

# Leadership Development for the Postindustrial, Postmodern Information Age

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*The requirements for leadership change in contemporary organizations have changed significantly in the past several decades. This article traces the evolution of leadership research in the 20th century and examines the relationship between emerging theory and changes in the organizational structure, work processes and procedures, and talent pools required for organizations to be successful in the postindustrial, postmodern, and information age. Implications for future leadership theory and leadership development are also discussed.*

## New Challenges for Developing Leadership

An alumnus of a highly selective and prestigious university related an apocryphal story to me recently that stimulated my thinking about people who get thrust into or choose to take on leadership roles and what motivates them to develop their leadership skills. As the story was related, this university's woeful basketball team was getting trounced by a much more athletic and skillful team from a less academically challenging school. The fans from the winning team jeered and belittled the uncompetitive team and their fans. After enduring the derisive catcalls for a few minutes, students from the losing university rallied and organized a counterattack, chanting

Hey, hey, hee, hee  
In five years, you'll be working for me!

This strategy quickly quieted the jeering from their opponents as the reality set in that the short-term loss of this inconsequential basketball game would be greatly overshadowed by the long-term victory of the players and fans from the more prestigious university. Clearly, it was more likely that these stu-

dents would become the bosses and leaders of tomorrow because of the better quality of the education (knowledge, skills, and abilities) and their demonstrated record of achievement in a highly competitive environment.

This story illustrates a trend that I have noticed in recent years as a consulting psychologist tasked with developing leaders for contemporary global organizations. Many employees selected for future leadership roles today would seem unlikely candidates for success. Many are selected primarily for their technical rather than their interpersonal or people leadership skills. Sometimes the butt of jokes, ignored, and marginalized during their education, these unlikely leaders just

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a few years before are now identified as “high potentials” to be groomed to lead large organizations in the future.

The elevation of “high-tech/low-touch” individuals to leadership roles occurs for a number of reasons: (a) They are thought leaders with a vision that the organization wants to support; (b) their technical skills are central to the mission of the organization they will lead; (c) they are rewarded for their achievements and efforts; (d) they are examples to others that technical skills and achievement will be recognized and rewarded; and (e) their promotion will keep them from leaving the organization. Notice that none of these reasons is related to the person’s potential or actual people leadership achievements. While organizations may be aware of this irony, they consider technical knowledge, skills, and abilities to be of primary importance. In order to pick up the necessary people management and leadership skills, the nascent “hi-po” supervisors and managers are enrolled in management training, leadership development, and coaching programs.

This approach to selecting and developing future leaders is a significant shift from the promotion practices in previous eras when hierarchical and bureaucratic organizations were more the norm. Those organizations worked best with a command and control culture (Schneider, 1999) and a leadership style where status, authority, and skillful use of contingent reward could be used to ensure compliance, if not enthusiastic cooperation.

Prior to the mid 1950s, the following traits and abilities were identified as characteristic of those chosen for leadership roles (Bass, 1990, p. 76):

1. Capacity—intelligence, alertness, verbal facility, originality, and judgment;
2. Achievement—scholarship, knowledge, and athletic accomplishment;
3. Responsibility—dependability, initiative, persistence, aggressiveness, self-confidence, and the desire to excel;
4. Participation—activity, sociability, co-

operation, adaptability, and humor; and

5. Status—socioeconomic position and popularity.

Many of the individuals who are now being identified as having high potential for future leadership in technology-driven and nonbureaucratic organizations would not fit the above profile. Many are introverted and intellectual, from backgrounds formerly considered to be lower status (e.g., working-class, non-Caucasian, female), have not been socially dominant (e.g., not presidents of student councils, fraternities, or sororities), lack leadership presence (e.g., poise, appearance, and strong interpersonal skills), and are organizational mavericks who buck authority and like to “draw outside of the lines.” Even traditional command and control organizations, such as the military, are emphasizing technical as well as command skills. Most degrees granted from our military academies are in engineering, reflecting shifts in the roles and responsibilities of contemporary military leaders.

With the rapid transformation of the global economy from an industrial/manufacturing base to a postindustrial and information base, a reexamination of our models for leadership and, consequently, leadership development is in order. These observations provide the impetus for this special issue. As Winum (2003) notes in his article in this issue, one of the advantages that consulting psychologists possess is the ability to leverage the science of human behavior. In doing so, consulting psychologists need to be mindful of the changing organizational requirements so that we don’t use outdated models and methodologies as we consult to our client organizations.

