The Leadership LEAP: A Leadership Model

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This paper examines the ontological perspective of leadership and leadership education. Leadership, as proposed by Maxfield, Broomé, & Fisher (2015) in the LEAP leadership model is explored in the concepts of legitimacy, ethical and value-based behaviors, affect (emotional intelligence) and persistence. The need for changing leadership curricula and pedagogical paradigms are also explored.

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The LEADERSHIP LEAP

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Abstract

This paper examines the ontological perspective of leadership and leadership education. Leadership as proposed by Maxfield, Broomé, & Fisher (2015) in the LEAP leadership model is explored in the concepts of legitimacy, ethical and value-based behaviors, affect (emotional intelligence) and persistence. The need for changing leadership curricula and pedagogical paradigms are also explored.
The Leadership Leap

Over the last few decades, leadership training and leadership education have permeated business, politics, academia, and our national lexicon. Yet, it appears that as a nation we have little or no confidence in our leadership. Dr. Barbara Kellerman, in her book, *The End of Leadership* (2012) contends that “...while the leadership industry has been thriving growing and prospering beyond anyone’s early imaginings—leaders by and large are performing poorly, worse in many ways than before, miserably disappointing in any case to those among us who once believed the experts held the keys to the kingdom (p. xv).” Her premise is that because of technology such as the Internet, cell phones, social networking, etc., followers are finding ways to make traditional leaders, using traditional methods, less effective. In some ways we agree with this phenomenon. However, we also see something more serious and alarming with regard to contemporary leadership.

Over the last 20 years or so, we have observed society becoming obsessed with instant gratification and glamour. Consequently, leaders have gravitated toward seeking popularity and/or fame as opposed to providing character and substantive leadership. Leaders have used hollow platitudes of hope and change to gain favor with followers, but have not been able to deliver leaving their followers disenchanted, if not jaded.

The LEAP model of leadership (Maxfield, Broomé, & Fisher, 2015) identifies four critical components of leadership. Good leaders are: 1) Legitimate—a leader has legitimate power, as well as authentic knowledge, skill and ability developed
through his or her work and attention to detail; 2) Ethical—a good leader has strong character, strong values, and makes ethical decisions when confronted with choices and/or dilemmas; 3) Affective—a good leader has the ability to instill emotion and passion in others (emotional intelligence); and, 4) Persistent—a good leader does not give up when times are tough or there is resistance to a righteous idea or plan. In this paper, we explore the importance of leader affect as reported by organizational leaders.

**Ontology--Becoming or Being a Leader**

Scholarly work on leadership, in a relative sense, is lacking. We feel that the Newtonian approach to the study of leadership has been one of the reasons. What we mean by this is researcher/scholars, using the scientific method, have inferred that if leadership can be broken down to its most basic unit or atomized, it can then be rebuilt it in a step-by-step method; hence, creating a prescription for building great leaders. Yet, because we are dealing with the dynamics of being human, leadership is a *subjective*, not an objective experience.

We believe leadership research and scholarship should center on the analysis of the relationship between the observed and the observer. It is easy to study, survey, quantify, and statistically analyze formative and summative results of various leadership strategies to find what works. However, it does not tell us how it works; or how one leader is able to get results that another leader does not, while using the same strategies. Applying strategies or theories is only part of the leadership equation.

Our modern world operates largely on the background of scientific and
technological advancement. Martin C. Dillon (1998) posits the underlying goal of science evolved from seeking truth to seeking certainty. Many people do not see these goals as different things. However, seeking certainty through science means that all accepted knowledge that is posited as “scientific” is based on empirical proof, or in other words something that can be seen or based on physical evidence and mathematically measured.

The principal founder of behavioral science, James Watson (1913) declared the scientific study of psychology (and by extension, sociology and other social sciences) as an empirical science based on behavior and not consciousness. In other words, psychology was no longer research on the mind directly but a study of human behavior that would provide “the knowledgeable” with the ability to predict and control human behavior. From this point, psychology and the social sciences based their values on the principles of the natural sciences and thereby regarded human beings as subjects or things under study and opened up a horizon for a whole new “means to ends” project. Further, the social science community became the authority for society’s basis for public policy and secular culture. In other words, our perspectives and values pertaining to humanity became dominated by the ethos of scientific reduction and atomism, which either willingly or incidentally scrubbed meaning from the discourse about human existence.

