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Leading Before, During, and After a Major Organizational Transition

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A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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by

Charles D. McCowan

May 2004

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Russell West

Keywords: Follower, Organizational Crisis, Organizational Leadership, Organizational Transition, Path-Goal Leadership, Servant Leadership, Situational Leadership, Style Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Trait Leadership

## ABSTRACT

Leading Before, During, and After a Major Organizational Transition

by

Charles D. McCowan

This was a qualitative, multiple-site case study that examined the leadership styles before, during, and after a major organizational transition. The purpose of the study was to determine if a major organizational transition affected the leadership styles of organizational leaders. It also sought to determine how the major organizational transitions affected the climate and the culture of the three organizations studied.

The participants for this multiple-site case study were a hospital, a manufacturing plant, and a public library in Central Ohio. The organizational leaders were chosen because they had gone through a major organizational transition in the previous two years. Each leader then chose three followers based on two criteria. Two of the three had to be subordinates who reported directly to the organizational leader and one who had to be the leader's administrative assistant. The participants were interviewed using a guided interview; therefore, qualitative methods were used. Data analyses were completed by the process of data reduction, data display, and conclusions drawn from the data display (constant comparison).

I discovered the leaders' styles remained somewhat consistent throughout the organizational transition. All three leaders used comparable methods of dealing with the transition. The leaders had the ability to identify the organizational issues that necessitated the transition, sought alternative actions, and then proceeded with the best alternatives.

The climate and culture of each organization was more affected by the transition than the leader.  
[I started this research thinking the leaders might be the ones most affected.]

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father (Charles Henry McCowan) who passed away in March, 2001, at the age of 67, my mother, wife, two daughters, brother, sisters, and grandmother. In spite of my father's lack of formal education and being raised in a dysfunctional home, he was a good example of one who could overcome adversity and persevere through great difficulties. My mother (Roberta Ann McCowan) has been caring, loving, stabilizing, and supportive and has helped guide my life with a great depth of perception, wisdom, and knowledge. Diane, the love of my life for some 30 years, has been my greatest supporter and encourager. Throughout the pursuit of my doctorate, she seemed to always have the right words when I was the most discouraged. My daughters, Rebecca (age 24) and Tracey (23), are two of the most wonderful individuals I have ever met. Their love for me has motivated me to strive to be the very best father I could be.

I would like to dedicate this work to my brother (Don) and sisters (Mabel, Nancy, Gail, Marilyn, and Reeda) who have prayed for me and given me the encouragement to continue on in the pursuit of my doctorate. Without their prayers, support, and encouragement, I doubt this work would have ever been completed.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to my grandmother, Maggie Cutter. She was educated as a schoolteacher at Berea College, Berea, Kentucky. She taught school in a one-room schoolhouse across the road from where she lived, back in the hills of Kentucky. My love and desire to teach grew from her love and desire to teach. Besides the above family members mentioned, she was one of the most influential persons in my life.

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I acknowledge with great appreciation the help, guidance, and support of the faculty and staff at East Tennessee State University College of Education. I especially want to acknowledge my doctoral committee: Dr. Ronald Lindahl (Chair), Dr. Andrew Czuchry, Dr. Louise MacKay, and Dr. Russell West. Dr. Louise MacKay assumed the role of chair and Dr. Terrence Tollefson graciously agreed to serve as a member of my committee when Dr. Ronald Lindahl transitioned out of the university.

I would also like to thank Sarah Wilson for editorial help.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The world is unpredictable and often unknowable. To some extent leaders must be experiencing the feeling of “being thrown.” The phrase conjures up the image of a bull rider trying to stay on a bull for eight seconds. The bull rider must get on the bull, tie his or her hands down, and hang on. Today’s leaders will have to make some drastic transitions (Bennis, 2001).

Society has gone from what appeared to be scientific, measurable, and orderly (modernism) to what appears to be chaotic and unpredictable (postmodernism). Several things may have influenced the transition from linear to random thinking.

Technology, with all of its advantages, may have been a contributor to a culture of chaos. For example, the television remote control replaced the numeric knobs on television sets. The remote control allows one to skip from channel one to 32 with one or two pushes of a button. Audiocassettes replaced eight-track tapes; compact discs (CDs) and Digital Versatile Discs or Digital Video Discs (DVDs) have replaced most audiocassettes. The audiocassettes were arranged in numerical order, making it difficult to switch from one song or recording to another. The CD and DVD can be started at almost any point a person wishes.

Bennis and Thomas (2002) concluded from their studies on leadership that one of the most reliable indicators and predictors of true leadership is the leader’s ability to find meaning in difficult circumstances and learn from it. They called this transformation the *Crucibles of Leadership*. Crucibles are defined as the transformation experiences through which a person finds a new sense of identify; they can be either good or bad experiences.

There are several responses a leader can take when confronted by change or chaos. Those responses can be: proactive, scrambling to act, or asking, “What happened?” If this is the

case, the leader has at least four choices: ignore the transition, predict it, control it, or grow with it. It would seem the best choice would be to grow with it.

Today's leaders will have to create a social architecture and support system that enables others to become leaders (Bennis, 2001). An important component of this new social architecture and support system is resilience. Resilience is the ability to bounce back after a major life-changing event or stay the course during times of transition. Some of the early studies involving resilience focused on genetic influence.

A study conducted with the Holocaust victims found those who survived the concentration camps had what was called a plastic shield. The shield was comprised of several components. They included a sense of humor, sense of perspective, the ability to form attachments to others, and a possession of an inner psychological space that helped protect them from the intrusion of those who wished to harm them.