## **The Evolution of Leadership Theory**

### ***Mission-Based Definitions of Leadership***

Early definitions viewed leadership in terms of group change, activity, and process

(Bass, 1990, p. 11). For instance, Blackmar (1911) viewed leadership as the “centralization of effort in one person as the expression of the power of all” (cited in Bass, 1990, p. 11). Redl (1942) considered a leader to be a central or focal person who integrates the group. Other definitions emphasized the ability to induce compliance (Munson, 1921) or as the exercise of influence (Cartwright, 1965; Stogdill, 1950; Tead, 1935). Some influential theorists, such as Raven and French (1958), went further in identifying power as the basis for leadership. Smith (1948) defined leadership as the ability to control the interaction process. From a general systems perspective, Katz and Kahn (1978) considered “the essence of organizational leadership to be the influential increment over and above the mechanical compliance with routine directions of the organization” (p. 528).

These kinds of definitions would seem to have limited appeal to supervisors and managers or applicability for many contemporary organizations. Definitions that stress leadership as process or as incremental impact beyond “mechanical compliance with routine directives” seem too abstract and of limited utility for new managers. Those definitions that stress influence, power, and control, on the other hand go against the grain for many managers, sounding too political or Machiavellian (Machiavelli, 1513/1962).

Definitions that include the impact of leadership on mission accomplishment have a much better chance of engaging the motivation of many managers who do not see influencing, motivating, inspiring, or controlling people as an end itself. For Davis (1942), leadership was “the principal dynamic force that motivates and coordinates the organization in the accomplishment of its objectives” (cited in Bass, 1990, p. 11). More recently Bass (1985), Bennis (1983), Burns (1978), and Tichy and Devanna (1986) defined leadership as a transformative process that creates visions of a future state for the organization and articulates ways for the followers to accomplish this goal.

In a recent conference presentation, Colin Powell (2000) provided a simple yet elegant definition that combines the essential elements of a number of the above definitions. Paraphrasing Powell, leadership is the ability to motivate and inspire people to accomplish a significant mission. Similar to Katz and Kahn’s (1978) definition, Powell sees leadership as having an incremental effect beyond transactional management. Managers efficiently use the current goals, structures, processes, and reward power to get routine things done. It takes leadership, in addition to good management, to motivate and inspire people when transformation of goals, structures, processes, and incentives is required to accomplish significant “stretch goals.”

### ***Traits, Competencies, and Situation Determinants of Leadership Potential***

Up until the early 1950s, the literature on leadership focused on three factors: the personal traits of leaders, specific competencies of leaders, and the situations requiring leadership. The search for the universal leadership traits possessed by “great men” (Carlyle, 1841) proved futile. By 1950, comprehensive reviews of the research on leadership (Bird, 1940; Jenkins, 1947; Stogdill, 1950) concluded that traits alone could not be used to reliably predict who would become leaders.

More recent meta-analytic reviews have not been so pessimistic, identifying some factors that seem to be related to successful leadership. For instance, meta-analyses by Cornwell (1983) and Lord, DeVader, and Alliger (1986) revealed a true mean correlation between general intelligence and being perceived as a leader of .50 across situations. Although other findings weren’t as dramatic, Bass (1990, pp. 86–88) concluded in his review of the literature that enough evidence existed to link the following cognitive and personality traits to successful leadership:

activity level, initiative, assertiveness, aggressiveness, competitiveness, dominance, ascendance, emotional balance, tolerance for stress, self-control, self-efficacy, enthusiasm, and extroversion.

The identification of behavioral leadership competencies has proven to be an important advance in both the prediction and development of leadership. First, it is easier to identify and evaluate what leaders actually do (their observable behavior) than personality traits, which inevitably involve some definitional problems. By developing behavioral anchors, bosses, colleagues, subordinates, customers, and the individuals themselves can evaluate the degree of competence displayed (Janz, Hellervik, & Gilmore, 1986).

Several reviews of the literature have concluded that there is solid evidence that how the leader carries out the leadership role is important (Bass, 1990, Howell & Dipboye, 1986). In one meta-analytic study (Day & Lord, 1988), differences in executive leadership behavior accounted for 45% of organizational performance. Based on a comprehensive review of the literature and internal research, Personnel Decisions International (2002) proposed the following meta-model for executive competencies: seasoned judgment, financial acumen, driving execution, inspiring and empowering, building organizational relationships, fostering open dialogue, drive for stakeholder success, adaptability, career and self-direction, attracting and developing talent, influencing and negotiating, global perspective, visionary thinking, shaping strategy, fostering teamwork, driving continuous improvement, aligning the organization, and cross-functional capability. It has not been possible, however, to identify the one ideal set of leadership competencies or leadership style that would lead to effective outcomes in a wide variety of situations (Bass, 1990; Chemers, 1997; Howell & Dipboye, 1986).