For many decades, if not centuries, scientific inquiry has been developed around mechanistic or a Newtonian physics model. Newtonian physics takes a somewhat deterministic or a linear view of cause and effect. In other words, if one looks at a situation, (we will call it situation C) one should then be able to determine
the evolution of situation C by looking backward to situation B. Hence, situation B was a result of situation A. The logical conclusion then, is that if one knows situations A, B, and C, one can reasonably predict the results of situation D and so on. We have heard it explained in a more graphic description that might clarify what this means.

Suppose one is wearing a wristwatch. If one were to take the watch off of the wrist and begin to disassemble it one piece at a time, being careful to lay each piece removed (in order of its removal) in a straight line on a table, theoretically, once the watch is completely taken apart to its individual components, one should be able to reassemble it. Hence, starting with the last piece disassembled, if one reassembles the watch in the reverse order, one will have a working wristwatch once again. Then, with new parts one will be able to duplicate the process and make other working watches.

In large measure, this is how the study of leadership has been undertaken and why there are so many differing theories. Researchers have identified successful leaders and tried to break down the individual components (traits, attributes, characteristics, etc.) to develop a strategy or recipe for creating other successful leaders. This approach is understandable because scientific inquiry is a strategy of trying to break things down to the smallest components in order to understand, quantify and validate hypotheses/theories. But, is this the best method for studying the dynamics of human interaction?

Max van Manen (1990) argued that the prescribed method for human science, in contrast to natural science involves description, interpretations, and self-
reflective or critical analysis. In other words, we define and explain nature, but we must understand human life. This assertion seems to suggest strategies that expand beyond traditional approaches.

As stated above, our viewpoint on leadership is a bit different and is based on a systems approach rather than a deterministic view. A systems approach does not define or explain phenomena in concrete terms like the linear/deterministic view attempts. Rather, the systems view infers a reality based on the analysis of the relationship between the observed and the observer. Einstein once stated: “A perfection of means, and a confusion of aims, seems to be our main problem.” In other words, we have become obsessed with the process (means) and have lost sight of the vision (ends).

This concept seems to fit the social constructivists’ view of knowledge and fits our philosophy as well. Constructivism basically asserts that learning is a process of constructing meaning from one’s experience. The constructivist’s view posits that knowledge is constructed through conversations, experiences, perceptions, or activities within one’s environment, or in other words socially sharing problems or tasks. A constructivist’s view also holds that we cannot prove what we believe about our world and everything must be viewed in its context; systems are built organically and interact dynamically in varying and changing contexts.

Leadership epistemologies are the consideration of knowing: when knowledge is valid and accepted as truth. Ontology, the consideration of being or what is, what exists, or what it means to be is often discounted as metaphysical and
therefore unscientific or meaningless (Packer and Goicoechea, 2000). However, if leadership is a subjective experience as we posit, then the phenomenon of “becoming or being” is meaningful and vital to the learning and growth of leaders.

**Leadership Defined**

Before we discuss our LEAP model of leadership in more detail, which is a slightly different approach to developing leaders, we feel it advantageous to give our definition of leadership. We posit that leadership is a process and a state where a person influences a group and the group agrees to the influence of the individual in order to reach a desired ideal or vision. Notice the distinction from most definitions – the group agrees to the influence of the individual in order to reach a desired ideal or vision. We feel this an important concept to look at and one of the reasons why there is a lack of trust or support for leaders today. In a general sense, our leaders have taken a narcissistic approach to leadership, forgetting that the followers have to agree to their leadership. While the leader may enjoy a period of power with this view, their influence wanes very quickly and their leadership tenure is short-lived.

Therefore, leadership is holistic, not prescriptive. This may be where people have gone wrong in their thinking. As Dr. Kellerman (2012) asserts in her book, leadership education is somewhat nascent and based on the belief that anyone can become a leader if they take a few classes and apply a few principles. But as she points out, this does not seem to be necessarily true.