Most theorists now agree some leaders are born resilient, but resilience can also be a learned trait. Resilience theories present several overlapping characteristics, such as a staunch acceptance of reality, a deep belief, often supported by strongly held values, the belief that life has meaning, and an uncanny ability to improvise. The resilience theorist believes a person can bounce back when possessing one or two of these characteristics but can only be truly resilient by possessing all of them (Coutu, 2002).

Increases in the amount and intensity of societal pressures have brought about radical changes in almost every institution. Relationships between the government and citizens, church and state, employee and manager, women and men, children and parents, and students and teachers are changing due to this revolution of change (Gifford & Pinchot, 1993).

Senge (1990) posited that from an early age we are taught to break complex problems into small components in order to better understand the problem. Then we try to reassemble the small pieces in order to be able to "see the big picture" (p. 3). Senge cited a physicist, David Bohm, as proposing the learned process of putting the small pieces together to see the bigger

picture is like putting the pieces of a broken mirror together and expecting to see a clear reflection. Future organizations will need to give up on the idea that the world is created in separate and unrelated pieces (p. 3). Organizations often distort the real issue of a crisis by narrow thinking and fragmenting complex questions into microscopic parts (Pauchant & Mitroff, 1992).

Page (1996) wrote, “Society is living in a world that is crying out for a different kind of leader” (p. 14). He posited a leadership gap exists in America and used one of Aesop’s fables to illustrate this leadership gap:

The frogs wanted a leader. They bothered Jupiter so much with their requests that he finally tossed a log into the pond. For a while, the frogs were happy with their new leader. Soon, they found out they could jump up and down on their leader and run all over him. He offered no resistance or even a response. The log did not have any direction or purpose in his behavior, but just floated back and forth in the pond. This practice exasperated the frogs, who were really sincere about wanting “strong leadership.” They went back to Jupiter and complained about their log-leader and appealed for a much stronger leader. Because Jupiter was weary of the complaining frogs, he gave them a stork that stood tall above the members of the group and certainly had the appearance of a leader. The frogs were quite happy with their new leader. Their leader stalked around the pond making great noises and attracting great attention. Their joy turned to sorrow, however, and ultimately to panic, for in a very short time the stork began to eat its subordinates. (p. 14)

This fable seems to describe two types of leaders: the weak (floating log) and the oppressor (stork). The fable also points out two things about followers. First, most followers desire some sort of a leader. Second, often followers do not know what kind of leader that would be.

For well over a hundred years, organizations have been moving toward an employee society of organizations. An employee society organization is one where a person enters the work force as a follower and moves up in the organization as his or her competencies increase. At the present time, the United States seems to be moving away from an employee society to a “Network Society.” The way employees interact with organizations and organizations interact with each other is rapidly changing. This new “Network Society” promotes leaders and followers working together to do what needs to be done in the day-to-day operation as well as jointly solving events that might emerge. Societies, communities, organizations, and individuals are seeking equilibrium in the midst of seemingly constant transition, crisis, or chaos. On the other hand, societies, communities, organizations, families, and individuals who are going to survive and thrive are seeking to survive and prosper by moving toward innovation, transformation, flexibility, and adaptation (Drucker, 1995).

Workers should not just be treated like machines but as humans who have a great deal to offer. What differentiates outstanding companies is their productivity of human capital. In traditional organizations, workers must fit into the system; nontraditional organizations fit the system to the workers (Drucker, 2002).

### Significance of the Study

Most, if not all, organizations have faced, in the past and present, transitions, crises, and challenges, along with planned events. An unsettling event may come suddenly, build gradually, or be planned by the organization. It may come as the result of unanticipated change or crisis in the world, other organizations, or among individuals. It may also come as the result of an anticipated change, which may or may not have developed into a crisis or need for transition.

Change is often very difficult to define and predict. It means different things to different people at different times. Most resist change, even if it is positive change. Change often means the giving up of something (loss). Change brings about transition.

In times of transition, chaos, and uncertainty, the basic courtesies of life seem to take on greater meaning. Reinke (1998) wrote about her research and experiences as a squadron commander during the downsizing and reorganizing of Air Force bases in the 1980s. Reinke came up with what was called the Ten Commandments of Leadership:

1. Treat others with respect, care, and concern.
2. Thou shalt be consistent. Consistency breeds trust.
3. Thou shalt get out of the office regularly. Get out among the people.
4. Thou shalt avoid snap decisions. At times decisions have to be made with very little time and consideration, but there are also decisions that can wait. Snap decisions often lead to mistakes.
5. Thou shalt make time for thy people. Spending time with those who work with you is the most powerful way to show them you care.
6. Thou shalt take the time to listen. Listening is another way of showing you care and it will also provide valuable information.
7. Thou shalt always be in control of thyself. If leaders cannot control their own actions and reactions, how can they expect to control others?
8. Thou shalt communicate clearly with thy subordinates. Communication is one of the primary needs of an organization, especially during a time of change.
9. Thou shalt take responsibility for thy actions. If a leader makes a mistake or has to make a difficult decision, he/she should be willing to take the consequences.
10. Thou shalt LEAD thy people. People are looking for a leader, especially in times of change. (pp. 99-102)

Clemmer (2001) used a two-part Chinese symbol for crisis to describe change and crisis. The top part represents darkness, disaster, and danger. The bottom part represents opportunity, renewal, and rebirth. The Chinese symbol is one image but two parts. Those two parts are

divided into the dark and dying half and the bright and living half. It is interesting that the bright and living half is on the bottom, serving as a foundation for change and renewal.