Some have proposed the radical notion that the situation rather than leadership traits

or behaviors is much more important in predicting who will emerge as the most effective leader. In a mirror image of the "great man" theory, Hegel (1830/1971) proposed that the great leader was actually a result of time, place, and circumstance. The great man was really that person who best met the needs of the time. Person (1928) presented a theory of leadership that was almost entirely situationally based. The situation determines the personal traits and competencies required in a leader. In addition, the leadership competencies of the selected leader are themselves the result of personal development attained in prior leadership roles. Person's model foreshadows the emphasis decades later on developmental assignments to develop leadership skills.

Winston Churchill is an example of a leader whose fortunes as a politician ebbed and flowed with the fit between the needs of his country, his traits, and the skills he had learned in prior leadership roles. He was first elected to Parliament 36 years before becoming prime minister in the early years of World War II. The Conservative Party he led was subsequently defeated within months following the end of the war. He led Great Britain again from 1951–1955, the height of the cold war with Russia. His preparation for his leadership during two "wars" included graduation from the Sandhurst Military College and appointments as first Lord of the Admiralty and Minister of Munition during World War I.

Most leadership theorists, however, have used situational characteristics as moderator variables. Research on the relationship of the situation and leadership has largely focused on characteristics of required tasks and of the people who are led ("followers"). This organization of situational characteristics is consistent with the fact that psychologists studying groups and organizations have consistently noted task and people main effects in their research (Bales & Slater, 1955; Katz & Kahn, 1978).

## **Human Relations and Human Potential Approaches to Leadership**

Deeply affected by World War II and the impact of authoritarianism and fascism on individuals and societies, researchers and practitioners inspired by Kurt Lewin (1947) and his followers (Lewin & Lippitt, 1938) focused as much on human potential as on the control and coordination of effort, the more traditional management focus. McGregor (1960) challenged the assumption that people were inherently passive, unmotivated, and lacking in internal direction or motivation (theory X) and, therefore, needed to be externally motivated. Instead, he proposed a more humanistic assumption about motivation (theory Y) that posited that people already possess the motivation and desire for responsibility and that the best management/leadership approach was to organize the organization's structure, procedures, and incentive systems to engage this natural motivation.

Others sharing this optimistic view of people extended McGregor's work. Argyris (1982) proposed replacing a top-down, controlling, win/lose negotiation style that concealed feelings and rationally censored information, freedom, and risk (a one-way or single-loop model of management) with a model that stressed a learning orientation, low-defense/high-information environment, and joint control by the more powerful with the less powerful with free and informed choice (a two-way or double-loop model of management). Likert (1961) argued that leaders must behave and create organizational structures, processes, and reward systems that employees will perceive to be supportive of their goals and values and that bolster their sense of self-worth. Blake and Mouton (1964) proposed that the most effective leadership results from a balanced concern for both the task and people.

Hersey and Blanchard (1977) provided a synthesis of Blake and Mouton's managerial grid and Argyris's (1964) ideas about the

maturity level of followers in creating their situational leadership model. The addition of this third dimension corrected for the overlooking of situational variables in the managerial grid model. These models have been very popular with human relations trainers and organization development practitioners. Although the models are intuitively appealing and are consistent with a larger body of social and organizational psychology research, they have not been the focus of much systematic research.

## **Contingency Models of Leadership**

In the more traditional academic research communities, on the other hand, Fiedler's (1964) contingency model received a great deal of attention. Fiedler predicted that the effectiveness of a high-task or high-relationship orientation by the leader would be contingent on the situation. In situations that were either highly favorable (e.g., good leader-follower relationships, high task structure, and strong or weak position power of leader) or highly unfavorable (e.g., poor leader-follower relationships, low task structure, and weak or strong position power of leader), high task orientation by the leader produces the best group performance. In situations that are moderately favorable (e.g., good leader-follower relationships, low task structure, and weak position power of leader or poor leader-follower relationships, high task structure, and strong position power of leader), on the other hand, group performance benefits from a more relationship-oriented leadership style. Fiedler's model generated a great deal of research, and results have generally supported his basic predictions. A meta-analysis of Fiedler's hypotheses by Peters, Hartke, and Pohlmann (1983) and Strube and Garcia (1981) indicated strong support for the model.

