Providing Direction: A Key Managerial Leadership Practice

Charles D. Kerns
Pepperdine University
Corperformance, Inc.

C-level executives and first line supervisors alike need to effectively provide direction that contributes to achieving desired organizational outcomes. After reviewing some relevant literature, a practical operational definition for providing direction and a practice-oriented framework are offered. This framework responds to calls from practice minded scholars, educators, and practitioners to close the gap between theory and the real-world practice of leadership. Six key action areas, which in practice are dynamically inter-related, are integrated into this framework. The application value and implications along with some challenges are presented. This article contributes to advancing the practice, applied research and teaching relating to the key managerial leadership practice of providing direction.

INTRODUCTION

Managerial leaders throughout an organization need to effectively provide direction at all organizational levels – work groups, departments, divisions, and the overall organization. People want to believe that the enterprise is headed in a positive direction and that they can be a part of its success. Without direction, an organization runs the risk of drifting without navigation and commitment.

The execution of the "director action role" is a critical managerial leadership competency (Kerns & Ko, 2014). [1] The effective leader uses direction to help set a clear and motivating path forward. Providing direction is a fundamental behavioral practice within the director action role which contributes to leadership effectiveness and desired business and economic outcomes (Kerns & Ko, 2014). Leaders at all levels in an organization are tasked to bring clarity to situations requiring direction. While the content and focus of the message communicated may vary depending on the position the managerial leader holds within an organization, it is essential for C-level executives as well as first line supervisors to provide direction. Leaders who have the ability to effectively provide direction increase the chances of enhancing performance as well as organizational well-being. Direction that is clear, credible, effectively communicated, and facilitated in an engaging proactive way with openness is especially effective.

The concept of managerial performance competencies has been extensively reviewed and numerous taxonomies have been published. These indices have all included the managerial leader practice area of providing direction (Tett, Guterman, Bleico & Murphy, 2000; Yulk, 2012; Kerns & Ko, 2014). While the labels and language used to refer to direction related practices studied within these taxonomies vary, the positioning of managerial leadership direction skills as a key competency area is consistent across these more academically oriented studies.

The seminal work of Mintzberg and Drucker (Mintzberg, 1973; 2004; 2013; Briner, Engwall, Jullerat, Mintzberg, Morgeson, Pratt & Tengkad, 2012; Drucker, 1954; 1993; 1999; 2001) relating to what managers do also points to the importance for managerial leaders to effectively provide direction. Surveys in organizational settings show that employees want to know what is expected of them and where the organization is headed (Schiemann & Morgan, 2006; Wagner & Harter, 2006). Without appropriate direction, employees might be "busy working" but any contribution toward organizational goals will in all probability fall below optimal levels. Managerial leaders, for example, have a responsibility to communicate direction and engage stakeholders in the direction setting process. If the direction is not effectively communicated, the interest of the overall organization and its key stakeholders are underserved and organizational resources are likely not optimally utilized.

Applied research has also underscored the importance of direction skills to enhancing leadership effectiveness and emergence. For example, researchers at the Gallup organization have found that employees look to their managers for clear expectations and clarity of purpose (Wagner & Harter, 2006). Employees working for managerial leaders who effectively clarify where things are headed, whether it be around such areas as setting expectations and/or clarifying purpose, are likely to have enhanced performance with high well-being (Kerns & Ko, 2014). This applied research also aligns with Peter Drucker's thought leadership perspectives relating to economic performance, people and business strategies (Drucker, 1993).

This article offers an operational definition for providing direction and a practice-oriented framework and approach to providing direction. In alignment with calls for theory and conceptualization in behavioral science to include facts and observations gleaned from the real-world of practice, the author has developed an approach to enhance the practice of providing direction (Locke, 2007; Locke & Cooper, 2000). A variety of resources and venues in the leadership development industry focus on improvement of any number of distinct components of direction; however, there is little available that integrates the key components of the director role into one integrated holistic approach for providing direction. The intent of this article is to offer one integrated practice-oriented framework for providing direction. This work will help seasoned professionals and emerging leaders enhance their effectiveness in this practice area while also serving as a resource for teachers and applied researchers.

PRACTICE – ORIENTED FRAMEWORK

As used in this article, the practice of providing direction in the context of managerial leadership is operationally defined as follows:

Establishing and communicating a clear, credible direction, as well as fostering engagement and commitment while being proactive and open to change.

Many opportunities exist for practitioners, researchers and teachers to draw upon knowledge about providing direction. The framework presented below applies this knowledge by building upon observations and experience in working with a broad range of managerial leaders across many different settings. [2]

Drawing upon fieldwork, applied research and consulting, together with relevant literature reviews, over the past 30 years the author has made the following observations about providing direction applied to organizational leaders:
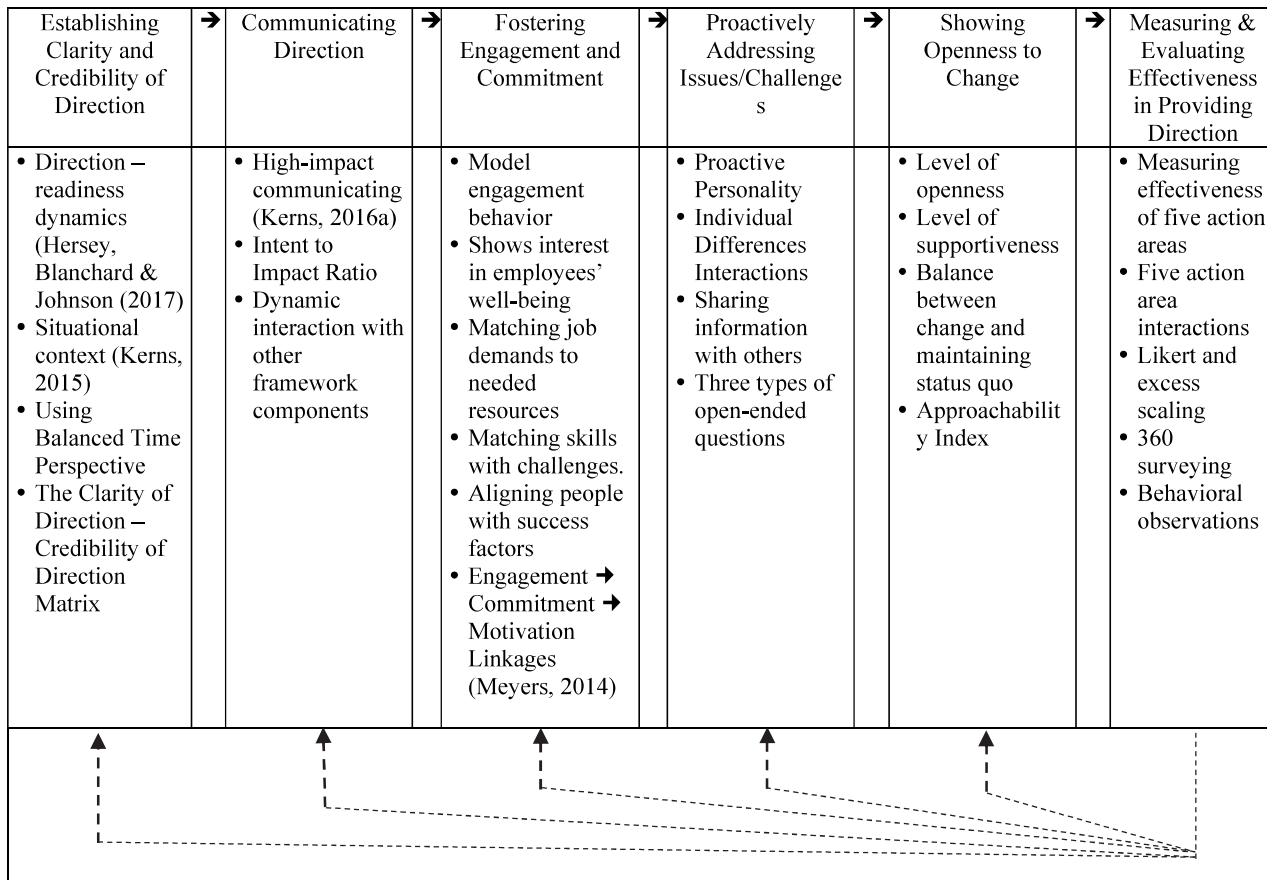
1. Direction needs to be present at all organizational levels. Individuals, groups and the overall organization need to have directional coherency (Mathieu &Chen, 2011; Zaccaro, Ely & Nelson, 2008).