Leadership and management require different strategies and competencies contingent upon the situations and their demands. The question is, what competencies are needed for catastrophic or disaster crises? The term crisis denotes
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events that a) threaten high priority values of people, organizations, or communities, b) exist in time pressures, and c) is unexpected. This existential event(s) brings to bear good leadership or exacerbates the effects of poor leadership. It is for this reason a deeper look at leadership is needed.

First of all, what is the main function of management? If one really breaks it down to the most basic level, management is the process of controlling and compressing (to the best of one's ability) the events of one's environment in order to ensure efficiency and desired outcomes. In other words, it focuses on the processes or means by which outcomes are reached. It seeks to eliminate chaos or to tone-down any disruptive noise, which may affect the processes and ultimately the outcome (or so that is the implied reason). However, doesn’t that tend to make the focus on means and processes? Isn’t that why there are policies and strict procedures for job performance? In fact, aren’t we expected to be busy at all times so that our process and productivity can be measured? Aren’t we most often compensated for our efficiency and output?

Leadership on the other hand is expansive and nurturing. Leaders try not to be bound by firm policies, rules, and procedures because they may inhibit the ability to move toward a vision. Leadership’s main role is to keep the vision (end) as the focus and foster a sense of community in seeking the vision.

Based on the above presentation, there is a distinction we offer. Management, while an important function in any operation, is very different from leadership. We posit that management is the controlling activities of systems and things; leadership is the influence of relationships among people. In other words, we
manage things, but we lead people. Since people are the real resource for getting things accomplished, we feel the need to focus more on leadership, particularly in the context of crises events.

Management and organizational rules do not bring worlds together. Because worlds are constituted of people, groups of people look for leaders in whom they can trust, follow, and will provide direction for the group. People identify with their leaders, and groups iconize such figures to represent their paradigms and intended actions. Leadership therefore, is essentially attached to meaning through vision, mission, principle, justice, duty, care, love, providence, expertise, and other values through which human beings transcend our biological limitations.

The LEAP Model

In light of the above information, we feel it relevant here to discuss a relatively new leadership model (Maxfield, Broomé, & Fisher, 2015). This model, designated by the acronym L-E-A-P, provides a guide for developing and assessing effective leadership and can be an effective tool in crisis leadership (or for that matter, any other discipline). We want to state up front, this is a model of leadership and not a leadership theory as such.

The LEAP model is comprised of four applied leader traits or characteristics. A leader is: (1) Legitimate – a leader has legitimate (authentic) power, knowledge, skill and ability developed through his or her work, experience, education, and attention to detail; (2) Ethical—a good leader has strong character, strong values, and makes ethical decisions when confronted with choices and/or dilemmas; (3) Affective – a good leader has the ability to instill, trust, confidence, emotion, passion,
and create vision with others; and, (4) Persistent – a good leader does not give up when times are tough or there is resistance to a righteous idea or plan, but rather shows determination in achieving goals and objectives.

**Legitimate**

Legitimacy is a social dynamic, which means that it is not a *thing* but a *relation* within a group of people. Importantly, each person’s legitimacy requires at least one other to legitimize him or her in a social role. In fact, it is questionable as to whether or not an individual has any role at all, if there were no ‘others’ for whom to play such roles. Roles are sometimes more concretely defined or else more situational in nature. Nonetheless, roles are legitimized by the others and ultimately are not an individual effort. In short, his or her followers legitimize the leader and the followers acquiesce to the leader’s power/influence. There is a relation between leaders and followers that may not be tangible, but is nonetheless a reality for all of those within the relating group.

Leadership and management are two sides of the same coin and can be seen logically producing social outcomes. Søren Kierkegaard (??) describes two antitheses of *possibility* and *necessity* that become synthesized in freedom. Possibility is the horizon of human potential and when used in this frame, we see that leadership is a cooperative intention of the group toward a goal or the horizon. On the other hand, management can be seen as the necessity or limitations on the group. Such limitations in organization can be economical, behavioral, communicative, etc. In other words, the rules, policies, and regulations in an organization are the confines of human interaction that make it predictable, sensible
and under control. Seen this way, it logically follows that a legitimate leader must have both expansive and creative qualities, as well as, practical and mechanical sensibilities. The synergy of these qualities allows for a leader who is forward thinking, but can keep the group’s motion on a meaningful and powerful path toward change.