It seems as though the adaptive change leader will have to assume two main roles. One is working alongside followers to comfort, confront, and grow while dealing with uncertainty. Leaders must view problems from the balcony as well as the floor. Leaders need to understand the culture, climate, and context of transition in the midst of uncertainty. Ideal leaders will move back and forth from the floor to the balcony. The leader will have to resist the temptation of staying too long below or too long above. There may even be the urge to retreat to safety (Heifetz & Laurie, 2001).

Transitions, crises, and chaos in society and organizational life seem to have influenced almost every aspect of individual lives. Because of these forces, it would seem leaders and followers need to be prepared to work together to confront unpredictability brought on by internal and external forces.

This research sought to determine how leaders seek to stabilize an organization during and after a major organizational transition. I also sought to determine what effect the transitions had on the climate and culture of the organizations.

A hospital, a manufacturing plant, and a public library were selected as examples in this multiple-case study. The hospital had recently gone through a leadership change and internal restructuring. The manufacturing plant had transitioned from a small one-man operation into a multimillion-dollar operation involving 50 workers in a very short period of time. The public library had built a second facility to provide better services, which had caused some internal instability.

### Research Questions

1. How did the leaders of the hospital, manufacturing plant, and public library lead before the organizational transition?

2. During the organizational transition, what (if any) effect did the organizational transition have on the hospital's, manufacturing plant's, and public library's leaders' style or approach?
3. After the organizational transition, what (if any) effect did the organizational transition have on the hospital's, manufacturing plant's, and public library's leaders' style or approach?
4. What (if any) effect did the organizational transition have on the climate and culture of each organization?

### Limitations

The nature of qualitative research limits the application of the findings to a narrow audience. I sought to broaden the audience by choosing three different types of organizations.

The geographical setting of this study is potentially a limiting factor because all three are located in Central Ohio. The geographical limitation may be offset by the possibility that some of the leaders and followers worked in organizations in different parts of the United States and world.

Access to the organizational leader and follower could have been hindered if I had identified the organizational transition for the case study. To insure the leaders' cooperation, I did not choose the transition; but each leader was asked to select the organizational transition for the case study. Each leader was to identify an event or transition that had a major impact on the organization.

Another possible limiting factor could have been the leaders choosing whom I would interview from their organization. I sought to overcome the possibility of the leader choosing participants who would bias the study. This was done by requiring the leader to choose two persons who reported directly to him or her as well as his or her administrative assistant. Setting the criteria that two of the followers must be direct subordinates was used to insure high-level

personnel were involved in the case study. I also believed the administrative assistant would most likely know a great deal about the leader and the organization.

Before each interview with a follower, I sought to overcome any possible attempt of the leaders to limit the study by carefully describing and detailing the transition and seeking his or her perception of the major organizational transition. I also assured the follower his or her responses would not be shared with the leader.

### Overview

Chapter 1 presented an introduction to the study, significance of the study, research questions, and possible limitations. Chapter 2 reviews, critically evaluates, and links six main leadership theories: Trait, Style, Situational, Path-Goal, Transformational, and Servant Leadership. Chapter 2 also presents a section on leadership, followers, and America in transition. Chapter 3 outlines the methods used to collect and analyze the data. Chapter 4 describes each organizational transition. Chapter 5 details the participants' responses, themes that emerged, and interpretation of those themes.

CHAPTER 2  
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a broad view of leadership and a discussion of Trait Leadership, Style Leadership, Path-Goal Leadership, Situational Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Servant Leadership, and Women in Leadership. It will also discuss the follower's role and responsibility during and after organizational transitions. The chapter concludes by describing some organizations in America that have recently gone through major organizational transitions.

DuBrin (2001) posited that a major component of leadership is direction setting. Direction setting involves anticipating and sometimes creating the future for an organization. Creating the future is a more forceful approach than trying to anticipate the future. Creating the future allows for creative leadership. This kind of leadership is often called "thinking outside of the box" (p. 370).

Stewart (1996) outlined the dilemmas a leader may face before, during, and after an organizational transition. The leader often has to choose between two options that seem viable, thus faces a dilemma. Dilemma is a word that originates from the Greek; it means choosing between two assumptions or premises. The nine dilemmas Stewart identified are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

*The Nine Dilemmas a Leader Faces*

---

Dilemma	Questions to ask
1. Broad-based leadership versus High-visibility	Should the leader share leadership or be a highly charismatic leader?

---

2. Independence versus Interdependence	Should units work together or compete with each other?
3. Long-term versus Short-term	Should the leader invest in long-term projects at the expense of immediate results?
4. Creativity versus Discipline	Which should be encouraged, creativity or a focus on details and budgets?
5. Trust versus Change	A high level of trust usually involves a limited amount of change, but change is necessary.
6. Bureaucracy versus Economies of Scale	Less bureaucracy may cost the company more because of the saving brought about by large-scale manufacturing or purchases.
7. People versus Productivity	To maintain a high level of productivity it is often necessary to push people beyond their limits.
8. Leadership versus Capability	Leadership skills are often different than management skills and technology competencies.
9. Revenue Growth versus Cost Containment	It takes spending to increase revenue, but an organization must still control cost.