2. Establishing clarity and credibility of direction is considered a key managerial leadership action contained within a broader action role relating to providing direction (Kerns & Ko, 2014; Tengblad, 2012; Miller, 2015; Graham, 2009; Holmes & Parker, 2017).

3. When establishing direction, a balanced time perspective helps to enhance performance and well-being (Kerns, 2012; Boniwell, Osin, Linley & Ivanchenko, 2010). A direction is especially beneficial when the past, present, and anticipated future have been considered (Boniwell, 2005).

4. High-impact communicating is an influence skill that helps a leader provide direction (Kerns, 2016a; Brink & Costigan, 2015; Kerns & Ko, 2014).

5. Engagement and commitment are motivational forces that help to create and sustain direction (Meyer, 2014; Kerns, 2014; Harter, Schmidt, Kilham, & Agrawal, 2009; Serrano & Reichard, 2011; Bergman, Benzer, Kabins, Bhupatkar & Panina, 2013; Klein, Molloy & Brinsfield, 2012; Shuck & Herd, 2012).

6. Proactivity helps leaders recognize and address direction related issues/challenges (Liao, 2015; Zhang, Wang, & Junqi, 2012; Tornau & Frese, 2013; Glaser, Stam & Takeuchi, 2016).

7. Behaviorally flexible managerial leaders seem to be more open to making timely adjustments and adaptions than do less flexible leaders. Behavioral flexibility and a preference for active learning help leaders make course corrections more easily when providing direction. This observation is aligned with the research on leader flexibility, learning and performance (D'Souza, Sigdyal, & Stuckell, 2017; White & Shullman, 2010; Bond, Lloyd & Guenole, 2013; Nadkarni & Herrman, 2010).

8. Leader individual differences seem to interact with the dynamic process of providing direction (Judge & Long, 2012; Glaser, Stam & Takeuchi, 2016; Malhotra, Reus, Zhu & Roelofsen, 2017).

9. Practical assessment tools can help organizational leaders index how well they are doing in competently practicing direction oriented behaviors. (Ashley & Reiter-Palmer, 2012; Wiley & Campbell, 2006; Abell, Springer & Kamata, 2009).

Based on the above observations and study of the topic of providing direction and leadership, with the perspectives of a managerial leadership consultant, industrial-organizational psychologist, business professor/scholar and practitioner who has served on the workplace firing line, over the years the author has developed an integrated framework to help emerging and seasoned managerial leaders enhance their competence at providing direction.[3] This framework, depicted below in Figure 1, has been applied in many settings including work organizations, executive education classrooms and applied research projects. The model is practitioner friendly and conceptually tied to relevant literature relating to the study of leadership, direction and effectiveness.

The framework presented in Figure 1 addresses the need for a holistic, integrated, practical approach to effectively providing direction. This proven framework integrates six key components of providing direction to more fully examine the dynamics relating to this process. Providing direction cannot be effective if the managerial leader focusses on fewer than all of the components in his or her execution of the director role; the components need to be integrated into one coherent framework.

FIGURE 1
PRACTICE ORIENTED PROVIDING DIRECTION FRAMEWORK

Establishing Clarity and Credibility of Direction	→	Communicating Direction	→	Fostering Engagement and Commitment	→	Proactively Addressing Issues/Challenges	→	Showing Openness to Change	→	Measuring & Evaluating Effectiveness in Providing Direction
• Direction – readiness dynamics (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson (2017) • Situational context (Kerns, 2015) • Using Balanced Time Perspective • The Clarity of Direction – Credibility of Direction Matrix		• High-impact communicating (Kerns, 2016a) • Intent to Impact Ratio • Dynamic interaction with other framework components		• Model engagement behavior • Shows interest in employees' well-being • Matching job demands to needed resources • Matching skills with challenges. • Aligning people with success factors • Engagement → Commitment → Motivation Linkages (Meyers, 2014)		• Proactive Personality • Individual Differences Interactions • Sharing information with others • Three types of open-ended questions		• Level of openness • Level of supportiveness • Balance between change and maintaining status quo • Approachability Index		• Measuring effectiveness of five action areas • Five action area interactions • Likert and excess scaling • 360 surveying • Behavioral observations

©Copyright (2012); revised 2017 Charles D. Kerns, Ph.D., MBA

In the framework, the six components are presented in the chronological order of the most basic provisions for providing direction. However, the components are inter-related and in practice are dynamic and interactive. The discussion below describes the components and the interplay among them.

Component I: Establishing Clarity and Credibility of Direction

Establishing a clear and credible direction:
1. enhances the operational focus for the work to be done,
2. helps guide the allocation of resources, especially people, to achieve desired results
3. enhances well-being since individuals, groups and the overall organization knows where things are going, and
4. Ultimately enhances performance of individuals, groups and organizations.

A key consideration for managerial leaders is to decide how much direction to offer, which is significantly influenced by situational context (Fiedler & Macaulay, 1999; Kerns, 2015). Using a scale of 0 – 10 (with ten being the highest level of direction (heavy direction) and zero representing little or no direction (delegation)), a managerial leader needs to discern how much direction is needed in a given situation and then effectively deliver this amount of direction in a clear and credible manner. One key consideration when deciding on the amount of direction to offer others is their level of readiness to perform (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2017). Individuals or groups high in readiness for the task at hand typically need less direction than do those who are not as ready to execute the assignment.

Also, when seeking to provide credible direction, a balanced time perspective can help enhance directional credibility. Briefly, orientation to the past, present, and future in relationship to various temporal dimensions is referred to as perspective on time. Perspective on time (i.e., does this person tend to live more in the past, the present or the future?) influences an individual's experience, thought process, and communication focus. (Boniwell, 2009.)