One of the weaknesses of the Fiedler contingency model (as opposed to the human relations model) is the lack of explanation for how and why a leader's style affects fol-

lower motivation and satisfaction (Chemers, 1997). House (1971) offered an alternative contingency model, the path-goal theory, that helped to fill in the explanatory "gaps" left by the Fiedler model. House argued that in order to motivate followers, leaders provide a facilitative role in emphasizing the benefits of goal achievement, clarifying and communicating necessary and appropriate behavior, communicating and clarifying success criteria, and removing or eliminating barriers and resource insufficiencies. When task structure is low, followers appreciate structuring behavior that helps to clarify the task and the path to the goal. However, when the task is already structured, additional structuring by the leader is experienced as redundant, micromanaging, and therefore demotivating. A leadership style high in relationship orientation is most effective when the task is boring, aversive, or unfulfilling and typically where task structure is already high. When the task is intrinsically interesting, on the other hand, high relationship orientation is not necessary and will not contribute significantly to motivation.

### ***Transformational Leadership Models***

House's (1971) model was perhaps the high water mark for models that focused on the transactional exchange between the leader and the led. In these models, leadership was seen as a social exchange in which leaders promised rewards and benefits to subordinates for the subordinates' fulfillment of agreements with the leader (Bass, 1990). Burns (1978) presented a new paradigm in which the leader asks followers to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the group, organization, or society. Burns also emphasized the importance of longer-term self-development as well as the shorter-term gains achieved by pursuing more immediate goals.

Burns' theories of leadership emerged just when quantum shifts in organizational struc-

ture, processes, and talent requirements were occurring. Business was becoming increasingly global, which required organizational processes and structures that were more flexible, creative, and responsive to changes in the variety of markets with which they transacted (i.e., supply, customers, financial, talent). These processes were much more information rich and required leaders with considerable technical sophistication. These changes in leadership talent are reflected in the apocryphal story at the start of this article.

The transformational leadership model proposed by Burns appeared to be a good match for the newer organizational models that were emerging. In the 1980s, a number of authors (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Tichy & Devanna, 1986) proposed leadership models that echoed Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theme. At the heart of these models was the leader's ability to create a vision that inspires and motivates people to achieve more than they thought they were capable of.

The globalization and rapid pace of business required organizations that had rich information networks across functions/businesses and decentralized decision-making processes. The need for greater efficiency resulted in a "delaying" of management hierarchies and greatly enlarged spans of control. These organizational realities required leaders who could lead through influence rather than authority and who had the ability to synthesize and communicate a highly compelling vision of a desired state or outcome.

Bass's (1998) model of transformational leadership is the most rigorously tested model in this genre. Bass's research (1985) identified three leadership factors: transformational, transactional, and non-leader. Components of transformational leadership include charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Bass identified contingent reward and management by exception as components of transactional leadership. *Laissez-*

faire behavior was considered the principal component of the non-leader factor. Meta-analyses of the research on Bass's transformational leadership formulation have yielded impressive support for the model. For example, Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramanian (1996) reported the following corrected correlations of Bass's leadership factors with effectiveness in private-sector organizations: transformational leadership—charisma = .69, intellectual stimulation = .56, individual consideration = .62; transactional leadership—contingent reward = .41, management-by-exception = -.02. Bass (1998) summarized the results of research on transformational and transactional leadership as follows:

Transformational leadership, particularly contingent reward, provides a broad basis for effective leadership, but a greater amount of effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction is possible from transactional leadership if augmented by transformational leadership. Finally, as reported earlier by Avolio and Howell (1992), transformational leadership also augments transactional in predicting levels of innovation, risk-taking and creativity.(p. 10)

### ***Chemers' Integrated Theory of Leadership***

Chemers (1997) presented a leadership model that integrates theory and research from each of the major approaches to leadership—trait, situational, contingency, transformational, and humanistic. The integration of these perspectives would seem to be difficult because some models (e.g., transformational and humanistic approaches) imply that there are best practices or one best way to be a successful leader whereas others (e.g., contingency theories) argue that there are several best practices, depending on the situation. Chemers (1997) suggested that the confusion of research and contradictions between theories are more apparent than real. He noted that researchers from each of the

dominant theoretical approaches have focused on very different points in the leadership process.

