted and beloved by soldiers and fellow statesmen alike, and, undoubtedly, a dedicated servant to his society. Such a composite perspective has both logical and emotional appeal. Leaders typically are called upon to do and be all these things—perform, develop followers, align their organizations, and foster the common good. Yet it also sidesteps the problem to some degree. Most leaders must make difficult choices about what to focus on and what they themselves should glean from the act of leadership. What is the appropriate balance and who determines it? Such normative questions loom large when reckoning the merits of the checkered histories of administrative leaders such as Robert Moses (Caro 1974), J. Edgar Hoover (Powers 1987), and more recently, Robert Citrone (the unwise public treasurer of Orange County, California). For an array of possible definitions related to administrative leadership, see Exhibit 1.5.

### **To What Degree Does Leadership Make a Difference?**

Burns (1978, 265) tells the cynical story of a Frenchman sitting in a café who hears a disturbance, runs to the window, and cries: “There goes the mob. I am their leader. I must follow them!” Such a story suggests that, at a minimum, we may place too great an emphasis on the effect that leaders have. The question, “Do leaders make a difference?” is essentially philosophical at its loftiest level because we are unable to provide meaningful control groups to define what leadership means other than in operational terms. Yet, no matter whether it is great man or transformational theorists comparing Hitlers to Chamberlains or situational theorists working with small groups comparing the results of finite solution problems, the answer is generally yes, leaders do make a difference (Kaiser, Hogan, and Craig 2008; Trottier, Van Wart, and Wang 2008). Nonetheless, it is important to remember that leaders do not act in a vacuum; they are a part of the flow of history and set in a culture with an environment filled with crises, opportunities, and even dumb luck. In practical terms, however, the question about whether leaders make (any) difference gets translated into the questions of how much difference and when.

In its various permutations, the question of how much difference leaders make takes up the largest part of the literature, especially when the question relates to the effect of specific behaviors, traits, and skills or their clusters. At a more global level, the transformational and “great man” devotees generally assert that great leaders can make a great difference. Some of the best practical writers, however, caution that leaders’ effects are modest only because of the great constraints and inertia they face (e.g., Barnard 1938/1987; Gardner 1989). Stories about how Truman pitied the incoming Eisenhower because his orders would not be followed as they were in the army, and about how Kennedy ordered the missiles out of Turkey only to find out during the Cuban crisis that they were still there, reflect this perspective. It is also likely that this wisdom is directed largely at the excessive reliance on formal authority and insulated rationalistic thinking that some inexperienced or weaker leaders exhibit.

At the level of the discrete effects of individual or clustered behaviors, the compari-

## Exhibit 1.5

**Possible Definitions of Leadership in an Administrative Context**

Leadership can focus strictly on the ends, for example, getting things done (technical performance) and the means by which things get done, for example, the followers (their motivation and development), or on aligning the organization with external needs and opportunities (which can result in substantive change). A definition of leadership can also emphasize the spirit with which leadership is conducted: In the public sector this is invariably a public service commitment. Of course, generally, definitions are a blend of several of these elements but with different emphases. One's definition tends to vary based on normative preferences and one's concrete situation and experience.

**Administrative leadership is the process of providing the results required by authorized systems in an efficient, effective, and legal manner.**

(This narrower definition might apply well to a frontline supervisor and would tend to be preferred by those endorsing strict political accountability.)

**Administrative leadership is the process of developing/supporting followers who provide the results.**

(Because all leaders have followers and because it is the followers who actually perform the work and provide its quality, it is better to focus on them than on the direct service/product. This is a common view in service industries with mottoes such as "Our Employees Are Our Number One Priority.")

**Administrative leadership is the process of aligning the organization with its environment, especially the necessary macro-level changes, and realigning the culture as appropriate.**

(This definition tends to better fit executive leadership and emphasizes the "big picture." Many public sector analysts are concerned about the application of this definition because of a breakdown in democratic accountability.)

**The key element to administrative leadership is its service focus.**

(Although leadership functions and foci may vary, administrative leaders need to be responsive, open, aware of competing interests, dedicated to the common good, and so forth, so that they create a sense of public trust for their stewardship roles.)

**Leadership is a composite of providing technical performance, internal direction to followers, and external organizational direction—all with a public service orientation.**

(This definition implicitly recognizes the complex and demanding challenge to leaders; however, it eschews the tough decision about defining the proper emphasis or focus that leaders may need to—and operationally do—make.)

sons are easier for social scientists. For example, how much difference does monitoring followers make, versus scanning the environment, and, of course, in what situational contexts? One important variant line of research examines the substitutes of leadership (Kerr and Jermier 1978). That is, some organizations over time acquire positive features that diminish the need for leadership in some task and interpersonal situations. When a leader has inherited or created an organization with good training, a highly competent workforce, clear task structures with feedback flowing directly from the task, innately satisfying work, group cohesiveness, and well-functioning rules, the need for strong leadership is less, at least in the short term.

Another particularly important dimension of the question about the effect of leadership

relates to the levels at which leadership occurs. At the extreme, some theorists emphasize leadership that is almost exclusively equivalent to grand change (Zaleznik 1977), while minimizing and even denigrating the notion that leadership occurs throughout the organization. On the contrary, the small-group research of the 1950s through the 1970s suggests that leadership is fundamentally similar at any level. Some research, especially the customer service and excellence literature, emphasizes the importance of frontline supervisors (Peters 1994; Buckingham and Coffman 1999). The more comprehensive models tend to emphasize the idea that there are different types of leadership required at different levels, especially because of the increasing levels of discretion allowed as one moves higher in the organization (Hunt 1996). Different levels simply require different types of skills (Katz 1955).