Managerial leaders are encouraged to consider the past, present and the future when working to establish direction. The deliberate consideration and management of time perspectives is unfortunately underutilized by managerial leaders generally and more specifically when it comes to providing direction (Kerns, 2012). However, by effectively taking this action, a managerial leader likely brings additional credibility to the process.

To this end, bringing perspectives gained from past setbacks as well as wisdom gleaned from prior successes can inform direction setting and likely provide additional clarity. Drawing upon past perspectives as well as current circumstances can offer insights about the future and ways to perhaps shape it in a desired direction. The most effective approach to managing time perspectives as it relates to providing direction is to seek a balance when considering the past, present and future. The credibility of direction is likely strengthened when anchored by a more balanced time perspective. This can help a leader avoid being overly influenced by prior events, current circumstances and/or the anticipated future, when seeking to establish a credible direction (Kerns, 2012).

Beyond the amount of direction that a managerial leader offers and his/her time perspective, the content of the leader's message needs to be clear and perceived as credible by his/her reports/followers (Holmes & Parker, 2017). Clarity is essential for effective communication of any concept or idea. Credibility can be equated to believability of the direction being offered by the leader (Miller, 2015; Graham, 2009). In practice, the credibility of the message is enhanced or diminished by the credibility of the source of the communication or communicator (i.e. the leader). The matrix presented in Figure 2 highlights the dynamic relationship between clarity and credibility of direction.

FIGURE 2
THE CLARITY OF DIRECTION – CREDIBILITY OF DIRECTION MATRIX
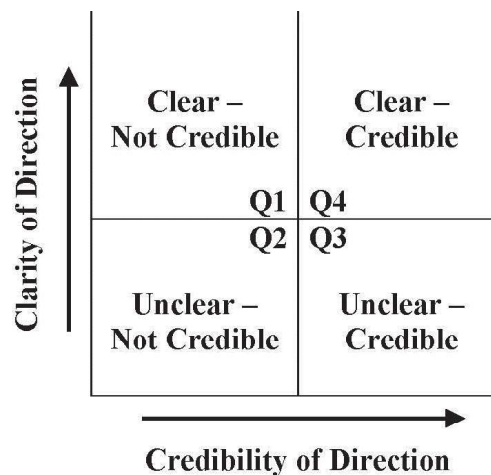
© Copyright (2017) Charles D. Kerns, Ph.D., MBA

Figure 2 provides an interesting and useful way of describing the permutations of the dimensions of clarity and credibility of direction. The author frequently uses this matrix with managerial leaders to discuss their own perceptions regarding the clarity and credibility of their established direction. (References in this article to the various quadrants are used for thought and discussion purposes only.

Further discussion of this conceptual model will be offered in the application value and implications section of this article.)

A leader possessing high credibility likely enhances the probability of being seen by others as a credible source for establishing a credible message. Credibility has received a great deal of attention in the managerial leadership literature. A person's credibility is characterized by perceptions of competency, caring and trustworthiness (McCroskey & Teven, 1999; Myers & Martin, 2015). These three characteristics have been used broadly when defining the source credibility concept (Graham, 2009). When combining credibility with clear message content, a stated direction is likely to be classified in Q4 in the clarity of direction – credibility of direction matrix.

Component II: Communicating Direction

In addition to establishing a clear and credible direction, the effective managerial leader needs to communicate the direction with high-impact. High-impact communication is an interpersonal influence skill that enhances the likelihood that a leader's intended direction has the desired impact (Kerns, 2016a). A high intent to impact ratio indicates that a leader's communication is likely effective. Effectively communicated, directional clarity and credibility encourage stakeholders to engage and commit to an espoused direction.

Dewan and Myatt (2007; 2008) remind us that a leader's influence increases with his/her directional clarity and skills at communicating the direction. It seems that practicing high-impact communicating is essential to providing direction. Their work, however, also informs us that followers likely pay more attention to leaders who effectively communicate regardless of the leader's personal sense of direction or directional clarity. Communicating for high-impact is essential, more broadly, to leadership effectiveness and more specifically, to helping leaders provide direction that helps produce desired results including creating economic value.

All components within the framework benefit from high-impact communicating by a leader. Kerns (2016a) offers a practical definition of high-impact communicating and a practice-oriented framework that addresses behavioral communication skills such as, speaking, communication filter analysis and listening.

Component III: Fostering Engagement and Commitment

The importance and impact of engagement on enhancing organizational performance and well-being is well documented (Kerns, 2014; Meyer, Gagné & Parfyonova, 2010; Meyer & Maltin, 2010). Leaders who are able to provide direction that engages individuals, groups, and an overall organization, as appropriate, will likely be more effective when executing the director action role. Also, as others increasingly engage in the process of establishing direction, their commitment to the path forward is more likely strengthened. As engagement and commitment grow, they can become a potent motivational force that produces persistence in a direction or course of action even in the face of constraints (Meyer, 2014; Myer, Becker & Vandengerghe, 2004). Follower engagement and commitment have motivational properties that a managerial leader can optimize when endeavoring to provide direction (Meyer, 2014).

Fostering engagement and gaining commitment around a direction can be advanced by managerial leaders who take actions such as the following:
1. Modeling key engagement behaviors, such as vigor/energy for the direction and commitment to the direction.
2. Showing interest in employee development, learning and well-being when providing direction.
3. Managing work and job demands while recognizing and optimizing personal and job related resources.
4. Encouraging matching skill levels to address relevant challenges to the desired action.
5. Aligning individuals, groups and the organization on critical success factors such as, direction and related success metrics.

These five practices relate to various definitions, conceptualizations and research findings found in the literature on engagement (Kerns, 2014; Tuckey, Bakker & Dollard, 2012; Shuck & Wollard, 2010).

Schaufeli and Bakker (2010), for example, see engagement as involving vigor/energy, dedication and absorption. Employee engagement levels have been shown to be impacted by the amount of interest shown in employees by managerial leaders (Rath & Harter, 2010; Schuck, Rocco & Albornoz, 2011). In connecting engagement to work performance, Bakker and Demerouti (2008) as well as Bakker (2011) show the relationship of personal and job resources to job demands. Encouraging the matching of skill levels with challenging directions that advance individuals, groups and organizations toward flow states also relates to the managerial practice of providing direction (Csikszentmihayi, 2003).

Component IV: Proactively Addressing Issues/Challenges

Anticipating issues and challenges that relate to providing direction can help clarify what to pay attention to during this process. This component connects closely with time perspective (referenced in association with Component I). The effective managerial leader using a balanced time perspective brings practical intelligence to the direction setting process drawn from relevant and important learning from the past, present and anticipated future (Sternberg, 2013; Thomas & Cheese, 2005).