---

Rost (1991) wrote a critique of leadership research in the twentieth century in an effort to understand (what he termed) the industrial paradigm and to look forward to the postindustrial paradigm. He reported much that had been written about leadership was actually management, not leadership. He posited the last societal paradigm shift occurred over a century ago with the industrial revolution. He admitted such things as the atomic age, space age, and computer age

have brought massive changes but not enough to signify a societal paradigm shift. Rost considered these massive changes to have deepened the industrial paradigm and made it more acceptable to those who had grown intolerant of the industrial mindset. He noted that the people of the twenty-first century might be the first to see the societal shift from the industrial paradigm to the postindustrial paradigm.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) proposed that future leaders should be concerned with marshaling commitment, energies, and resources of an organization to move in a particular direction. They also pointed out the importance of vision, passion, integrity, self-knowledge, empowerment, and doing things right. Bennis and Nanus also posited that the speed and turbulence of technology would continue to accelerate change.

Egan (2000) conducted research on the competency requirements for senior officers of the Saanich Police Department, Province of British Columbia. Interviews were conducted with six Senior Officers, two retired Senior Officers, and two Chief Constables serving similar size departments as the Saanich Police Department.

The purpose of the research was to identify leadership competencies that could be used for the training and selection of leaders in the department. Due to rapid growth in the Province, more police were needed. Within one to five years, all but one of the senior officers would be retiring, and 50% of the supervisors would also be retiring. Budget cuts had limited training the police officers for leadership positions.

Egan used a leadership competency model developed by Desrochers, Duquette, and Gregoire (1998) to guide the study. The model consisted of six competencies, which they saw as forming core values. The competencies were: continuous personal growth, communication skills, relationship building, stewardship, critical thinking, and organizational awareness and renewal. A listing of the findings is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

*The Nine Dilemmas a Leader Faces*

---

Competencies	Definition
Continuous Personal Growth	Develops Self-Awareness/Self-Discipline Builds Self-Confidence Demonstrates Flexibility Establishes Right Balance Practices Stress Management Learns Continuously
Communication Skills	Listens in Order to Understand Communicates to be Understood
Relationship Building	Demonstrates Integrity Develops Credibility Develops Interpersonal Awareness Builds on Diversity
Stewardship	Directs Others Builds Commitment Creates the Environment for Empowerment Resolves Conflict
Critical Thinking	Ability to Deal with Complexity Recognizes Patterns in Multi-Dependency Systems Challenges Assumptions/Analyses Present Paradigm
Organizational Awareness and Renewal	Develops and Enunciates Vision Invites, Accepts, and Promotes Change Is Client Centered Demonstrates Commitment to Quality Recognizes and Promotes the Concept of a Learning Organization

---

In an environment as volatile as law enforcement, this study seems to indicate each category and its components are equally important.

There is no question about how much the world has changed in the last decade. Change and uncertainty seem to be the norm. Leaders and followers are constantly challenged by uncertainties produced by change. Some may seek to avoid or resist the change, and others will look for opportunities. Throughout the scientific era, leadership theories have emerged to seek to meet the changing needs of society.

The idea of what type of theory will emerge to meet today's needs is very intriguing to me. I will not be proposing a new model of leadership but will pursue how three leaders and their followers reacted to a major transition. I started my pursuit by researching some of the major leadership theories.

### Major Leadership Theories

#### Trait Leadership

One of the earliest forms of leadership research emerged as Trait Leadership. Trait Leadership first posited that leaders are born, not made, and they are usually men. Trait Leadership research originally sought to identify some innate characteristics of a leader. Stogdill (1974) pointed out that, as early as 1879, Galton studied the heredity of great men. Stogdill also cited Woods' (1913) research of 14 nations over a period of 10 centuries to see what impact the leader's ability had on the nation.

Originally, Trait Leadership sought to identify certain innate characteristics of male leaders (i.e., physical appearance, attributes, and social behavior). This led to the development of Trait Leadership, sometimes referred to as the "Great Man Theory."

Stogdill (1948) conducted a study on Trait Leadership that led him to believe no consistent set of traits separated leaders from non-leaders. In 1974, he refined his original

research methods and conducted another study indicating there were possibly some personality dimensions to leadership, giving a measure of validity to Trait Leadership.

This research opened the door for a broader view of trait leadership, causing the focus to turn slightly from physical characteristics to traits which included social behaviors. Northouse (1997) contended Trait Leadership, as it originally appeared, has several weaknesses. He posited trait research does not identify a definitive set of leadership characteristics. The Trait Theory is also very subjective. What might be considered an important characteristic for one leader may not be considered the same for another. The “Great Man Theory” limits the possibility of training and developing leaders, as personality characteristics are relatively fixed (pp. 20-22).

Wilkinson (1992) remarks that teachers who had become master teachers seemed to relate well to the idea that leaders are not born leaders, or just simply trained for leadership, but are persons who seek to improve. Wilkinson wrote, “Unlike the popular notion that great teachers are born, I believe master teachers are not born, not manufactured, but just improved” (p. 41).

Great leaders are persons who strive to lead but lead at a level of greatness. This greatness may be achieved by a combination of innate characteristics and a desire to lead, learn, and improve. Leadership is a learned skill having little to do with natural forces (Bennis & Nanus, 1985)

Trait Theory laid the foundation for a deeper consideration of the entire persona of a leader. The following study is an example of how difficult it is to identify the innate characteristics of a leader. Two different cultures (Chinese and American) were used to contrast and compare leadership characteristics workers most preferred.

Ling, Chia, and Fang (2000) asked Chinese workers to identify characteristics of a good leader. These findings were compared to seven characteristics from similar research conducted among American workers.