### **Are Leaders Born or Made?**

An implicit assumption of the great man theories is that leaders (invariably the heads of state and of major businesses such as banks and mercantile houses) are essentially born, probably allowing for some significant early training as well.<sup>9</sup> That is, you either have the “stuff” or you do not, and most do not. Of course, in an age when leadership generally required either membership in the privileged classes (i.e., the “right stuff” included education, wealth, connections, and senior appointments) or, in rare instances, extraordinary brilliance (such as Napoleon’s) in a time of crisis,<sup>10</sup> there was more than a little truth to this. In a more democratic era, such factors have less force, especially insofar as leadership is generally conceived so much more broadly in terms of position.

The behavioral geneticists have weighed in with rather compelling empirical data in recent years. In several studies with differing populations, Arvey and his colleagues have found that 30–32 percent of the variance in the leadership role could be accounted for by genetic factors (Arvey et al. 2006, 2007). That is an important role for genetics, to be sure, but leaves the even larger role for development.

Today the question is generally framed as one of degree, rather than as a strict dichotomy (Bennis 2007). To what degree can leaders be “made” and how? The developmental portion actually has two major components according to most researchers and thoughtful practitioners. While part of leadership is the result of formal training, this may actually be the smaller component. Experience is likely the more important teacher. In the extreme, this position states that while leadership cannot be taught, it can be learned. As Nietzsche noted, “a man has no ears for that which experience has given him no access.” Of course, random career paths might or might not provide a useful string of experiences, and a mentor might or might not be present to help the learner to extract significant lessons from both the challenges and failures that experience provides. Ideally, high-potential leaders-in-the-making get appropriate rotational assignments. Certainly, this has been a major strategy of the armed services and major businesses for a long time. It does mean that early decisions are made about which individuals to groom because of their exceptional potential. Such assignments, it is commonly suggested, should broaden the protégé by including new experiences (horizontal experiences before vertical advancement), should

be moderately challenging, and should include visible role models and opportunities for interaction with them (Kotter 1990, 154).

More formal training is not without its virtues, too, providing technical skills and credibility, management knowledge, external awareness, coaching, and encouragement toward reflection. Leaders must have (or in some instances acquire) the basic technical knowledge of the organization, often more for credibility than for the executive function itself; formal training can assist greatly here. Management is a different profession altogether from doing line work; again, training can greatly facilitate the learning process, especially for new managers. Formal leadership training, when properly done, is excellent for providing an awareness of different models of managing and leading for different situations, often outside one's own industry. Because mentors are hard to find, and *good* mentors are downright rare, formal training often plays this role, giving attendees a chance to process their experiences with instructors and fellow participants. Finally, good leaders more often than not are people of action, which means that opportunities for reflection are often even more important for leadership improvement; formal training structures opportunities for reflection, forcing doers to alternate thinking for action. Yet, while virtually no one would deny that formal training is useful, data to prove that it is of significant assistance are modest if one excludes studies of those promoting their own training agendas. Thus, while the black-and-white debate about leaders being made or born is largely considered sophomoric, the more sophisticated debate about the *relative* importance of innate abilities, experience (unplanned or rotational), and formal training is alive and well.

### **What Is the Best Style to Use?**

Although leader style is really just an aggregation of a specific pattern of traits, skills, and behaviors, it has been an extremely popular topic of research and debate in its own right. One of the most significant issues has been definitional: What is leader style? Although leader style can be thought of as the cumulative effect of *all* traits, skills, and behaviors, it is generally used to describe what is perceived as the key, or at least a prominent, aspect of the universal set of leader characteristics. Examples include: follower participation, such as command, consign, consult, and concur styles (as discussed by Zand 1997, 43); change styles, such as risk-averse or risk-accepting; and personality styles, such as those based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Other leader style definitions involve communication, individual versus group approaches to leadership, value orientations—especially involving integrity—and power and influence typologies.

A slightly different approach to the issue of style examines it in relation to function. Much of the situational literature addresses the style issue in this light. Leaders have to get work done (“initiate structure”) and work through people (“consideration”). How they are perceived to balance these factors can be operationally defined as their style. A somewhat different but very useful insight into functional style preference has to do with the type of situation that the leader prefers or excels in: a maintenance situation, a project or task force situation, a line versus function situation, a “start-up,” or turning

a business around (McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison 1988). In the next chapter of this book a taxonomy of nine distinct styles is discussed. Chapters 3 through 8 compare the styles implicit in all major schools of thought.

Another important set of issues regarding style has to do with whether, and to what degree, style can be changed in adults.<sup>11</sup> Not many have taken the hard line that changing style is nearly impossible. Fiedler (1967; Fiedler, Chemers, and Mahar 1976) is probably most prominent in this regard, largely advising that it is better to figure out the situation first, and find the appropriate leader second. Yet, even assuming that change in style is possible, most serious researchers warn against excessive expectations of dramatic change, although radical style-change anecdotes do pepper the popular literature. If style can be changed, then how it can be accomplished is the important issue that emerges (and this becomes largely an applied training issue). Hersey and Blanchard (1969, 1972) have been the most popular in this vein, teaching people to compare their style preference (defined as allowing worker participation in decision making) with the style needs of various situations (primarily follower maturity). In addition to style need (situational demands), style preference, and style range (a leader's repertoire of different styles) is the issue of style quality. For example, just because a situation seems to call for consultation, and this is among the style sets of the leader, it does not mean that she will do it well. Each style requires an extensive set of skills that must be artfully integrated into an evolving situation, but that may be beyond the abilities of a particular neophyte manager or inept leader (Lynn 1996).