Proactively addressing issues/challenges related to direction will likely be more challenging for some managerial leaders than others. This action area exemplifies the interaction of competencies and related practices with individual differences among managerial leaders (Malhotra, Reus, Zhu & Roelofsen, 2017). While proactively addressing direction related issues/challenges is helpful in enhancing directional clarity, managerial leaders vary in their predisposition to be proactive. Proactivity is indeed a relevant individual difference factor when considering leadership behavior in organizations. The recognition of this dispositional difference among leaders is useful when striving to optimize this component in the framework and may be an important area for development.

Leaders with a proactive personality are more action oriented and seem to recognize opportunities, issues, and challenges. Proactive individuals also have a propensity to share information with teammates which is important when seeking to provide direction. Conversely, it has been found that managerial leaders lacking in proactivity inhibit the initiative of followers (Zhang, Wang, & Junqi, 2012). However, Glaser, Stam and Takeuchi (2016), remind us that there are also risks associated with managerial leaders being too proactive in taking personal initiative. Like with most individual difference factors, this factor needs to be recognized and managed in light of situational context demands (Kerns, 2015).

The use of specific behavioral skills can advance proactively addressing issues and challenges relating to providing direction. In particular, the use of open-ended questioning with key stakeholders can help in providing direction (Marquardt, 2014). Three types of open – ended questions are particularly useful when proactively seeking to establish a way forward. The following three lines of questioning can be used by managerial leaders with stakeholders on an individual or group basis:

- Illuminating questions, which facilitate additional impact and understanding on the issue or challenge being addressed when the managerial leader is uncertain about what he or she is hearing (e.g. "Please tell me what you mean by ….?")
- Refocusing questions, which help bring the conversation back to the issues and challenges at hand (e.g. "Can we get back to what you were saying about…?")
- Broadening questions, which open up the discussion when more information surrounding the issues and challenges is needed (e.g. "Please tell me about your thoughts about…?")

The above three types of open-ended questions also have applicability to Component V in the providing direction framework.

Component V: Showing Openness to Change

In order to sustain active engagement and commitment (Component III), a managerial leader needs to display sufficient levels of openness to adjusting and/or considering changes in direction. Without the appropriate amount of openness and flexibility, engagement suffers and open communication diminishes. However, there is a delicate balance between making appropriate course changes and altering the direction because of personal preferences/individual differences rather than for performance based reasons. Leaders who have a "creator –innovator" work style preference are more likely to be open to

making direction change than those more predisposed toward a "maintainer – preserver" style (Kerns, 2016b).

There is clear evidence that managerial leaders who display supportiveness and openness tend to see this reflected in their people and teams (La Fasto & Larson, 2001). The display of openness reduces the resistance to changing the status quo while enhancing levels of engagement and commitment relating to direction. With openness and supportiveness, forces for driving desired directional change may more effectively advance while the restraining factors for change and maintenance of the current direction may be dampened (Manchester, et al, 2014; Audia, Locke, & Smith, 2000.)

Openness also helps a managerial leader to be perceived as approachable. Approachability helps build goodwill and trust for the managerial leader within the organization. When a leader has a high approachability index, the opportunities to receive feedback on the direction being provided increase. Key stakeholders are more likely to see the leader as willing to listen to potential suggestions for course corrections as well as being open to feedback on the direction.

Showing openness to change closely connects with Components I – IV in the providing direction framework. Openness is needed to advance the clarity and credibility of direction, foster engagement and commitment, as well as proactively address issues during the process.

Component VI: Measuring Effectiveness

Measuring a managerial leader's effectiveness at executing the above five framework components is important in helping to develop and improve the performance of these individuals. While each component in the framework is presented individually, in practice they form an interactive composite of key action areas for providing direction.

For measurement purposes, it is useful to assess a leader on each action area. There are a variety of useful and practical ways for measuring the effectiveness of a leader in providing direction. These assessment methods include using Likert rating scales, 360° surveying, behavioral observations and excess rating (Abell, Springer & Kamata, 2009).

With an understanding of the various components of the providing direction framework, and the interplay among them, a discussion of the application value of the framework, and how relevant tools for targeting specific areas for improvement might be integrated into the framework, follows.

APPLICATION VALUE AND IMPLICATIONS

Work relating to the managerial leadership practice of providing direction has application value and implications for practitioners, researchers and teachers. All three groups contribute to the growth and development of emerging and seasoned leaders. Practitioners, in particular, can benefit from having practical frameworks and tools to help them better manage their own efforts at providing direction. A discussion of the application value and implications of the proffered framework across practice, research and teaching domains follows.

Practice Domain

The providing direction framework described above can serve as a practical roadmap for productive conversations and development. While the components are broken down for clarity and discussion purposes, in practice, the six component framework is an integrated and interactive whole. To help operationalize the providing direction framework, various behavioral skill areas provide opportunities to increase the effectiveness of managerial leaders in providing direction within the various components of the framework. A managerial leader, independently or in consultation with others, can consider the following six behavioral skill areas, each of which alone are integral to the providing direction process, and identify the areas which he/she should target for improvement when striving to become more effective at providing direction:

- Establishing clear and credible direction
- Communicating direction

- Fostering engagement and commitment
- Proactively addressing direction related issues/challenges
- Showing openness to making changes/adjustments in direction
- Measuring effectiveness in providing direction

The above checklist of behavioral skill areas represents a springboard for conversations with managerial leaders about their skills in providing direction and in areas for improvement within the context of the overall framework. Discussing these action areas can lead to more sophisticated forms of assessment, including, for example 360° surveying, which utilize Likert type scales. Managerial leaders may also address the behavioral skills noted on this checklist with reports when coaching them to enhance their skill in providing direction.

The clarity of direction – credibility of direction matrix previously noted in Figure 2 has proven to be a useful model in coaching managerial leaders to more fully understand and apply Component I in the providing direction framework. Leaders frequently come to further appreciate the difference between the clarity and credibility of direction offered to others. Having managerial leaders explicitly review what they can do more and/or less of to enhance the clarity and credibility of direction has proven to be valuable. Typically, the leader/coachee is initially asked to plot where he/she believes he/she maps on the clarity of direction – credibility of direction matrix in relationship to a recent situation where he/she provided direction. What typically ensues are discussions about behaviors that have detracted and/or promoted establishing a clear and credible direction. Subsequent to these conversations, the leader/coachee will be asked to take corrective actions intended to enhance his/her skill at establishing clear and credible direction, especially in critical managerial leadership situations.

It seems clear that managerial leaders have considerable influence on work engagement and the amount of impact can vary across organizational levels. Gallup's research, for example, underscores the influential role that managerial leaders have on engagement levels (Rath & Harter, 2010). More attention needs to be given to the role of alignment of engagement across organizational levels, especially as it relates to providing direction. Top management teams should consider, for example, spending more time designing, executing and assessing work engagement across their organizations (Wiley, 2010). As managerial leadership actions, including the six areas noted in the providing direction framework in Figure 1 are connected to the engagement – commitment component (Component 3), the director action role will likely be enhanced.