One of the attributes of a legitimate leader is the desire and ability to mentor. Mentoring followers is probably one of the most desirable functions of a leader; but mentoring is a little different than ‘teaching.’ A legitimate leader recognizes that giving followers opportunities for growth and allowing them to develop those opportunities into successes or failures (without too much direction other than to prevent catastrophic results) creates future, legitimate leaders.

A legitimate leader recognizes the value of success and failure. Failure, if it is not negligent or overly malignant to the group is a natural process of legitimization. The key is how one uses experience to become a legitimate leader in the eyes of others. Hence, mentoring and being mentored adds to legitimacy.

**Ethical**

Ethical leaders are in great demand. Unfortunately, we have never been a morally perfect people, nor have we always honored the moral exemplar. However, it appears that this honor for the exemplar is more prominent in history than in the present. David K. Hart (?) asserts that the nation began to lose touch with its exemplars after World War II. Due to the rise of the big, complex organizations, individual accomplishment faded in with the cloudy background of collective behavior (group behavior). By the 1980s it appeared as though the moral exemplars
had become extinct. Moral exemplars are not non-existent. Arguably, we as a society have lost the driving desire to recognize and appreciate them when they are identified.

It is within Dr. Hart’s assertion we find an interesting paradox of today’s society. Good leaders act righteously. However, this goes much beyond making choices based on a code of conduct or a code of ethics. It is actually a consistent demonstration of moral character; leaders act rightly in most, if not all they do.

So, what are the qualities of the ethical leader? Dr. Hart provides a great blueprint for the moral exemplar. He offers that the leader must be of good moral character, must be a constant exemplar; it is not a sometime thing. Second, the exemplar must not be compelled. He or she must be free to act as he or she intends. Third, the leader must be relatively faultless; he or she need not be perfect, but must continually strive for virtue. Finally, the actions of the leader must produce benefit or something good, even in failure; a leader’s actions must never be pointless.

The attributes Dr. Hart has posited are timeless; they are not bounded by currency or locale. These characteristics have and will continue to be qualities of moral and ethical relevance. While modern moral issues may be different from past issues, these virtues and principles have, and can be anticipated to stand the test of time.

**Affective**

The ability to affect, or to be ‘affective,’ is very important in leadership. In many ways, it is the most recognizable attribute or characteristic of leadership. Yet, what does it really mean to affect and how can one recognize a truly affective leader.
In the opinion of many, a leader who affects is one who demonstrates charisma. Who does not want to be around a person who is charismatic? Unfortunately, charisma alone is not a good indicator of leadership and many cases exist where people have put their trust in a charismatic person, only to be led to harm or destruction.

We are born into this world as individuals; individuals with unique talents, abilities, personalities, weaknesses and strengths. Most of what we do in life is to enhance ourselves individually. Yet, we as human beings are also very social. We seek to be accepted and interact with others. We are not only born with the ability to reason, we are also born with emotions and therefore are dynamic and diverse in our needs and desires. A leader who has the ability to “affect” has the power to create and transcend. We seek a leader with the ability to affect us and help us to feel accepted and secure, while at the same time helping us to effectively achieve and grow.

Effective vs. Affective

Unfortunately, due to the desire to make the most profit or benefit at the least amount of cost, there is dominant pressure to be as effective as can be. From a management perspective, effectiveness is very important and helps keep things working well. It is by no means a bad thing. Yet, effect without affect soon crumbles. Let’s look at the difference between these two concepts.

*Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary* defines *effect* as: *Anything brought about by a cause; a result.* With this in mind, we can deduce that to be effective is to bring about a desired result. Of course, this is a very important concept in individual lives
as well as organizations. Everyone wants to bring about desired results, especially when one is implementing changes, growth, or seeking to maintain current situations. When something is working well and bring desired results, we say that it is effective.

On the other hand, *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* defines *affect* as: *Influence, to stir the emotions of; to move.* Like with *effect*, we can also deduce that to be affective is to stir up one’s emotion or provide a means for personal motivation to achieve desired results. While there appears to be subtle difference in the definitions, we believe the difference is much greater.