The American workers' responses were more generalized than the Chinese worker. The American workers identified sensitivity, dedication, charisma, attractiveness, masculinity, intelligence, and strength as characteristics of a good leader. The Chinese workers' perceptions of the characteristics of a good leader were categorized into four factors: personal morality, goal effectiveness, interpersonal competence, and versatility. The comparative analysis was broken down into four factors.

Factor one, *personal morality*, indicated the participants expected the leader to be willing to be a public servant, honest, truthful, fair, serve as a model, have integrity, and be willing to accept criticism. The closest American worker's descriptor was dedication.

The second factor was labeled *goal effectiveness*. The Chinese worker expected the leader to have a broad vision, ability to plan and a keen sense of perception, be open minded, do what is right, be decisive, be deliberate, have outstanding ability, appreciate scientific methodology, and be able to maximize the ability of others. The American workers identified intelligence, masculinity, and strength as characteristics of goal effectiveness.

The third factor was *interpersonal competence*. The Chinese workers expected the leader to be mature, sophisticated, and straightforward, have good social skills, and use effective persuasive skills. This factor is similar to what the American workers described as sensitivity, attractiveness, and charisma.

The fourth factor was *versatility*. The Chinese participants indicated it was important for leaders to be knowledgeable, imaginative, willing to take risks, multi-talented, and approachable, have broad interests and a sense of humor. None of the American participants' leadership preferences seemed to relate to the Chinese fourth factor.

This study suggested followers' ability to determine necessary leadership attributes are further complicated by the influence of socioeconomic differences (Ling et al., 2000).

In New Zealand, a study was conducted to determine the correlation between a leader's charisma (social sensitivity) and vision (future oriented). This study concluded followers

preferred a leader with both charisma and vision. Followers said they were more motivated, satisfied, committed, and performed at a higher level for a charismatic and visionary leader. In the eyes of the follower, charisma and vision worked together to bring about a larger-than-life image of the leader (Birchfield, 2000).

Lorne's (1999) study among senior-level managers further demonstrates the difficulty of identifying leadership traits and behaviors. Data were collected on a group of 46 participants who were senior-level managers. Lorne used the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) that was developed by Cattell, Cattell, and Cattell (1993).

Warmth surfaced as the most consistent predictor of leadership effectiveness. A leader who rated high in warmth was considered to be easygoing, adaptable, warmhearted, attentive, frank, expressive, trustful, cooperative, and participating. No direct relationship was found between personality and leadership effectiveness.

For some, President John F. Kennedy epitomized the external characteristics of a trait leader with his good looks, mannerisms, communication skills, his heredity, and his mystique. Mother Teresa, on the other hand, may have exemplified the internal characteristics of an ideal leader. She was small in stature but was a powerful example of one with great character, a desire to do well, and seemed to possess a strong inner strength.

Covey's (1989) book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, deals primarily with the inner attributes of a leader. Covey insisted an effective leader must be a person of character and integrity. He wrote about how the leader's self-image affects how he or she interacts with others. Covey suggested the development of a successful leader begins with character.

Trait Leadership began as a study of "Great Men" and moved beyond external traits to character traits. Trait theorists began to realize that it takes more than genetics, good looks, and great personalities to make a leader. Style Leadership will move even farther away from external traits and consider the leader's primary approach to leading.

## Style Leadership

Style Leadership appears to shift the focus of leading from traits to behaviors. In the 1950s and 1960s, Ohio State University and the University of Michigan conducted several studies seeking to identify leadership styles (Blake & Mouton, 1968). Two styles of leadership, task and relational, were identified by these studies. If the leader was dominant in focusing on the task, then he or she was labeled a task leader. The leader who seemed to show more care and concern for the needs of the follower than the leader who focused more on the task was identified as a relational leader.

Ideally, the leader would seek to match his or her leadership style to the situation. If the situation or needs of the followers required a more directive approach, then the leader should exercise his or her task oriented skills. If the situation or followers did not need as much direction or supervision, then the leader should exercise his or her relational skills.

Style Leadership can be divided into two categories: a concern for people and a concern for productivity. A leader whose main style of leading is concern for people focuses more on the intrinsic needs of the follower (i.e., trust, respect, appreciation, and concern). The leader whose primary concern is productivity is not as concerned about people and their needs as with productivity. This does not mean the one whose first concern is people is not concerned about productivity, nor does it mean the one who is primarily focused on productivity is not concerned about people. The categories simply describe their priority and approach to leadership.

Blake and Mouton's (1968) Management Grid was designed as a guide in determining a manager's style. On the X side of the grid is Concern for People, and on the Y side is Concern for Results. A low concern for people and a low concern for results is called an impoverished manager. A high concern for people and low concern for results is labeled a country club management style. High concern for results and low concern for people is labeled as authority-compliance management. High concern for people and results is called team management. The middle-of-the-road manager demonstrated a balanced concern for both people and results.

Blake and McCanse (1991) added motivation to Blake and Mouton's Management Grid. Their three-dimensional grid (task, relational, and motivational) was intended to present a systematic approach to a manager's behavior and provide concrete actions to improve the manager's effectiveness. This revised grid was intended to assist the manager in adapting his or her style to the task, relational, or motivational need of the follower. Blake and Mouton's Management Grid was later renamed the Leadership Grid in 1991 by Blake and McCanse.

Colangelo (2000) studied the relationship of the immediate supervisor's leadership style to followers' responses. A sample of 567 United States Air Force enlisted members attending airman leadership school at three different locations in Europe was used to gather the data. Participants completed a *Followership Survey* developed by Kelley (1992) and a *Leader Effectiveness and Adaptability (LEAD)* instrument developed by Hersey (1993) to determine leadership style. The three leadership styles studied were: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire.