Each of the six behavioral skills noted above can be aligned with the appropriate component in the framework, allowing the managerial leader to focus on improving concrete real-world behavioral skills which play significant roles in the framework to enhance effectiveness in providing direction. The author and his colleagues frequently provide clients with an expanded version of Figure 1 wherein the six behavioral skills are appropriately integrated into the framework.

Research Domain

The focus of this article is on providing practicing managerial leaders with additional perspective and understanding to support providing direction. Several areas, however, could benefit from additional research. Given the paucity of evidence based frameworks for practitioners to review and consider, it would be of interest to further examine additional practice-oriented frameworks intended to enhance practitioner skills in providing direction. This work would be especially valuable if these frameworks would integrate practices into a practical and coherent whole.

The current framework for providing direction represents a multi-faceted behavior oriented model (Components I – VI) for applied researchers to explore further. This future work could include investigating the overall framework, individual components and/or the interactions between specific parts. For example, the work of Meyer (2014) concerning the linkages between engagement, commitment and motivation could be extended to empirically investigating how a leader best engages and gains commitment from followers in a way that enhances these stakeholders' motivation level to support an established direction. Also, further investigation of the interactions between clarity of direction and credibility of direction would be valuable. It would be especially useful to learn more about the respective

interactions between the context of the direction, leader credibility, and high-impact communicating. This line of research could help practitioners further understand the importance of having both a clearly formulated direction and credibility before proceeding to communicate the direction. In terms of examining the overall framework, empirical work that investigated how much variance in effectively providing direction can be attributed to each of the components within the framework would be helpful. This research could shed additional light on where to target development efforts when coaching leaders to execute the key practice of providing direction.

The design, development and formal evaluation of assessment tools associated with the current practitioner oriented frameworks represents another opportunity for additional research. This work on assessment tools would be most helpful if the tools were integrated into practices nested within the overall framework, which contributes to achieving desired organizational results/outcomes. This line of research could likely benefit by using practice oriented assessment methodologies like the Linkage Research Model (LRM) which was introduced by Jack Wiley and his colleagues (Wiley & Campbell, 2006). Kerns (2002) provides a practical description and application of this approach. The behavioral practice of providing direction would likely be a good action area for inclusion in the LRM assessment methodology.

Individual differences may likely play a role in leader effectiveness in providing clarity of direction setting (Judge & Long, 2012). For example, personality facets and skill levels needed for focusing on practices embedded in a framework for providing direction vary among individual leaders (Levasseur, 2013). Stam, Lord, Knippenberg and Wisse (2014) underscore, for example, how individual differences come into play when considering the dynamics associated with clearly communicating direction in the form of a vision. It would be important to know how other interpersonal influence practices interact with one's effectiveness at providing direction. For instance, field work by the author and his colleagues has shown that individuals high in introversion tendencies may not provide enough information to clarify and communicate direction, not because they lack the requisite skills, but their predisposition for quiet concentration reduces their energy for providing sufficient detail when providing direction. Empirically investigating how providing direction is related to individual differences and key managerial leader interpersonal influence practices seems useful. The recent work on individual differences relating to extraverted CEO behavior during acquisitions including direction related practices seems useful and important. This latter work holds particular promise given the significant reported impacts of CEO extraversion on business and economic outcomes (Malhotra, Reus, Zhu, & Roelofsen, 2017).

The Linkage Research Model (LRM) provides a useful methodology to measure the impacts of a variety of relevant and important personality facets and associated leadership behavioral practices on organizational results. Specifically, research that examines various behavioral practices relating to providing direction could be measured for their impacts on employee, customer and financial business results. This applied research would help business leaders better connect who they are and how they practice leadership with financial results that impact their organizations' economic bottom line. For example, CEO behavior has been found to substantially impact the economic outcomes of businesses to include that CEO personality facets were connected to a 14.7 million dollar average gain for shareholders in acquirer companies in acquisition transactions when the CEO involved was extraverted. (Fang, Landis, Zhang, Anderson, Shaw and Kilduff, 2015; Malhortra, et.al, 2017).

Brink and Costigan (2015) as well as Conrad and Newberry (2011) remind us of the importance of studying the alignment of workplace communication skills that relate to Component II in the current framework with areas that are taught/developed in business schools. More generally, further study of the alignment between what we focus on in external leadership development programs, including providing direction, and what leaders actually do in the workplace, seems especially valuable (Conger, 2013). Indeed, increased alignment may help decrease the alarmingly high incidence of managerial leadership ineffectiveness and/or incompetence (Kaiser & Craig, 2014; Aasland, Skogstad, Notelares, Nielsen & Einarsen, 2010).

Finally, the impact of technologies and social media on providing direction needs to be more fully explored, especially as it relates to communicating direction (Component II in framework). As Te'eni (2001) points out, technology assisted communication can impact not only what we communicate

(content) but how we send the message (process). For example, Hartman and McCambridge (2011) indicate that the millennial generation is prototypically seen as being more connected to technology oriented communication than they are to interpersonally focused exchanges. This is only one potential area for studying the impact of technology and social media on providing direction in the workplace. This area of research would seem to offer valuable insights and information for organizations and their leaders (Davenport, 2014).

Teaching Domain

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

Application of the providing direction framework offered in this article has been advanced by using experiential exercises in the business classroom setting to help learners better understand and utilize this framework. For example, the clarity of direction – credibility of direction matrix that was introduced earlier (Figure 2) has been successfully used to engage students enrolled in leadership oriented MBA classes to better understand and apply the skills in establishing a clear and credible direction. Typically, students in small groups are given a copy of the matrix and asked to plot themselves and their current bosses on the two dimension (clarity of direction and credibility of direction) found in the matrix. This exercise usually stimulates productive conversations about leadership follower differences and dynamics in establishing clear and credible direction and how these efforts enhance or decrease performance and well-being. Also, students emerge from this activity with a more complete understanding of the difference between directional clarity and the credibility of direction. It has been enlightening for many participants to realize how much individual difference factors such as personality and experience influence how they go about establishing direction that is clear and credible.

Another valuable experiential exercise involves students engaging in a mini-workshop that facilitates them in developing a strategic direction for a business of their choosing. The activity is based upon a framework and process that helps practitioners and students of leadership think more strategically and document these efforts at providing a strategic direction for a selected enterprise (Kerns, 2002b). Students complete this activity in small groups where they are instructed to integrate all six components in the providing direction framework into their strategic direction for the selected company. This mini-workshop has proven to be invaluable in helping students apply the providing direction framework to a real-world situation. The debrief sessions, which follow a brief presentation by each group of their approach and applications, to strategic direction setting yield many useful insights and observations about how to go about more systematically addressing the skill of providing direction. One consistent finding is that participants come to realize how much individual differences such as personality facets and experience influence their direction setting behavior.

An additional helpful tool to apply the framework includes students brainstorming and presenting practical ways to measure their effectiveness in providing direction. The work being done relating to high-impact communicating has been useful in this area (Kerns, 2016a). This activity is in response to the call for workplace assessments to be applied in business classrooms (Yu, 2010).