One of the prominent experts on leadership, Peter Drucker has provided some insight with his assertion *that management is doing a thing right, while leadership is doing the right thing.* While this is somewhat nebulous or leaves a lot of room for interpretation, we feel it helps define what being affective means.

As we presented earlier, Van Manen (1990) asserted that human science, in contrast to natural science, involves description, interpretations, and self-reflective or critical analysis; we define nature, but we must understand human life.

Leadership involves human will and performance. We can quantify the results of leadership, but we will always have difficulty trying to define or quantify the process of leadership because it involves human interaction. Why? The answer is quite obvious; no two human beings are exactly alike. What works for one may not necessarily work for an other. Also, what works in one situation may not work in a different situation. So how is it that we have been able to work together at all to achieve what we have? We believe the answer lies in the concept of affectiveness.
Vision

So, what is a vision? The word comes from the Latin *videre*, “to see.” What will the future look like? What do I see when I picture success? Vision provides a clear sense of purpose for an individual, group, or organization and provides a clear sense of future appearance (what the individual, group, or organization will look like or be) once the vision is realized.

When a group shares a leader’s vision, the group (individually and collectively) tends to become empowered. Empowerment provides individuals with the capacity to believe, think, and act from a position of strength. The key element of empowerment is relationships, not accomplishments; relationships are more important. An empowered person feels:

- Important, legitimate and significant;
- That his or her contribution and competence really matter;
- That his or her work is meaningful, exciting and challenging;
- That he or she has a sense of belonging to the group or organization.

A leader with a relevant vision can affect followers and create a pathway for individual and group success. In other words, an affective leader has his nose to the wind and his eyes on the horizon seeking to make things in the future more effective and efficient through human interaction and relationships.

*Inter-personal Skills and Communication*

Another attribute of the affective leader is his or her inter-personal skills and ability to communicate. In fact, we believe this is the major component or attribute
that determines charisma. Someone who can make others feel as though they are the only ones in the room has a great skill. But, good communication is more than expressing one’s vision and speaking with clarity. While these are definitely important and cannot be overlooked, communication is much, much more. As we have previously expressed, human relationships are more important than achievement or production for long-term success. Therefore, knowing and demonstrating how to interact and communicate with individuals is extremely important. Even when one is speaking to a group, communication should be delivered as though speaking to an individual.

How can one become a better communicator – one who can affect others? The key is not in becoming more fluent and polished in one’s speech (which is also important), but in becoming a better listener. An important thing to remember is that when one listens to others, one does not have to take on the other person’s problems or try to solve them; this is a mistake that can truly impede communication.

From a leadership perspective, the power of this principle comes from the fact that as you truly listen and validate the concerns and emotions of your followers, the followers then feel empowered to solve their own problems and are more willing to offer their time, talents, and abilities to the vision or mission of the group, whether in business, community, or family.

We would submit that listening involves four basic steps: (1) Listen – listen to what is being verbalized; listen to the emotions of the other person (anger, frustration, sadness, joy, etc.); (2) Understand – feel what he/she is feeling,
understand what his/her needs are and why he/she is telling you these things; (3) Suspend all judgment – don’t put your values or experiences in his/her situation, and, (4) Do not offer advice – most people already know how to solve their issues and are communicating for validation. If one offers advice and it is not what the person is planning, most likely he or she will dismiss it anyway. If the person accepts the advice and it does not work out successfully, then he or she will blame the advice giver. The best thing one can do is ask clarifying questions to assist the person in becoming clearer in his or her own strategy or approach (Lundberg and Lundberg, 1995).

If one is successful in incorporating these steps into communication, one will be much more successful as a leader, because followers will have confidence in the leader and will be empowered to accomplish more than they believe can. Unfortunately, communicating as we have outlined in this chapter is not usually a natural thing. Therefore, it will take practice and effort to make listening and communicating more natural. Yet, the practice and effort in making this a part of natural communication will be well worthwhile. In many respects, this will help one to affect people in a positive way. One should be able to communicate a vision(s) in ways that will make others want to come along and be part of an exciting opportunity. This allows connection with others and empowers them to give their best efforts to become valuable members of a team – whether that team is at work or family. A well-developed person (leader), whether as a teacher, boss, co-worker, or parent is more affective. So, if one wants to be more successful at work or in
relationships, learn how to communicate and practice it always. The results speak for themselves.