The dimensions measured by the *Followership Survey* were active engagement, critical thinking, passion, and team-mindedness. Colangelo concluded there was a significant relationship between the leader's style and active engagement, passion, and team-mindedness. Participants who had democratic supervisors scored their supervisors higher on active engagement, passion, and team-mindedness.

It was somewhat surprising that autocratic leadership was not the most prevalent style chosen, especially because the participants were members of the armed forces. The democratic style was the most prevalent. Participants indicated democratic leadership was most conducive to the followers' active engagement, passion, and team-mindedness.

Critical or independent thinking skills were rated approximately the same for all three types of leaders (autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire). The high task characteristic was mutually shared between democratic and autocratic leaders. However, the high-task democratic leader seemed to be able to adapt into an autocratic leader when the situation called for it.

The difference between democratic and autocratic leadership was the relational aspect. The democratic leader was prone to be more relational. The participants indicated high relational and high task democratic leaders produced better followers in active engagement, passion, and team-mindedness but did not produce critical or independent thinkers (Colangelo, 2000).

Hall and Hord's (2001) study of teachers' implementation of a very innovative science curriculum in a large suburban school district led to the study of the leaders' responsibility in implementing change, not just the teachers. The teachers from certain schools responded differently than those in other schools. It seemed as though their responses paralleled those of specific schools and not the new curriculum. Some of the teachers embraced the change and others did not. Most of the teachers who embraced the change were at schools that had principals who were considered to be change agents. For the most part, the teachers who resisted the change worked at schools where the principals were not considered to be as receptive to change.

They concluded the differences in the teachers' acceptance or rejection were not based on the curriculum or the teachers' reaction to the new curriculum but the principals' acceptance of change. Hall and Hord (2001) pointed out that there can be a major difference in a leader's concept of his or her leadership style and actual behavior. They described style as the pattern or leaders' approach and behavior as the individual response to certain situations.

They identified three styles of Change Facilitators (CF): the initiator, manager, and responder. Table 3 describes and defines each of these styles.

Table 3

*Description of Three Change Facilitators' Styles*

Facilitators' Style	Responses
Initiators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear long-range goals</li> <li>Strong beliefs</li> <li>Decisions are made in relation to goals</li> <li>Frequent contact with followers</li> <li>Monitors implementation</li> <li>Adamant but not unkind</li> <li>Seeks input and then makes the decision</li> </ul>
Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broad range of behaviors</li> <li>Initiates action in support of change</li> <li>Behavior is linked to rapport with followers</li> <li>Keeps followers informed</li> <li>Sensitive to followers' needs</li> <li>Defends followers under excessive demands</li> <li>Involved with the followers in making changes</li> <li>Usually does not seek to exceed expectations</li> </ul>
Responders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows followers and others to take the lead</li> <li>Focuses on traditional administrative tasks</li> <li>Gives little guidance throughout the change</li> <li>Emphasizes relations over tasks</li> <li>Makes decisions based on circumstances</li> <li>Desires to please others</li> <li>Demonstrates limited vision</li> </ul>

They used three metaphors to describe each of these styles. The initiator approaches the change process like a chess player. The manager approaches change like a board game. The

responder flips a coin to make decisions. The followers tend to view each leader's style differently (Hall & Hord, 2001).

The initiator is often seen as highly social, informal, and possessing a clearly defined vision. The followers view the manager as almost neutral, very little feeling either way. The followers tend to view the responder as having high level of trust in the followers (Hall & Hord, 2001).

Style Leadership evolved from an identification of a leader's style. Basically, there were two styles to choose from: task or relational. Which style the leader seemed to be most predisposed to dictated how he or she responded to the followers. This was one of the first leadership theories to consider how followers responded to different leadership styles.

### Situational Leadership

Situational Leadership studies began as early as 1931. Several of the earliest theorists to deal with Situational Leadership were Westburg, Case, Brown, Gath and Mills, and Bennis (as cited in Stogdill, 1974).

Situational Leadership considers the amount of guidance a follower needs in a given situation. According to this theory, there are many ways to influence followers (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 1996).

Hersey's Situational Leadership Model (1985) provided four alternatives for the leader to choose from in responding to followers in a certain situation. The alternatives are: telling or selling, coaching, delegation, and empowerment. Before the leader can choose one or more of these alternatives, he or she must determine the followers' commitment and competency in performing the task in the given situation.

This model also provides a range of followers' readiness. The readiness levels are labeled as willing and not ready, willing and ready, or ready and not willing. The leader must spend a great deal of time telling or showing the one who is willing but not ready. As the

follower gains competence in the task, there is more coaching. Coaching still involves telling and showing, but it also involves allowing the follower to perform the task with the help of the leader. When the leader thinks the follower is ready and willing, then there is less supervision. Once the follower has proved his or her competency, then he or she can be turned loose to perform the task, empowered. The leader's response to the follower who is ready but not willing is very complex and will require a great deal of interaction with the leader (Hersey, 1985).

Fernandez, Carmen, and Vecchio (1997) gathered data from 332 university employees and 32 supervisors on the dimensions of leaders' behavior and followers' maturity. The purpose of the study was to determine how the leaders' behavior and followers' maturity affected performance, satisfaction, and quality of leader-member exchange. The study found supervising, monitoring, and consideration directly related to the productivity of the follower, but it did not support the predictability of optimal combinations of leader behaviors and follower maturity.