### **Debates and Discussions in Administrative Leadership Theory**

Although these debates have strong echoes in the public sector literature, the differences in the debate structures are as important as the similarities. Of the four major questions, only the first regarding the proper focus is discussed as robustly in the public sector literature as it is in the mainstream; indeed, from a normative philosophical basis, the administrative leadership literature probably argues this issue even more thoroughly. However, the question of proper focus is translated into the discretion debate, which has taken numerous forms affecting the proper role of administrative leaders. For the sake of simplicity, the first era (1883 to the 1940s) can be conceptualized as the time when a dichotomy between the political world of policy decisions and the world of technical and neutral implementation was the overarching ideal. It was generally argued that good administrative leaders made many technical decisions but referred policy decisions to their political superiors. The role of discretion was largely ignored or downplayed. The second era (the 1940s to the 1980s), adopting a less idealistic model, recognized that the interplay of the political and administrative worlds is far more intertwined than a simple dichotomy would explain. The dominant model during this period was one of administrative responsibility, that is, the appropriate and modest use of significant discretion. The recent era (from the 1990s), driven by a worldwide governmental reform agenda, has interjected entrepreneurial uses of discretion for public administrators. The debate about what to reform in government (e.g., the size, the cost, the processes, the structures, the



accountability mechanisms) and how to reform it has stirred huge controversies in the scholarly community. To the degree that it is embraced, the newest model encourages creative and robust uses of discretion and diffuses authority among more stakeholders and control mechanisms.

The discretion debate has shaped the proper-focus debate primarily in terms of a management orientation (transactional) versus a change orientation (transformational). If leaders should not exercise significant discretion or be too activist, then they should *not* play a substantial change role but should focus more on management issues. In a contrasting position, many in the New Public Management<sup>12</sup> school echo the strains of the mainstream school of the 1980s in asserting that public administrators are uniquely qualified to play a large role that will otherwise leave a critical leadership lacuna. Another element in the “proper focus” discussion that is robust in the public sector literature adds, or sometimes substitutes altogether, the issue of inclusion of customers/clients/citizens and the public good more generally. Although the different schools disagree rather caustically about the way to frame these notions and the proper terms to use, there is nevertheless impressive agreement that external constituencies and the common good are a fundamental focus of public sector administrators that is not to be taken for granted.

The debate about the importance of leadership is much more muted and underdeveloped. Although some argue from the perspective of democratic theory that administrative leaders should *not* be important from a strictly political perspective, most public administration scholars and almost all practitioners simply assume or assert the importance of public administrators. Unfortunately, there is a great tendency to treat all the situations in which leadership is important as a single monolith, rather than to explore the ramifications of different types of leadership in different contexts with varying missions, organizational structures, accountability mechanisms, environmental constraints, and so on. This means that the issues of the technology of leadership are much less articulated in the public sector than they are in the private sector. Attempts at scholarly syntheses that reflect sophisticated multifunctional, multilevel, and multisituational models that were in evidence in the mainstream by the 1990s (e.g., Hunt 1996; Chemers 1997; Yukl 1998) were largely lacking in either monographs or journal literature in the public sector until recently (e.g., Van Wart 2004; Fairholm and Fairholm 2009).

Part of the weakness of the literature resides in its nonintegrated character, with the ironic exception of many surprisingly good chapter overviews on leadership in general public administration and public management textbooks. The serious debate about the best style to use is separated into many parts and is rarely as explicitly or holistically discussed as in the mainstream leadership literature. Fragments of this literature are found in management topics such as total quality management, motivation, and routine problem solving in publications such as *Public Productivity and Management Review*, and part of the literature is found in executive topics such as strategic planning and organizational change and development in journals such as *Public Administration Quarterly*. The ethics-values literature, for all its normative robustness, generally offers few concrete recommendations on this score, beyond general admonitions to be responsive, trustworthy, honest, courageous, prudent, and so forth.

The debate about whether leaders are born or made is also not particularly well-developed from a theoretical perspective. In the 1960s, the situational models presented relatively elementary task-people matrices. Both task and people skills could be taught, and a more humanistic approach that was less reliant on directive styles was encouraged. This was generally adopted in the public sector literature. In the 1980s, when the mainstream field was searching for a more comprehensive and complex model, some good examples of sophisticated training models did emerge on the public sector side (Flanders and Utterback 1985; Faerman, Quinn, and Thompson 1987) and saw a resurgence in the 2000s (e.g., Parks 2005; Morse and Buss 2008). The “born” side of the argument recognizes the importance of recruitment and selection of exceptional individuals. Such discussions have been relatively common in the human resource context, especially in reports recommending ways to strengthen the public sector (e.g., the “Volcker” Commission 1990, and the “Winter” Commission 1993), but have not been integrated in an explicit leadership discussion.

## **A DISCUSSION OF SOME IMPORTANT TERMS AND CONCEPTS**

A major challenge in leadership studies is the specialized language used for concepts that often have a lay usage or are used in contradictory ways by different researchers. Some of the more important terms and concepts are defined or described in this book.

### **Levels of Leadership Action**

One of the most important distinctions has to do with the level of analysis used for leadership actions, which varies from specific activities to overarching classifications used to simplify the welter of leader responsibilities. The narrowest level of analysis is generally tasks, which are the discrete functions common to many jobs. Examples of tasks are “conduct briefings or other meetings” or “serve as agency representative in outside meetings or activities” (U.S. OPM 1997). Typically, studies that define job tasks for leaders and managers list more than 100 tasks and some, more than 1,000, at which point they are generally considered microtasks.