**Persistent**

Much of what it takes to lead one’s self and others is the ability to persist. An important aspect of persistence is the understanding that physical and/or political conditions can bring plans and actions to a halt. However, persistence is pursuing the desired outcomes in spite of perceived conditions and knowing only those things that are beyond our control or influence should cause us difficulty. Moreover, the more one knows about conditions in relation to his or her limits, the more influence he or she will have to adjust one’s path along the way.

**Staying the Course**

Human beings have a paradoxical nature that has its nexus resting on anxiety. The anxiety we experience is grounded in the awareness of our own mortality. In other words, it is death anxiety that ultimately underlies our day-to-day worries, whether situational or general. We understand that the old saying, “there are two things people have to do, die and pay taxes,” is really only literally true for the first and not the second.

Persistence in a challenging situation or condition means that we have to manage ourselves in the interaction with our circumstances. All too often, we think of ‘fighting the challenge.’ The metaphor of a physical fight or war with our adversity can add psychological strain to the experience. Persistence and tenacity are not necessarily forcing through a barrier, but rather navigating through a field to reach
a goal/solution, while also understanding that persistence is a process and only can be understood with respect to a desired outcome.

**Focus**

Susan Jackson and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi assert that the relationship between a task’s difficulty and the performer’s competency is a ratio when in adequate balance provides an experience of absorption. In other words, this is when the subconscious takes over so the mind and body function in total harmony. People will not experience this flow when the task is too easy relative to their abilities, or when the task gets too difficult for their skill-sets. Therefore, we can see this generally in an individual’s sense of self within the context of their situation. The principle applies whether it is an intellectual, physical, or spiritual challenge. When the task seems too big for the person, he or she will tend to find it overwhelming. When the task seems too small he or she will take it for granted. When tasks are small, we can string them together to synthesize a larger task and find much more appreciation for its completion. In a sense, what we are proposing here is that in order to persist in a project or through a challenge without getting overwhelmed, bored and/or losing focus, we have to mentally and emotionally ‘size’ the experience to our capabilities. This means we either have to expand or constrict our worlds into a manageable relation in order to stay motivated and capable of meeting the task.

Within the journey of persistence, one must remain focused on solving the various problems arising rather than fixating on the problems themselves. Moreover, the hyper-vigilance for problem detection and identification can be a drain on mental and emotional resources. Jason Selk calls the approach *relentless*
solution focus that successful people must practice to create solutions to the problems rather than being problem-focused. First of all, there are always challenges and problems that need to be navigated, but it is the spaces in-between that are pathways to the clearings and destination.

When one is motivated by the outcome, without getting too focused on it, and is relentlessly solution-oriented rather than problem fixated, he or she can maneuver through the barriers, obstacles, or uphill parts of the journey.

The synthesis therefore, is making the lived-world situation manageable in size by reducing it to its process; by remaining focused on solutions to each obstacle in an open way that is flexible and creative enough to innovate some solutions to the novel challenges; and, have the will to keep going toward the desired outcome until stopped by insurmountable conditions. That means, one doesn’t quit but is stopped by only things beyond his or her control. One simply carries on with one choice, one action, and minding only those that are relevant to the process of the moment.

Summary

So where do we go from here? As we have pondered this for several years, one thing has become apparent to us: Leadership curriculum and scholarly activity need to undergo a paradigmatic shift. As we stated earlier, leadership is not prescriptive, nor is it necessarily objective. We cannot send people to a class and present them with theories and strategies, which they can then attempt to apply in the real world. Leadership is a social, human science. We believe it to be somewhat counter-productive to atomize or break leadership down to its smallest components so that they can then be taught mechanically in leadership courses. Epistemology
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(what is known, theories, etc.) is important. However, the lived experience and human dynamic (ontology) is where true leadership flourishes.