Blank and Weitzel (1990) sought to determine how followers' maturity affects the leaders' task and relationship behavior. They proposed three hypotheses: Hypothesis 1: Follower performance and satisfaction is directly related to the leaders' task behavior and the followers' maturity; Hypothesis 2: Followers' performance and satisfaction is determined by how the leaders relate to the followers and the followers' maturity; and Hypothesis 3: Followers' performance and satisfaction will be high when the leadership style fits the followers' maturity level.

The sample consisted of 27 resident hall directors and 353 resident advisors from two large Midwestern universities. They used the Leader Behavior Descriptive Questionnaire (Stogdill & Coons, 1957) to gather primary data.

Leaders' task behavior made significant differences in the followers' satisfaction but not in their performance. The followers' psychological maturity, alone, made a significant contribution to work satisfaction. For the third hypothesis, measuring how the leader related to

the follower, the leaders' style had a significant effect on workers' satisfaction (Blank & Weitzel, 1990).

Trait Leadership considers the attributes that make a leader, and the Style Leadership divides the attributes into two styles (task and relational). Situational Leadership, as its name implies, deals primarily with the situation. The leader seeks to determine his or her approach to followers who are at differing levels of maturity and motivation as well as the nature of the situation.

### Path-Goal Leadership

Path-Goal Leadership is similar to Situational Leadership in that they both focus on the goal. They differ in the approach the leader uses to assist the followers in reaching the goal. In Path-Goal Leadership, the leader clearly defines the path and goal for the followers. Once this is conveyed, the leader then monitors the followers' behavior and performance, standing ready to help (Hughes, Ginnett, & Curphy, 1996).

The idea is that followers are motivated by the personal reward they each will receive upon reaching the goal. This approach is intended to increase productivity and job satisfaction. Instead of focusing on one specific task, it focuses on the path and goal.

Path-Goal Leadership can be separated into two areas: the followers' acceptance of the leaders' competence and the leaders' ability to motivate. Followers' satisfaction is somewhat determined by how much he or she perceives the leader values his/her work (House & Mitchell, 1974).

Path-Goal Leadership proposes the leader must clearly define the goal, lead along the path (not just command), reward (praise or appreciate) along the way, and identify and help when needed. Path-Goal theory focuses on the leader's competence, ability to communicate, and helpful behavior toward the followers when an obstacle appears.

The followers' perception of self, the leader, the difficulty of following the path, and the end result most likely will effect the followers' productivity. If the tasks along the path are very structured and routine, the leader may not need to be as directive and hands-on. On the other hand, if the tasks lack structure and routine and the followers are not equipped to go it alone, the leader will need to be more directive and supportive. Path-Goal theory asserts that the leader must assess the situation, the followers' response to the situation and the leader, and then respond in an appropriate manner (Hughes et al., 1996).

Path-Goal leadership is designed to help the leader understand how directive and supportive he or she needs to be with the followers. This model provides the framework for the leader to determine if the followers need a task or relational leader, or a combination of the two.

Path-Goal theory has received mixed reviews because it is very abstract, complex, and difficult to implement. It assumes the only way to increase the performance level of the followers is by clearly defining the path to the goal and motivating the followers along the way. It seems to ignore the need to choose the right people for the right task or the restructuring of the task (Northhouse, 1997).

There is a scene near the beginning of a motion picture produced by Anderson and Reher (1998), *A Bug's Life*, that seems to be a good example of Path-Goal leadership. It shows a group of ants gathering food for the winter. The scene opens with the ants lining up to carry seeds back to what appears to be an altar on top of a mound. A leaf falls across the ants' path. They panic. They do not know what to do; they just stand still. Down from the mound comes an older ant that calms them down and leads them around the leaf. The ants breathe a sign of relief and proceed on around the leaf to the altar.

This seems to be a good example of Path-Goal leadership because the ants' path is clearly defined. They are progressing along toward the goal and then an obstacle appears which a leader quickly removes.

Path-Goal Leadership is comprised of the leaders' commitment to a goal and the choosing of a path that seems to be the most direct way to the goal. The leader interacts with the followers by clearly defining the path and motivating the followers toward the goal. If an obstacle appears along the path, the leader stands ready to help the followers deal with the obstacle (House & Mitchell, 1974).

### Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership defines the leader in terms of his or her values, motivation, wants, needs, aspirations, and expectations. Transformational Leadership is similar to Path-Goal Leadership in that they both seek to achieve a desired goal by adapting and overcoming obstacles with a high level of effectiveness and efficiency. They differ in that the Transformational Leader seeks to enter into a transformational relationship with the followers. Ideally, the leader pursues change in his or her life and then seeks to become a change agent in the lives of the followers, helping them with changes brought about by internal or external forces (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

Grundstein-Amado (1999) used the term "bilateral transformational leadership." Bilateral transformational leadership is composed of two elements: self-discovery and reflection. Leaders and followers use these two elements to construct a set of values that will be the framework for a collective vision.

The Path-Goal leader focuses mostly on the path in order to reach the goal. The Transformational Leader is more concerned with the leader and follower sharing vision, values, purpose, and potential.

Ackoff (1999) stated, "Leadership requires the ability to implement vision. Inspiration without implementation is provocation, not leadership, and implementation without inspiration is management or administration, not leadership" (p. 21). Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) wrote, "True transformational leaders identify the core values and unifying purposes of the organization

and its members, liberate their human potential, and foster pluralistic leadership and effective, satisfied followers” (p. 181).