Chemers (1997) proposed a causal path for leadership that starts with personal characteristics and situational demands (the zone of self-deployment), then involves interpersonal issues (the zone of transactional relationship), and concludes with follower actions (the zone of team deployment). Focusing on any one of the zones will identify the dominant social psychological forces in that zone and will require different research methodologies (with their inevitable methodological biases and distortions). When each zone of the leadership process is studied separately, the research results look confusing and contradictory. By applying a "match" principle, however, the results and theoretical propositions become consistent and noncontradictory. According to the match principle, leadership efforts in each zone will be most successful when there is a high degree of fit between the leaders' characteristics and behavior and the demands of the environment in each zone.

Each of the three zones has a dominant leadership function. The zone of self-deployment, for instance, is characterized by the leadership function of *image management*. Image management is concerned with a leader's ability to project an image that is consistent with expectations of followers. In this zone, the central causal process is the match between the personal orientation of the leader and the requirements of the environment. This zone is also characterized by a trade-off between perceptions and objective reality. For instance, in many cases, the person/environment fit is best determined by followers' perceptions of the leader rather than objective evaluations of their characteristics. In these cases, perception is reality. Most research in this zone has been conducted using surveys and interviews, methodologies that rely on social perception and tend to obscure differences in leadership behavior (Chemers, 1997).

The zone of transactional relationship focuses on the dynamic interaction between the leader and followers. Because so many variables in this interaction are internal, highly personal, and subjective (e.g., values, motivations, attitudes, commitment, satisfaction), researchers in this zone are often dealing with the shared social reality (Festinger, 1950) of leaders and followers and their interpretation and report of events and processes rather than objective measures of the events and processes themselves. The leadership function of primary interest in this zone is *relationship development*—the leader's success in creating and sustaining motivated and competent followers. Elements of importance in this zone include the confidence and optimism of the leader (his or her "mettle"), the leader's behavioral intentions (structuring, considering followers' needs and concerns, gaining personal prominence), the behavior of the leader, and follower reactions (image, legitimacy, satisfaction). It is this zone that has been the primary focus of transformational and contingent leadership models.

Finally, in the zone of team deployment, the needs and cognitive and affective reactions of followers are translated into action. The leadership function of *resource utilization* is most salient in this zone. The leader's behavior impacts the amount of effort, persistence, and contribution of followers, which subsequently results in differences in team and organizational productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Chemers (1997) provided the following explanation of the match principle in the three zones of leadership (p. 27):

Leaders are able to project a compelling image when their actions match commonly held templates of how effective leaders should appear. They are able to build meaningful relationships when their behaviors match followers' needs and expectations. They are able to effectively deploy available resources when their strategies match the demands of the organizational environment.

## Future Directions for Leadership Theory and Leadership Development

Virtually all theories of leadership and leadership development were developed from the point of view of the organization, not the individual. These theories attempt to answer these questions: (a) How do we identify and select people with the most leadership talent and potential? (an assessment perspective); (b) how do we develop the skills of those who will be placed in leadership roles? (a training or development perspective); and (c) what are the best leadership behaviors or styles for the situations leaders will face? (a behavioral flexibility or image management perspective).

These questions are useful ones for organizations to consider in their efforts to recruit, select, promote, and develop their talent. A contemporary approach to leadership development, however, benefits from addressing leadership using an individual as well as an organizational lens. Many people entering management today owe their success and promotion to individual rather than team or organizational achievement. The lack of interpersonal and leadership skills has not been a barrier for them. In fact, their ability to focus their energies on the technical side of the job, ignoring the interpersonal, has been an advantage. Given how they were rewarded and promoted in the past, why would any of these "high potentials" be willing to devote the considerable time and energy to develop leadership skills?

For many high-achieving individual contributors, the primary motivation to take on a leadership role is the reality that they cannot achieve their personal vision or mission—whether it be achieving a major technological breakthrough or running their own company—by themselves. They become interested in developing leadership skills when they realize that these skills are as important as their technical skills. To achieve their ambitious goals, individuals, no matter how technically talented, need skills such as mo-



tivating, inspiring, and influencing people; negotiating and managing conflict; aligning and coordinating organizational action; shaping and executing strategy; communicating their ideas, recommendations, and directives effectively; building strong relationships within and without the organization; and attracting and developing talent.

The importance of considering leadership development through both the individual as well as the organizational lens was captured by Hicks and Peterson (1999) in their identification of the necessary and sufficient conditions for systematic human development. Hicks and Peterson (1999) identified a "development pipeline" composed of insight, motivation, capability development, real-world practice, and accountability that mediates the amount of development that *actually* results from an organization's developmental programming. Each element addresses a different requirement and a potential "pinchpoint" for development.