Another impactful way to assist students in learning the framework is having effective leaders review the model with students and indicate how they apply it in their efforts to provide direction. The lessons learned by the successful executive while striving to effectively provide direction have proven to be impactful teaching moments that enhance student learning. The impact on learners has been especially valuable in sessions where leaders have shared their performance against the 6-item behavioral checklist previously noted. In these sessions the clarity of direction and credibility of direction matrix has been a useful experience to help students focus on the importance of establishing a clear and credible direction before they communicate to a broad audience.

SOME CHALLENGES

Putting the direction framework into practice presents a variety of challenges. Managerial leaders need a practical methodology to measure how well they are providing direction. Although there is a paucity of methodologically sound practice oriented models that effectively integrate key components for providing effective direction, the author encourages emerging and experienced organizational leaders to consider using the Linkage Research Model (LRM) to help measure effectiveness (Wiley, 2010; Brooks, Wiley & Hause, 2006). This approach can systematically help a leader and his/her organization focus on a variety of practice areas including providing direction. Organizational leaders are challenged, in general, to find and adopt practical frameworks which integrate key direction setting skill components and are supported by straight forward approaches to assessing skills at providing direction. As noted earlier, the intent to impact ratio metric associated with enhancing high-impact communicating would likely be a useful metric in assessing a leader's effectiveness in providing direction. The approachability index associated with showing openness to change (Component V) provides another challenging area to explore.

Closely associated with the previously noted challenge is the need for practicing managerial leaders, leadership developers and applied researchers to consider how other director action role practices may interact with a leader's efforts at providing direction. Other practice areas such as managing core values and action planning likely influence a leader's communication effectiveness. Knowing how other director role and interpersonal influence practices may relate when providing direction would be valuable.

In addition, there is a need to extend the work of Malhotra, Reus, Shu, and Roelofsen (2017) to more explicitly connect the practice of providing direction on improving the economic value and rate of success of acquisitions. Beyond this work in the acquisitions field, it would be valuable to study the impacts of direction setting practices on overall organization performance and well-being. In practice, poor execution in providing direction seems to diminish performance and well-being leaving individuals, groups and organizations adrift. The use of the Linkage Research Model, for example, to assess leaders' effectiveness at providing direction across organizational settings seems especially useful.

Practitioners, applied researchers and develops of leaders/teachers are challenged in their work to connect soft skills to hard dollar impacts. In the case of providing direction, leaders need to more fully understand and appreciate how their behavior when executing their role as a director impacts the financial/economic side of their business. This connection is often over looked when providing direction. However, beyond the current evidence noted in this article relating to financial impacts of "soft behavioral practices" on an organization's financial outcomes, managerial leaders, leader developers/teachers/coaches and researchers are encouraged to highlight and reinforce this connection in their work. An organization without leaders who can provide effective direction will not optimize their potential.

While in practice providing direction at work cuts across all organizational levels, the focus is often on the direction of individual employees. To broaden this perspective, the author suggests a more comprehensive view. Based on work with executives in the field, there are at least three organizational levels that managerial leaders need to be concerned about: individuals, work groups and the overall organization. Tuckey, Bakker and Dollard (2012) underscore the need to investigate models, concepts and practices from a multi-level perspective, pointing out that places of work involve individuals aligning with groups and teams as well as the organization. The managerial leader needs to focus on providing direction and the impact his or her direction setting behavior is having on individual employees, work groups and the larger organization. The recent exploration of employee engagement practices by Shuck, Rocco and Albornoz (2011) underscores the critical role managerial leadership plays in practice areas such as providing direction.

Providing direction takes place in changing contexts, requiring the leader to be flexible in seeking to be effective in executing the director role, especially when directing diverse audiences. Global leaders, for example, who show flexibility when communicating direction with key stakeholders across diverse cultures will likely be more impactful in their communications. Indeed, the author's field experience indicates that the more behaviorally flexible an organizational leader is in applying this framework across

changing contexts, the more likely he/she will be effective in providing direction. This field study evidence aligns with other observations found in relevant literature (D'Souza, Sigdyal, & Struckell, 2017; Lavasseur, 2013).

A final challenge for managerial leaders applying this framework is for them to consider how the use of communication technologies and social media influence their efforts at providing direction (Phelps, 2014). Technology assisted communication underscores the importance for a leader to recognize and understand what is in his or her communication filter as it relates to providing credible direction to individuals, groups or an entire organization. It is also important that they understand how their target audience perceives key features of credibility relating to the topic being addressed. This may be particularly relevant when a leader is providing direction to individuals across different generations and cultures.

Focusing on the challenges of assessing the effectiveness of frameworks, the impacts of individual differences on providing direction, behavioral flexibility, organizational level key alignments and technology influences will enhance our understanding and execution of this key area of managerial leadership practice. Moving forward, additional challenges for practitioners, applied researchers, and teachers will emerge. This important practice area will, if executed effectively, likely contribute to enhancing a leader's overall effectiveness across diverse organizational settings as well as enhance the achievement of desired business results.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The development and application of frameworks and tools to help managerial leaders more effectively understand and execute providing direction will be beneficial to advancing the practice and study of leadership. In turn, it will also likely contribute to producing better business results and creating greater economic value for key stakeholders. With a systematic approach that builds upon practice oriented frameworks and tools, additional resources can be developed and applied to help leaders effectively provide direction in workplace settings. As this work moves forward there will be a need for assessment methodologies, additional integrated practice oriented frameworks, and the identification of best practices to help managerial leaders enhance their effectiveness in their role as a director. These and related efforts will likely advance our knowledge and understanding of the dynamics associated with providing direction.

ENDNOTES

1. A debate comparing and contrasting management and leadership has occurred over more than thirty years. In this article the terms managerial leadership, management, leadership, leader and manager are used synonymously.
2. In developing leader performance enhancing frameworks and tools for leaders, the author and his colleagues utilize the following set of criteria. The frameworks and tools need to:
   - Add value in an organization
   - Have face validity for practitioners
   - Be relevant to practitioner's daily work
   - Be evidence based in practice and/or research
   - Be practical to implement in an organizational operating environment
   - Be coachable/teachable
3. This system of managerial leadership strives to provide practitioners, applied researchers and teachers with an integrated approach to viewing and understanding leadership. The system brings together several streams of leadership study and research that have been offered over the past 100 years. A key practice in this model relates to a leader's providing direction. A better understanding and management of this practice area can help advance the practice, study and teaching of leadership which is the focus on the current article. It is beyond the scope of the current presentation to review and discuss the other system dimensions and related practices.

REFERENCES

Aasland, M.S., Skogstad, A., Notelaers, G., Nielsen, M.B., & Einarsen, S. (2010). The prevalence of destructive leadership behavior. *British Journal of Management*, 21, 438-452.

Abell, N., Springer, D.W., & Kamata, A. (2009). *Developing and validating rapid assessment instruments*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Ashley, G.C. & Reiter-Palmer, R. (2012). Self-awareness and the evolution of leaders: The need for a better measure of self-awareness. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management*, 14, 2-17.

Audia, P.G., Locke, E.A., and Smith, K.G. (2000). The paradox of success: and archival and a study of strategic persistence following radical environmental change. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(5), 837-853.