Behaviors, traits, and skills are at the next level of analysis. Behaviors are observable patterns of leader activities, primarily used to link related tasks. All leader behavior is typically broken down into ten to thirty behaviors, which, according to most theories, are the elemental building blocks. For example, Howard and Bray (1988) identify organizing and planning as a behavior whereas Yukl, Wall, and Lepsinger (1990) break this area into planning and organizing, monitoring operations and the environment, and clarifying roles and objectives. (This book will identify twenty-one behaviors as the backbone of its analysis.) Another way of looking at this level of analysis is with traits and skills. Traits and skills are innate aptitudes and learned abilities that affect the quality of behaviors. They are generally indirectly observed through the quality with which behaviors are performed. Examples include energy, flexibility, communication skills, and analytic ability. One directly performs a behavior such as (operations) planning, but one uses analytic

ability to improve its quality. Environmental scanning is a behavior but flexibility is a trait/skill that enhances scanning by enriching the means with which it is done. Frequently, “behavioral” taxonomies are a combination of both behaviors and traits and skills. In this case, the term competency is often used to apply to both.

The next level of analysis is style. A style is a moderate-sized cluster of leader behaviors, primarily used to describe or prescribe actual or ideal leader patterns. For example, Vroom and Yetton (1973) discuss a delegative leadership style in the context of decision making that emphasizes the behaviors of delegating (assigning responsibilities to others and providing minimal oversight), problem solving (examining operational problems), and managing innovation and creativity. On the other hand, Hersey and Blanchard (1969, 1972) discuss delegating in the context of follower maturity, and thus refer to the behaviors of delegating, clarifying roles and objectives, informing, and developing staff. The two operational definitions clearly are quite similar, but a behavioral analysis demonstrates that they are not identical. The use of styles as the primary unit of analysis is very popular with researchers, trainers, and lay practitioners. Note that some leadership theories focus on only a portion of all possible leader behaviors in their analysis of styles, such as those solely incorporating followers.

The highest level of analysis is metacategories. A metacategory is a very large cluster of behaviors used primarily to analyze the universe of leader functions. Typically, such taxonomies include from two to five elements. A famous example derived from the Ohio State University leadership studies in the 1950s. After analyzing more than 1,500 tasks, the researchers distilled two overarching leadership metacategories: consideration and initiating structure. Another famous taxonomy is the division of leader functions into technical, interpersonal, and conceptual categories (Katz 1955). The purpose of metacategories is conceptual elegance; that is, they are meant to explain how many different tasks or behaviors can be rolled into a few for purposes of conceptual simplicity and clarity. Styles, on the other hand, generally have a more applied focus and less elegance. Exhibit 1.6 summarizes these terms.

### **Level of Organizational Conceptualization**

Another way to think about leadership is to focus on where it occurs (Yammarino et al. 2005; Yammarino and Dansereau 2008). If the focus is between specific leaders and followers, it is generally called dyadic. That is, the leadership occurs between two people—a dyad—in which one might consider the effects of the leader’s behaviors on a follower, or a follower’s attributions of a leader. Often, all followers of a leader are conceptualized as a single entity. Another increasingly common focus is the group level of analysis. How does leadership emerge from an unstructured group? What are the leadership dynamics with different types of followers in the same group? How do leaders transform low-performing groups into high-performing or self-managed teams? A still higher level of analysis is the organization. What type of leadership does an organization need in a time of crisis as opposed to a time of effectively implemented innovation? What are the competency differences between a frontline supervisor and a chief executive officer?

Exhibit 1.6

**A Hierarchy of Terms Related to Types of Leader Activities**

Type of activity	Typical range of activities	Definition of activities	Examples of types of activities
Metacategories	2 to 5	A large cluster of leader behaviors, used primarily to analyze the universe of leader functions	Consideration and initiating structure (Ohio State studies); task oriented, relations oriented, participative leadership (Michigan studies); technical, interpersonal, conceptual (Katz 1955)
Styles	3 to 12	A moderate-sized cluster of leader behaviors, used primarily to describe or prescribe actual or ideal leader patterns	Impoverished, authority compliance, country club, team (Blake and Mouton 1965); directive, supportive, participative, achievement oriented (House and Mitchell 1974)
Behaviors	10 to 30	Observable patterns of leader activities, used primarily to link related tasks	Short-term planning, clarifying task objectives and roles, monitor operations, provide support, provide recognition, develop member skill and confidence, consult with members, empower members to take initiative in problem solving, monitor the environment, propose innovative strategies, think innovatively, take appropriate risks to promote change (Yukl 2002)
Traits and skills	5 to 25	Innate aptitudes and learned abilities that affect the quality of behaviors; they are generally indirectly observed through the quality with which behaviors are performed; sometimes lumped with behaviors	Adaptable, alert to social environment, ambitious, assertive, cooperative, decisive, dependable, dominant, energetic, persistent, self-confident, stress tolerant, willing to assume responsibility, skilled analytically, creative, diplomatic, persuasive, knowledgeable about work, organized (Stogdill 1974)
Tasks	100 plus	Discrete functions common to many jobs	Implement programs to meet objectives, make decisions for the agency, recruit, integrate client expectations into the delivery process, evaluate performance and project accomplishments to assess overall program effectiveness, motivate subordinates and peers toward future goals, provide career growth opportunities for staff, conduct selection interview during the selection process (U.S. OPM 1997)