Secondly, we believe a clearer distinction (separation) between leadership and management needs to be defined, studied, and put into curriculum. The model of director/teacher as leader has been used for years. Yet with newer technology and access to information, this model has apparently become less effective. While management and leadership have a symbiotic relationship, they are distinct entities and should be studied separately before expecting them to be magically conjoined. We think that the model of the teacher/student of the past has driven our acceptance of the leader/manager to be blended. If one is to look at business school curriculum at most universities, leadership is usually taught right alongside of management—often in the same course. It appears to be the assumption that when one rises to a position of management, that one is also a leader.

We believe that at the least, the curriculum at our universities should shift from teaching components of leadership theory to preparing leaders who have extensive work in personal development and have been given real-world experience in becoming leaders. We also believe that in addition to the current epistemological or theoretical aspects of leadership, the LEAP model is an effective guide for development of the human factors side of leadership curriculum.

To support our assertion, an interesting article was written by Erhard, Jensen, and Granger (2012) offer:

The sole objective of our ontological approach to creating leaders is to leave students actually being leaders and exercising leadership effectively as their
natural self-expression. By ‘natural self-expression’ we mean a way of being and acting in any leadership situation that is a spontaneous and intuitive effective response to what one is dealing with.

In creating leaders we employ the ontological discipline (from the Latin ontologia ‘science of being,’ see Heidegger (1927)). The ontological model of leader and leadership opens up and reveals the actual nature of being when one is being a leader and opens up and reveals the source of one’s actions when exercising leadership.

One interesting assertion they also make in this article points to what we have been saying throughout this book. They state:

“Yet, students being able to speak cogently about leader and leadership, and even with the ability to explain the style or characteristic, the principles and actions, and so forth that made or would have made this or that leader effective in this or that case, does not reliably leave students being leaders as their natural self-expression.”

In other words, learning the theories and components of leadership (epistemology), do not make one an effective leader. One must become or live the role of leader (ontology). For the most part current curriculum does not allow for that lived experience. We feel this is what is needed, especially with regard to our nation’s security.

While it is obvious that formal education is not necessary to become a good leader or guarantee good leadership, it is in academia that most inroads or changes are researched and introduced. This is why we feel so strongly that a shift in
paradigms be undertaken and new qualitative scholarly work done – we need to understand the human experience of leadership, not just the mechanisms or prescriptions of human interaction. As we come to understand more about that human experience, we will be better able to develop curriculum and programs to develop better people, who will then use their experience and development to become natural leaders – whether at home, in the community, in business or in politics.

Therefore, we submit that the LEAP model is a good basis for which to begin development of leadership curriculum and experience. If one works to have **Legitimacy** – through authentic knowledge and experience –, one will be better prepared to assume a leadership role.

**Ethical** and value-based performance is vital to good leadership. Yet, this is not something that can be gleaned from reading books or learning ethical theories – it must be lived. In short, we feel very strongly that curriculum be developed that gives the student opportunities to use and reflect upon value-based and ethical decision-making. Only when one has explored and experienced in advance can one be prepared to do the right thing in future situations. Curriculum that allows for this is vital to the success of tomorrow’s leaders and our continued lifestyle. We need to prepare leaders to do the right thing, not the popular thing.

**Affective** leadership is vital. We need to develop leaders who not only can create a vision and effectively communicate that vision to others, but who can also facilitate the experience of others as being integral in the fulfillment of that vision. We need to distinguish more between management and leadership, teaching both as
separate and distinct components, because both are vital to success but not necessarily equal or desirable in all situations.

_Persistence_ in leadership is irreplaceable. Nothing would ever be accomplished if at the first hint of resistance or the first barrier to a vision the leader gives up. Learning how to regroup and to move in parallel directions to accomplish a goal or preferred vision is a key to success. We need to teach future leaders how to think critically, to find solutions to problems or roadblocks, and to become intransigent in seeking the righteous cause. Presenting future leaders with dilemmas and helping them to find innovative ways to succeed through reflection and experience will achieve this.

The LEAP model was developed for everyone. By following the principles of this model, we believe everyone can enhance their personal experiences, their family life, and life in the community. The better we develop members of our society, the greater our successes. With more quality leadership, we will raise the quality of living. We can train managers, but we must _develop_ leaders!
References