Bakker, A.B. (2011). An evidence – model of work engagement. *Psychological Science*, 20, 265-269.

Bakker, A.B., & Demerouti, E. (2008). Towards a model of work engagement. *Career Development International*, 13, 209-223.

Bergman, M.E., Benzer, J.K., Kabins, A.H., Bhupatkar, A., & Panina, D. (2013). An event – based perspective on the development of commitment. *Human Resources Management* Review, 23, 148-160.

Bond, F.W., Lloyd, J., & Guenole, N. (2013). The work-related acceptance and action questionnaire: Initial psychometric findings and their implications for measuring psychological flexibility in specific contexts. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. 86(3), 331-347.

Boniwell, I. (2005). Beyond time management: How the latest research on time perspective and perceived time use can assist clients with time-related concerns. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 3(2), 61-74.

Boniwell, I. (2009). Perspectives on time. In S.J. Lopez & C.R. Snyder (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, (2nd edition pp. 295-302), New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Boniwell, I., Osin, E., Linley, P.A., & Ivarchenko, G. (2010). A question of balance: Examining relationships between time perspective and measure of well-being in the British and Russian student sample. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5(1), 24-40.

Briner, R.B., Engwall, L., Juillerat, T. L., Mintzberg, H., Morgeson, F.P., Pratt, M.G., & Tengblad, S. (2012). Bridging the management theory and practice gap. In S. Tenglad (Ed.), *The work of managers: Towards a practice theory of management* (1st ed., pp. 319-336). New York, NY: Oxford Press.

Brink, K.E., & Costigan, R.D. (2015). Oral communication skills: Are the priorities of the workplace and AACSB – accredited business programs aligned? *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 14(2), 205-221.

Brooks, S.M., Wiley, J.W., & Hause, E.L. (2006). Using employee and customer perspectives to improve organizational performance. In L. Fogli (Ed.), *Customer service delivery research and best practices* (pp. 52-82). San Francisco, CA Jossey-Bass.

Conger, J. (2013). Mind the gaps: What limits the impact of leadership education. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 6(4), 77-83.

Conrad, D., & Newberry, R. (2011). 24 business communication skills: Attitudes of HR resource managers versus business educators. *American Communication Journal*, 13(1), 4-23.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2003). *Good business: Leadership, flow, and the making of meaning*. New York, NY: Viking.

D'Souza, D.E., Sigdyal, P. & Strukell, E. (2017), Relative ambidexterity: A measure and a versatile framework. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 31(2), 124-136.

Davenport, B. (2014). From A to Google: How technology is impacting information and leadership. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 8(2), 41-45.

Dewan, T. & Myatt, D.P. (2007). Leading the party: Coordination, direction and communication. *American Political Science Review*, 101(4), 827-845.

Dewan, T. & Myatt, D.P. (2008). The qualities of leadership: Direction, communication, and obfuscation. *American Political Science Review*, 102(3), 351-368.

Drucker, P.F. (1954). *The practice of management*. New York NY: Harper & Row.

Drucker, P.F. (1993). *Managing for results*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Drucker, P.F. (1999). *Management challenges for the 21st century*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Drucker, P.F. (2001). *The essential Drucker*. New York: NY: Harper Collins

Fang, R., Landis, B., Zhang, Z., Anderson, M.H., Shaw, J.D., & Kilduff, M. (2015). Integrating personality and social networks: A meta – analysis of personality network position, and work outcomes in organizations. *Organization Science*, 26, 1243-1260.

Fiedler, F.E. & Macaulay, J.L. (1999). The leadership situation: A missing factor in selecting and training managers. *Human Resource Management Review*, 8(4), 335-350.

Glaser, L., Stam, W., & Takeuchi, R. (2016). Managing the risks of proactivity: A multilevel study of initiative and performance in the middle management context. *Academy of Management Journal*, 59(4), 1339-1360.

Graham, E.E. (2009). Measure of source credibility. In R.B. Rubio, A.M. Rubio, E.E. Graham, E.M. Perse, & D.R. Seibold (Eds.), *Communication research measures II: A sourcebook* (pp. 201-204). New York, NY: Routledge.

Hartman, J.L., & McCambridge, J. (2011). Optimizing millennials communication skills. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 74, 22-44.

Harter, J.K., Schmidt, F.L., Kilham, E.A. & Agrawal, S. (2009). Q12 *Meta analysis: The relationship between engagement at work and organizational outcomes*. USA: Gallup Inc.

Hersey, P., Blanchard, K.H., & Johnson, D.E. (2017). *Management of organizational behavior: Leading human resources* (11th Ed.). Upper Saddle River: NJ: Pearson Publishing.

Holmes, W.T., & Parker, M.A. (2017). Communication: Empirically testing behavioral integrity and credibility as antecedents for the effective implementation of motivating language. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 54(1), 70-82.

Judge, T.A., & Long, D.M. (2012). Individual differences in leadership. In D.V. Day & J. Antonakis (Eds.), *The nature of leadership* (2nd ed., pp. 179-217). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kaiser, R.B., & Craig, S.B. (2014). Destructive leadership in and of organizations. In D.V. Day (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of leadership and organizations* (pp. 260-284). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Kerns, C.D. (2002a). Managerial leadership at twelve o'clock: Link management practice to business results. *Graziadio Business Review*, 5(3).

Kerns, C.D. (2002b). An entrepreneurial approach to strategic direction setting. *Business Horizons*, July-August, 2-9.

Kerns, C.D. (2012). Profiling and managing time perspective: A systematic approach. *International Leadership Journal*, 4(1), 20-40.

Kerns, C.D. (2014). Fostering and managing engagement: A framework for managerial leaders. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability, and Ethics*, 11(1), 34-49.

Kerns, C.D. (2015). Situational context: A core leadership dimension. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability, and Ethics*, 12(1), 11-24.

Kerns, C.D. (2016a). High – impact communicating: A key leadership practice. *Journal of Applied Business and Economics*. 18(5), 11-22.

Kerns, C.D. (2016b). Understanding and managing work style preferences: A key managerial leadership practice; *Business Renaissance Quarterly*, 11(2), pp. 1-12.

Kerns, C.D., & Ko, K. (2014). Managerial leadership competencies: A practice-oriented action role framework. *International Leadership Journal*, 6(1), 82-99.

Klein, H.J., Molloy, J.C., & Brinsfield. (2012). Reconceptualizing workplace commitment to redress a stretched construct: Revisiting assumptions and removing confounds. *Academy of Management Review*, 37(1), 130-151.

La Fasto, F., & Larson, C. (2001). *When teams work best: 6,000 team members and leaders tell what it takes to succeed*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Levasseur, R.E. (2013). People skills: Developing soft skills: A change management perspective. *Interfaces*, I 43(6), 566-571.

Liao, P.Y. (2015). The role of self-concept in the motivation linking proactive personality to employee work outcomes. *Applied Psychology – An International Review*, 64(2), 421-443.

Locke, E. A. (2007). The case for inductive theory building. *Journal of Management*, 33, 867–890.