## Leadership Versus Management

A heated debate about the meanings of and relationship between leadership and management emerged in the late 1970s (Zaleznik 1977) and is unlikely to ever be fully settled. First, what do these terms mean? Is leadership about interacting with followers only (Mintzberg 1973), or is it about everything that a leader does (Bass 1985), or does it imply a special obligation to change the organizational direction or culture? Is management about basic task and general management functions (human resources, finances, etc.), everything that an executive does, or does it simply imply the maintenance of ongoing operational activities? Zaleznik and others (Bennis and Nanus 1985; Kotter 1990) have suggested that leadership is about producing change and movement and thus focuses on vision, strategizing, aligning people, and inspiring, and that management is about order and consistency, and thus emphasizes planning, organizing, controlling, staffing, and budgeting. They then assert that leaders are both more important and in short supply. Mintzberg, on the other hand, has asserted that managing many things is what executives do, and only one of those things is leading followers. This text will follow the convention common to leadership studies that leaders do many things, including leading people, leading production, and leading change. (The operational definition below will elaborate.) The terms “leaders” and “managers” will be used interchangeably, in the sense that managers (at any level) rarely have the luxury of focusing only on maintenance or change, or focusing only on followers or tasks or organizational alignment. Rather, all good managers must occasionally be leaders (in any of the narrower meanings), and all good leaders had better be good managers (even in the most prosaic sense) at least some of the time if they are not to be brought down by technical snafus or organizational messiness. Indeed, one of the enormous challenges of great leadership is the seamless blending of the more operational-managerial dimensions with the visionary leadership functions.

## Descriptive Versus Prescriptive

Descriptive studies attempt to define and describe leadership processes, typical behaviors, and contingency factors. Descriptive studies include case studies, experimental studies in laboratory settings, experimental studies in the field, factor analysis of survey feedback instruments, unobtrusive observation of leaders, interviews, and so forth. They essentially form the basic science of leadership studies in which evidence for relationships is established. Prescriptive studies attempt to make applied recommendations from descriptive findings: What must leaders do to be more effective and under what conditions? For example, the following might be asserted: “Research shows that it is hard to perform many other supportive activities unless consultation has occurred first; therefore, consult with employees early and regularly.” Prescriptions can be very useful when the average behavior varies substantially from the most effective behavior. Because prescriptions not only involve many theoretical assumptions but also often include value preferences (normative assumptions), it is wise to examine them critically. Many studies include both descriptive and prescriptive elements, and the line is not always very clear. Nonetheless, it is a useful distinction to keep in mind.

## **Universal Versus Contingency Approaches**

A universal approach to leadership assumes that at some level there is an ideal pattern of leadership behavior that fits nearly all situations. A contingency approach to leadership assumes that the situations in which leaders find themselves are crucial to determining the appropriate behavior and style. Early trait theory sought a universal approach but failed to achieve one, and thus universal approaches have been somewhat discredited. However, at a high level of abstraction, they are still attractive. For example, Blake and Mouton's leadership grid (1965, 1985) is still popular, even though it ultimately recommends a single style across situations (the "team" approach), and more recent transformational leadership theories are largely universalist in their approaches, too. However, contingency approaches are generally more powerful for defining the concrete relationships of tasks and behaviors to effectiveness, and for more detailed prescriptions.

## **Formal Versus Informal Leadership**

Formal leadership stems from occupying a defined position (legitimacy). With their authority and resources, formal leaders generally have some ability to reward and coerce members. They augment their formal or position power with personal power that comes from expertise, wisdom, trust, and likability. Informal leaders, on the other hand, have little or no position power and therefore must rely nearly exclusively on personal power. Examples of informal leadership occur when a group convenes but there is no assigned chair, and one person emerges as the leader. (Informal leadership is generally called emergent leadership.) When leaders emerge from ill-defined social movements, they do so as informal leaders; however, over time they may acquire formal positions. Sometimes a follower may be so well liked and crucial to operations that he or she has more power than the formal leader.

## **Vertical Versus Horizontal Leadership**

Vertical leadership is commonly expressed in hierarchical relationships when the bulk of the power is with the formal leader. Leaders can express their vertical leadership not only by being directive but also by largely limiting participation to input only. Horizontal leadership occurs when hierarchy is reduced or eliminated. It emphasizes employee/follower empowerment and delegation as well as partnering relationships. Vertical leadership tends to provide tighter accountability chains and efficiency. It is also prone to corrupt the leadership process for the needs and preferences of the leader. Horizontal leadership tends to provide greater input, participation, adaptability, and creativity. It is also prone to loose accountability and inefficiency. Contemporary organizations tend to use both forms of leadership, and much organizational design is concerned with getting an optimum balance of the two.

## Leaders Versus Leadership

Because of the importance of individualism in Western culture, it is easy to exaggerate the role of the leader (Graen 2007; Kort 2008) and to confuse leaders with leadership. Eastern culture tends to be more sensitive to the roles of culture, tradition, and the group. Although much leadership research focuses on an individual leader's perspective, leadership is a process that includes not only leaders, but followers and the environment as well. For example, in contexts in which leaders inhabit networks, a collaborative mindset may be far more optimal than a more leader-centric one (Weber and Khademain 2008).

## AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP FOR INDIVIDUALS

Definitions of leadership abound. They can be oriented toward whole systems, organizations, or individuals. The bias of the following definition is an individual or practitioner orientation.