Consideration of the implications of the development pipeline model is useful in developing effective leadership development programs. Designers of these programs need to understand that many participants do not have extensive experience in people leadership roles, that interpersonal skills are not their strong suit, and that they may not be fully convinced of the benefits of placing a priority on developing their management and leadership skills. A clear line-of-sight between leadership training and participant goals and objectives must be demonstrated in order to motivate many participants effectively. Designers must also place a high priority on shaping the work environment that participants go back to so that (a) they have an opportunity to practice their new skills on real-world tasks and problems and get useful feedback and (b) the organization will support and reward them for not only taking the course, but also demonstrating the new capabilities on the job.

Some readers may be wondering by now about the reference to *postmodernism* in the

title of this article. Although allusion to postmodernism may be more obscure than to postindustrialism and the information age, consideration of key tenets of postmodernism may well hold more promise for exploring future directions for leadership theory and leadership development. Most authorities (Klages, 1997) identify the "modern" era as beginning with the Age of Enlightenment (c. 1750) and ending in the years just following World War II. The modern era is associated with primacy of reason, rationality, the triumph of science, and the creation of order out of chaos. The crowning achievements in the modern era create orderly ways of understanding phenomena with the aim of attaining increased stability. Many of the standard models that consulting psychologists and organization development specialists use (e.g., force-field analysis, quasi-stationary equilibrium states, and general systems theory prior to chaos theory) are planted squarely in modern era thinking.

One of the ways that modern societies attempt to create order out of chaos is by creating "grand" or "master" narratives, which are stories a culture tells itself about its practices and beliefs (Lyotard, 1992). For instance, an American grand narrative might be the belief that democracy and individual freedom is the most enlightened form of government (Klages, 1997). Lyotard argued that even science, the modern era's primary form of knowledge, depends on grand narratives.

Postmodernism is concerned with the critiquing of a society and culture's grand narratives (Lyotard, 1992). This process invariably serves to unmask the contradictions, instabilities, and chaos that are inherent in any science or cultural practice. By "deconstructing" grand narratives, postmodernism focuses attention on "mini" narratives that explain small practices and local events rather than universal or global concepts (Klages, 1997). A postmodern approach to leadership is necessarily situationally based. The implica-

tion for leadership development programming is that it is important to include elements that help participants examine their grand narratives, assumptions, and metaphors that may obscure more creative and adaptive solution and sense-making. This process of examining personal and cultural assumptions as well as connections and linkages between the real and metaphoric as a basis for creative leadership is a key theme in Palus, Horth, Selvin, and Pulley's (2003) article in this special issue.

Another assumption in the modern era was that knowledge was good for its own sake (Klages, 1997). Development of one's mental capabilities and knowledge base *in general* were well accepted goals for education in the modern era. The liberal arts college curriculum is based on these goals. In the postmodern era, however, knowledge is desired not as an end in itself but as a way of achieving something desired (Sarup, 1993). Increasingly, educational curricula provide knowledge, skills, and abilities that can be directly applied by the learner to achieve specific goals and to solve real problems. In the postmodern paradigm, the opposite of knowledge is "noise" rather than ignorance as would be the case in the modern era mentality (Klages, 1997).

This postmodern way of looking at knowledge has clear implications for leadership development. Reflecting Colin Powell's definition of leadership (2000), leadership programs must incorporate personal and organizational missions, strategic goals, cultural values and assumptions, and core challenges for the sponsoring organization in order to engage both the participant and the larger organization in the developmental process. The leadership program described by Leonard and Goff (2003) in this issue specifically incorporated these elements into the development process. Both Kincaid and Gordick (2003) and Winum (2003) in this issue also address the utility issue asking how consulting psychologists can provide more value or return on investment than the mul-

titude of other consultants and trainers offering leadership development programming to organizations.

I encouraged the authors for this issue to look at leadership from the perspective of their current and future practices when preparing their articles. The articles included in this issue provide innovative points of view regarding leadership development and case examples that reflect the changing requirements for leadership in contemporary and future organizations. Three of the articles (Kaplan & Kaiser, 2003; Leonard & Goff, 2003; Palus et al., 2003) provide new methodologies that can be applied to the development of leadership skills in contemporary organizations. As we move further into the postindustrial, postmodern, and information age, consulting psychology will need to re-examine its grand narratives and provide the research and theory so that our leadership development programs provide a compelling line-of-sight to the goals and ambitions of our future leaders.

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