Locke, E. A., & Cooper, C. L. (2000). Conclusion: The challenge of linking theory to practice. In C. L. Cooper & E. A. Locke (Eds.), Industrial and organizational psychology: *Linking theory with practice* (pp. 335–341). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Malhotra, S., Reus, T.H., Zhu, P.C., & Roelofsen, E.M. (2017). The acquisitive nature of extraverted CEOs. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1-39.

Manchester, J., Gray-Miceli, D.L., Metcalf, J.A., Paolini, C.A., Napier, A.H., Coogle, C.L., & Owens, M.G. (2014). Facilitating Lewin's change model with collaborative evaluation in promoting evidence based practices of health professionals. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 47, 82-90.

Marquardt, M.J. (2014). *Leading with questions: How leaders find the right solutions by knowing what to ask*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mathieu & Chen (2011). The etiology of the multi-level paradigm in management research. *Journal of Management*, 37, 610-641.

McCroskey, J.C., & Teven, J.J. (1999). Goodwill: A reexamination of the construct and its measurement. *Communication Monographs*, 66, 90-103.

Meyer, J.P. (2014). Employee commitment, motivation and engagement: Exploring the links. In M. Gagné (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of work engagement, motivation, and self-determination theory* (pp. 33-49). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Meyer, J.P., & Maltin, E.R. (2010). Employee commitment and well-being: A critical review, theoretical framework, and research agenda. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 77, 323-337.

Meyer, J.P., Gagné, M., & Parfyonova, N.M. (2010). Toward an evidence – based model of engagement: What we can learn from motivation and commitment research. In S. Albrecht (Ed.), *The handbook of employee engagement: Perspectives, issue, research and practice* (pp. 62-73). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Meyer, J.P., Becker, T.E., &Vandengerghe, C. (2004). Employee commitment and motivation: A conceptual analysis and integrative model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89, 991-1007.

Miller, R.L. (2015). How people judge the credibility of information: Lessons from evaluation from cognitive and information sciences. In S.I. Donaldson, C.A. Christie, & M.M. Mark (Eds.), *Credible and actionable evidence: The foundation for rigorous and influential evaluations* (2nd ed., pp. 39-64). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mintzberg, H. (1973). *The nature of managerial work*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Mintzberg, H. (2004). *Managers, not MBAs: A hard look at the soft practice of managing and management development*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Mintzberg, H. (2013). *Simply managing: What managers do – and can do better*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett Koehler.

Myers, S.A., & Martin, M.M. (2015). Understanding the source: Teacher credibility and aggressive communication traits. In T.P. Mottel, V.P. Richmind, & J.C. McCroskey (Eds.), *Rhetorical and relational perspectives* (pp. 67-88). New York, NY: Routledge.

Nadkarni, S., & Herrman, P.O.L. (2010). CEO personality, strategic flexibility, and firm performance: The case of the Indian business process outsourcing industry. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53, 1050-1073.

Phelps, K.C. (2014). "So much technology, so little talent"? Skills for harnessing technology for leadership outcomes. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 8(2), 51-56.

Rath, T. & Harter, J. (2010). *Wellbeing: The five essential elements*. New York, NY: Gallup Press.

Schaufeli, W.B. & Bakker, A.B. (2010). Defining and measuring work engagement: Bringing clarity to the concept. In A.B. Bakker & M.P. Leiter (Eds.), *Work engagement: A handbook of essential theory and research*, 10-24. New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Schiemann, W.A., & Morgan, B.S. (2006). Strategic surveys: Linking people to business strategy. In A. Kraut (Ed.), *Getting action from organizational surveys: New concepts, technologies, and applications*. (pp. 76-101). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Serrano, S.A. & Reichard, R.J. (2011). Leadership strategies for an engaged workforce. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 63(3). 176-189.

Shuck, B. & Herd, A.M. (2012). Employee engagement and leadership: Exploring the convergence of two frameworks and implications for leadership development. *Human Resource Development Review*, 11, 156-181.

Shuck, B. & Wollard, K. (2010). Employee engagement and HRD: A seminal review of the foundations. *Human Resource Development Review*, 9, 89-110.

Shuck, B., Rocco, T.S. & Albornoz, C.A. (2011). Exploring employee engagement from the employee perspective: Implications for HRD. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 35, 300-325.

Stam, D., Lord, R.G., Knippenberg, D., & Wisse, B. (2014). An image of who we might become: Vision communication, possible selves and vision pursuit. *Organization Science*, 25(4), 1172-1194.

Sternberg, R.J. (2013). The WICS model of leadership. In M.G. Rumsey (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of leadership* (pp. 47-61). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Te'eni, D. (2001). Review: A cognitive-affective model of organizational communication for designing IT. *MIS Quarterly*, 05(2), 251-312.

Tengblad, S. (2012) Managerial work at the top: Tracing changes in work practices and efforts towards theory development. In S. Tengblad (Ed.), *The work of managers: Toward a practice theory of management* (pp. 226-241). New York: NY: Oxford University Press.

Tett, R. P., Guterman, H. A., Bleier, A., & Murphy, P. J. (2000). Development and content validation of a "hyperdimensional" taxonomy of managerial competence. *Human Performance*, 13(3), 205–251.

Thomas, R.J. & Cheese, P. (2005). Leadership experience is the best teacher. *Strategy & Leadership*, 33, 24-29.

Tornau, K. & Frese, M. (2013). Construct clean-up in proactivity research: A meta-analysis on the nomological net of work-related proactivity concepts and their incremental validities. *Applied Psychology*, 62, 44-96.

Tuckey, M.R., Bakker, A.B., & Dollard, M.F. (2012). Empowering leaders to optimize working conditions for engagement: A multilevel study. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 17, 15-27.

Wagner, R. & Harter, J.K. (2006). *The 12 elements of great managing.* New York, NY: Gallup Press.

White, R.P., & Shullman, S.L. (2010). Acceptance of uncertainty as an indicator of effective leadership. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 62(2), 94-104.

Wiley, J.W. (2010). *Strategic employee surveys: Evidence-based guidelines for driving organizational success.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wiley, J.W., & Campbell, B.H. (2006). Using linkage research to drive high performance. In A. Kraut (Ed.), *Getting action from organizational surveys: New concepts, technologies and applications* (pp. 150-180). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Yu, H. (2010). Bring workplace assessment into business communication classrooms: A proposal to better prepare students for professional workplaces. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 73(1), 21-39.

Yukl, G. (2012). Effective leadership behavior: What we know and what questions need more attention. *Academy of Management Perspective*, 26(4), 66–85.

Zaccaro, S.J., Ely, K., & Nelson, J. (2008). Leadership processes and work motivation. In R. Kanfer, G. Chen & R.D. Pritchard (Eds.), *Work motivation: Past, present, and future* (pp. 319-360). New York: Routledge.

Zhang, Z., Wang, M., & Junqi, S. (2012). Leader – follower congruence in proactive personality and work outcomes: The mediating role of leader – member exchange. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(1), 111-130.