**Leadership is a complex process involving numerous fundamentally different types of acts.** Leadership is technical competence and achieving results. It is working with and through people. It is making sure that the organization is in alignment with the environment in terms of resources, services and products, structures and processes, and so forth. And it is also being sure that the organization's norms are appropriate and consistently adhered to, and that a healthy dynamic organization culture is maintained.

**Leadership involves assessing one's environment and one's leadership constraints.** Leaders cannot get somewhere (achieve goals) if they do not know from where they are starting. A rigorous assessment process requires looking at the major processes of organizational effectiveness with a highly critical eye. It also requires a realistic assessment of one's own constraints, so that excessive frustrations, missteps, and underachievement are minimized.

**Leadership involves developing numerous leadership traits and skills.** Before the leader ever acts, he or she needs to utilize and develop natural talents and to refine more acquired skills into a coherent set of leadership characteristics. Such traits include self-confidence, energy, flexibility, a need for achievement, integrity, and emotional maturity. Skills include the abilities to continually learn, influence and negotiate, and communicate. This partial list is challenging in its length. In this book, ten traits and six skills are highlighted and discussed in chapters 11 and 12.

**Leaders must refine and modify their style for different situations.** Whether refining their preferred style for a narrower set of situational factors or modifying it to handle situations of considerable variety, leaders must be in command of their style. In other words, even if a leader chooses not to personally change his or her style for a new situation, an effective leader will be aware of the ideal style for the situation and be able to make a practical judgment about whether to modify that style or provide an alternative (such as having someone else with a more appropriate style handle the situation). Further, mastering even a single style is a challenging endeavor that takes a great deal of conscientious study and practice.

## Exhibit 1.7

**An Operational Definition of Leadership**

Leadership is a complex process involving the acts of:

1. assessing one's environment and one's leadership constraints;
2. developing the numerous necessary leadership traits and skills (such as integrity, self-confidence, a drive for excellence, and skill in communications and influencing people);
3. refining and modifying one's style for different situations;
4. achieving predetermined goals; and
5. continually self-evaluating one's performance and developing one's potential.

**Leaders achieve predetermined goals.** Leaders' assessments, characteristics, and styles are only the tools or means to acting. The actions of effective leaders result in goal accomplishment. Actions are the actual activities that fill up the days of leaders and include monitoring task processes, informing, motivating, building and managing teams, scanning the environment, networking and partnering, and decision making, among many others. Yet, actions are themselves only a means to an end: goal achievement.

**Leaders continually self-evaluate their own performance.** Just as effective organizational and environmental assessment is necessary for effective leadership, continual self-evaluation is critical too. Otherwise, it is easy to rest on old laurels and successes and slide into complacency, or worse, incompetence and dysfunctionality. Bringing all these factors together is a tall order, but it explains why consistently high leadership performance is relatively uncommon. A compilation of this leadership profile, an operational definition, is provided in Exhibit 1.7.

**CONCLUSION**

The leadership process is often treated as a simple phenomenon, but in reality it is not. This is why relatively few people excel at it, especially in contexts that are demanding. Simplistic explanations of leadership are elegant and fine for limited purposes such as providing an inspirational speech or identifying an important principle. However, simplistic explanations also tend to fall prey to overgeneralization, lack of completeness, and lack of applicability. Therefore, the genuine study of leadership requires an appreciation of the subtlety (complexity) of the leadership process, the need for more sophisticated models to explain how it operates in various circumstances, and the fact that there are fundamentally different types of leadership.

References to leadership are as old as written language. The more serious study began in the nineteenth century in which the "great man" thesis prevailed. Leaders were endowed with the gift of leadership by a combination of innate talents and early training and education. The first half of the twentieth century was dominated by the trait perspective, a belief that select traits and skills caused leadership. The contingency perspective pointed out that without situational contexts, the traits and skills made little sense. Early contingency



theories tended to be simplistic models balancing task- and people-oriented perspectives. The charismatic and transformational schools of thought reiterated the importance of the leader's force of character and ability to affect change. Servant leadership reinforced the ethical dimensions of leadership, asserting the fundamental responsibility to serve those one is leading. More contemporary emphases in leadership research include enhanced efforts to find integrative models, the reexamination of horizontal or distributed leadership, and the postmodern rethinking and critique of the meaning of leadership itself. The literature on public sector leadership was mixed with the mainstream and did not emerge as a distinct subfield until quite recently.

Although the perennial debates in leadership cannot be authoritatively answered, they provide a dialectic that informs the reader of the competing issues involved in this dynamic subject. One debate is about what leaders should focus on in terms of achievement, people, or change. Another debate is about just how important leaders really are, a debate that becomes convoluted in the context of administrative leaders in a political system. A third debate is about whether leaders are born or made—the nature versus nurture debate found in other social sciences as well. It is often transformed into a discussion about the relative importance of inherited talents versus education, training, and experience. Finally, there is the debate about the best style to use, no matter whether it is about the amount of inclusiveness such as directive versus participative styles or the amount of focus on individual needs (i.e., an achievement-oriented style) versus group needs (i.e., an inspirational style).

Various terms and concepts were reviewed. Leadership can be analyzed with different levels of action, from tiny tasks to overarching metacategories. Leadership occurs at different organizational levels, from supervisors to executives. Leadership and management can be defined as functionally so overlapping as to be largely synonymous, or with management being a maintenance function and leadership being the change function. Descriptive studies focus on empirical facts and testable theories and prescriptive studies focus on normative and ethical issues. Universal approaches emphasize the generalizability of theories across all situations and contingency approaches emphasize the context variables affecting leadership success. Formal leadership stems from position and authority whereas informal leadership arises nearly solely from personal power and expertise. Finally, while leadership is often studied with a focus on the role of the individual leader and the skills s/he must employ to be successful, leaders are embedded in groups and are a part of a process.

The chapter concluded with an operational definition of leadership at an individual level. Leadership is a complex process involving numerous fundamentally different types of acts. It involves assessing one's environment and constraints, developing numerous leadership traits and skills, modifying one's style for different situations, achieving predetermined goals, and evaluating one's performance. Ultimately, every individual, whether student or researcher, must define leadership for his/her own purpose. Indeed, individuals may redefine leadership for different purposes, which is fine, as long as their reasons for doing so are explicit and their assumptions are transparent. This book should help readers to clarify their specific purposes and thus their personal definitions of leadership.

## NOTES

1. By the term “mainstream” I refer to the literature that self-consciously labels itself as a part of the leadership literature and addresses itself to relatively broad audiences. I exclude literatures that are primarily meant for the consumption of a single discipline with specialized interests and terms. Thus, while many of the studies of public sector administration are to be found in the mainstream, many of the issues and materials are not. Needless to say, as with all distinctions regarding large bodies of work, such differentiations are more for general insight and convenience than for use as rigorous taxonomies.

2. Later examples and reviews include Wiggam (1931), Hook (1943), Murphy (1941), and Jennings (1960).

3. For example, Greenleaf is not among the 7,500 citations in Bass (1990).

4. For example, Burns states that “moral leadership emerges from and always returns to, the fundamental wants and needs of followers” (1978, 4), and he later adds that “transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and the led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both” (20).

5. Of course, Weber (1922/1963) had introduced the notion of charismatic leadership quite clearly, and it had been used by those influenced by sociology and political science such as Willner (1968), Dow (1969), and Downton (1973). Even Freud had made it clear that leadership involved more than simple exchange processes implicit in most situational theories.

6. Although part of this avoidance may have been due to a proexperimental or positivist perspective, part of it may have been an eschewal of the “great-man school” (which clearly has transformational trappings) that was disdained as antiscientific.

7. Because the overlap is so extensive for the subschools, these distinctions are more for analytic insight than articulation of groups that would necessarily self-identify with these monikers.

8. For example, Bass notes: “We find that leaders will exhibit a variety of patterns of transformational and transactional leadership. Most leaders do both but in different amounts” (1985, 22).

9. This is a variation on the nature-nurture debate found in some form in most of the social sciences.

10. The time-of-crisis motif is prominent in the change literature, for example, Kanter, Stein, and Jick (1992) and also in the leadership literature. Transformationalists have reminded us that there are exceptional leadership opportunities, which may or may not be filled, when: there is a dramatic crisis or a leadership turnover, and/or at select stages of the organizational life cycle (especially the birth-to-growth and the maturity-to-decline phases).

11. This debate is related to the made-born argument above but with a critical difference. While the made-born argument is about whether a leader can learn any style, the style debate focuses on whether a leader can learn styles other than his/her native or preferred style.

12. The New Public Management school of thought is a term that was invented by the British but refers to trends across the English-speaking world starting in the 1990s. In the United States it emphasizes customer focus, worker empowerment, work streamlining, cross-sector collaboration, and performance management. It also emphasizes greater results accountability and deemphasizes employee tenure rights. Proponents welcome the new style of accountability, which has market overtones; critics are concerned about the slippery slope to a new age of spoils.

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PART I

# **LEADERSHIP THEORIES**

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# **Theoretical Building Blocks: Contingency Factors and Leader Styles**

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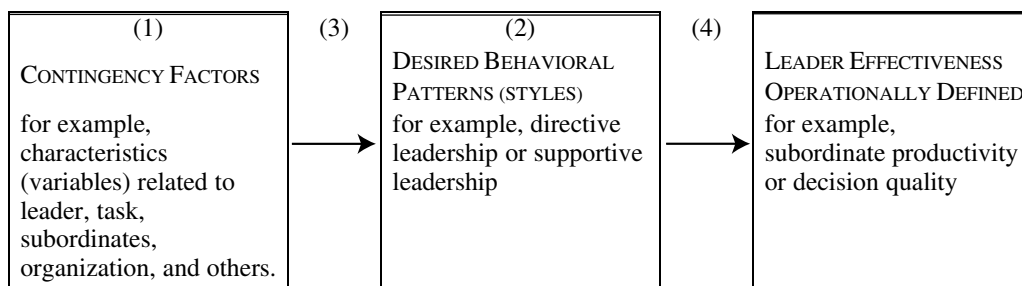
A deeper understanding of leadership requires an analysis of the competing theories and frameworks that have been advanced in the field and that provide a variety of perspectives for this complex topic. Narrower models help explain why the individual concepts or elements of leadership function as they do singly, and broader theories explain the complex relationships among numerous elements.

The scientific model of social science works by asserting various relationships or correlations that then can be tested across broad classes of situations. The most common research question is generally framed: What do leaders do to be effective (and how can we prove the reply)? Concepts are defined in specific, observable ways—operational definitions. Concepts that are being tested under different conditions are called variables; independent variables are those that are changed to examine the effects on others, which are the dependent variables. Hypotheses are formulated and tested concerning the relationships of specific variables, say, leader intelligence on decision quality. The notion of theory building is normally reserved for the explanation of how numerous concepts function together in interrelated causal chains, generally called a model. For example, decision quality is affected not only by leader intelligence but also by problem ambiguity, follower sophistication, and so forth; combining all these relationships into a model constitutes a theory. Looser models in which concepts are difficult to measure or in which causality is unclear because of the complexity of relationships are often called frameworks.

We now return to the theoretical aspects of leadership, which were briefly alluded to in chapter 1. The most common format involves the question: What contingency factors affect which ideal leader styles that in turn will increase the likelihood of leader and organizational effectiveness? The four common specific research questions are: What are the most important contingency factors? What are the predominant leader styles? What is the correlation between contingency variables and styles? What is the correlation between styles and leader effectiveness? (See Exhibit 2.1.) This chapter addresses the first and second questions; chapters 3 through 8 examine the third and fourth questions.

Contingency factors are all the different types of variables that affect the style or behavior of leaders as they seek to be effective. Here the term is used very broadly. Styles are the generalized patterns of behaviors exhibited by leaders. Leader effectiveness must be operationally defined in terms of a specific outcome: productivity, worker develop-

Exhibit 2.1

**Major Variables Considered by Prominent Leadership Theories**

Major theoretical questions asked:

- (1) What are the most important contingency factors?
- (2) What are the predominant leader styles?
- (3) What is the correlation between contingency variables and styles?
- (4) What is the correlation between styles and effectiveness?

ment, worker involvement and cohesion, effective problem solving and decision making, successful organizational change, or a combination of these factors. An example of the correspondence between a grounded/applied perspective (represented by the leadership action cycle explicated later in this book) and the empirical model of most leadership theories is illustrated in Exhibit 2.2.

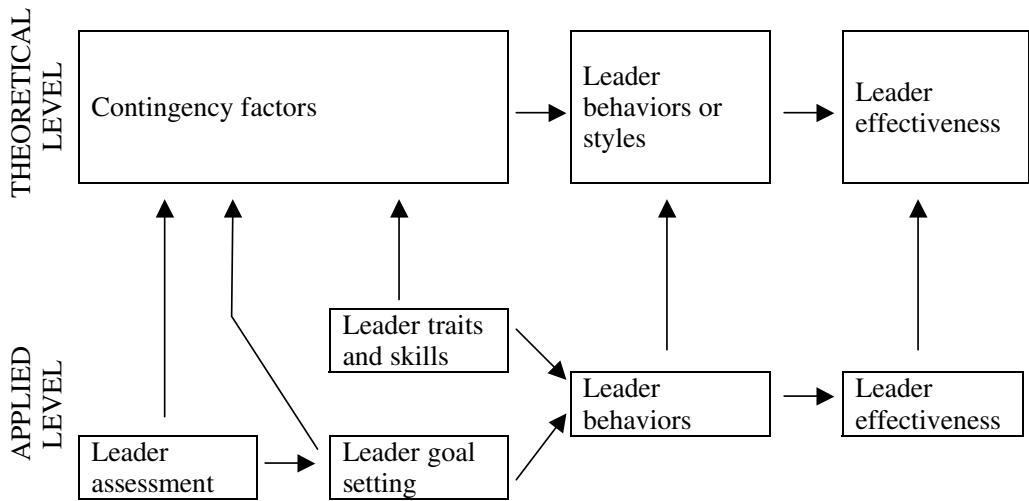
The two approaches differ markedly in purpose. The applied approach is descriptive; the theoretical approach is explanatory. The applied approach assumes relationships and generally seeks to affect practice; the theoretical approach tests relationships. Because of the different purposes, they tend to use different formats and terminology. Nonetheless, there is a fundamental comparability of the two approaches, as is highlighted in Exhibit 2.2.

Prior to analyzing some of the major theories of leadership, it is useful to examine the principal elements common to most theories: (1) contingency factors, (2) dimensions of style, and (3) types of leader styles.

This chapter first examines five clusters of contingency factors (fourteen in all) commonly considered in major leadership theories. Some theories consider many contingencies and some just a few. In studies of leadership, contingency factors are most commonly used as two types of variables: intervening and moderating. Intervening variables affect which behavior/style is/should be selected to enhance the desired outcome. For example, problem structure is an intervening variable in some theories because a structured problem might lead to one style while an ambiguous problem might lead to another. Moderating variables affect the strength, quality, or success of a behavior/style. For example, a common moderating variable is leader expertise in a specific behavior or style. A leader can use the right style but minimize its effectiveness because of poor execution.

Next, the chapter examines the dimensions most commonly associated with styles.

Exhibit 2.2

**Correspondence Between Theoretical Issues and an Applied Perspective**

Because leader style is a higher-level concept, it can be defined in many ways. The discussion of style dimensions will help us understand some of the major ways in which the concept can be defined.

Finally, the chapter extrapolates nine overall styles identified and/or recommended by the various theories that will be covered in the following chapters. Of course, different theories use different numbers of styles to explain leadership effectiveness and they define each style in significantly different ways. The taxonomy of styles presented here is more comprehensive than the one found in most theories, which often have a narrower focus. With these theoretical “building blocks” in place, the following chapters examine specific theories in more detail.

**CONTINGENCY FACTORS**

As should be evident from these discussions, an immense number of factors affect the leader’s preferred modes of action (exhibited as styles) and the degree of effectiveness of those actions. What does the leader think the overall goals should be? What are the task skills of the followers? What is subordinate effort like? How good is the organization of the work and how does this align with performance strategies? What types of constraints do leaders have to incorporate, including their own abilities such as traits, skills, and behavioral competencies? The social scientist studying leadership wants to know not only which contingencies are important but also exactly how important each factor is. In other words, how much explanatory power does each factor provide in different classes of situations? For example, a social scientist may test the often-held assumption that emergencies (one type of task contingency) require a directive mode of leadership (one