Transformational Leadership goes beyond a leaders’ style, followers’ needs, and the situation. Transformational Leadership starts with the leader. The Transformational Leader is motivated by his or her desire to help others cope with change. He or she seeks to face the change process by allowing change to take place in his or her life before ever asking others to change. The Situational Leader seeks to identify the followers’ level of maturity and motivation and then respond to them in a way that will lead them to be more productive. The Transformational Leader starts with himself or herself and then moves to others.

### Servant Leadership

The concept of Servant Leadership has moved beyond the walls of churches and other service organizations to business, education, government, and non-profit organizations. Laub (1999) defined Servant Leadership as “an understanding and practice of leadership that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader” (p. 81).

Some of the present-day authors who are writing about Servant Leadership are Blanchard (1995), Block (1993), Covey (1994), DePree (1989), and Senge (1990). Hunter (1998), the principal consultant of J. D. Hunter Associates, a labor relations and training consulting firm located near Detroit, Michigan, has written a book titled *The Servant: A Simple Story About the True Essence of Leadership*. He is a sought-after public speaker and trainer primarily in the areas of servant leadership and community (team) building. Ken Blanchard, author of the *One Minute Manager*, has recently teamed up with Bill Hybles, the senior pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago, Illinois, and Phil Hodges, manager director of the Center for *FaithWalk Leadership* to write *Leadership by The Book: Tools to Transform Your Workplace* (1999).

Amazon.com (an on-line bookstore) listed 28 books dated from 1977 to November, 2000, with the words Servant Leadership in their title (on-line). March 3, 2003, Amazon.com listed 46 books with Servant Leadership in their title. The number of books on Servant Leadership has more than doubled in less than three years.

The term Servant Leader, as it is used today, can be traced back to Robert Greenleaf. In 1977, Greenleaf wrote a book entitled *Servant Leadership*. Greenleaf posited that a Servant Leader was one who seeks first to be a servant and then aspires to leadership. The Servant Leader is sharply different from the leader who seeks to lead and then serve as a means of facilitating personal and professional goals.

The words *servant* and *leader* do not seem to go together but seem to be some sort of Ken Koan. Ken Koan is a juxtaposition of apparent opposites, meant to startle the seeker after wisdom into new insight. The leader exists to serve those whom he or she normally leads and those who supposedly follow. He or she finds fulfillment in meeting the needs of the followers (Kiechel, 1992).

Dave Thomas, the founder of the Wendy's restaurants, wrote about implementing what he called an MBA award. The MBA award was given to those who demonstrated a Mop Bucket Attitude. An employee or manager could win the award by exemplifying an attitude of service above and beyond the call of duty. The award looks like a small-scale model of a mop bucket with the person's name engraved on a nameplate at the bottom of the award (Thomas, 1994).

It seems as though Servant Leadership has somewhat blurred the division between leading and following. This chapter has gone from a presentation of the studies of leadership that focused solely on the leader, often a man, to a focus on both the leader and follower. Kelley (1992) wrote, "If there is anything the nineties have already taught us, it's that most people are both leaders and followers. The roles of followers and leaders are no longer as clearly demarcated as they used to be" (p. 9).

The Servant Leader is more than just a leader who pretends to serve the followers because it benefits the leader. It seems to involve more than doing menial tasks and constantly seeking consensus; it is an attitude as well as an action.

Many may suppose Servant Leadership is a weak form of leadership. Servant Leadership as presented by Robert Greenleaf does not appear to be for the weak, lazy, or the soft. Sims (1997) pointed out, “Servant and leader combine to form an ideal blend of personal attributes in *toughness* and *tenderness* (p. 15).

Much of the recent writing about servant leadership suggests it takes a strong leader to be a true servant leader, a leader who knows who he or she is, what he/she is seeking to achieve, and cares about people. Sims (1997) wrote, “Servant-hood acknowledges and respects the freedom of another and seeks to enhance the other’s capacity to make a difference. . . . This is the ‘velvet and steel’ of servant leadership, a mystical blend of gentleness and strength, a paradox that gains by giving” (p. x).

Another type of leader, similar to the Servant Leader, is the Wounded Healer. In the book the *Wounded Healer*, Nouwen (1972) writes about a priest who asks a prophet about the arrival of the messiah (the promised one). The prophet says, “Go and ask him yourself.” The priest responds by asking where he may be found. The prophet told the priest, “Go to the city gate and you will find him sitting among the poor, covered with wounds. You will know him because he will be the one who is unbinding and dressing his wounds one at a time. The rest are unbinding all of their wounds at the same time. They are focusing totally on their wounds (needs). The Wounded Healer is unbinding one of his own wounds at a time so he can also assist the others with their wounds” (pp. 82-83). A Wounded Healer is much like a Servant Leader in that he or she is one among the many, but the one difference is he or she is not only tending to his or her needs but also to the needs of others.

One of the weaknesses of lumping Servant Leadership with the other major theories presented is that very little research has been conducted on Greenleaf’s presentation of Servant

Leadership. Because of that, only a few assessment instruments have been developed to identify Servant Leaders and the orientation of an organization toward service. Page and Wong (1998) developed an instrument titled Self-Assessment of Servant Leadership Profile (On-line). Laub (1998) developed the Organizational Leadership Assessment as part of his dissertation. He first called it the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment. Laub stated he changed the name of the instrument to Organizational Leadership Assessment because the term *servant* was causing confusion in the business world (personal communication). Lytle, Hom, and Mokwa (1998) developed a leadership questionnaire titled SERV\*OR. The questionnaire measures employees' perception of the organization's orientation to service. One of the dimensions of service in the model is Servant Leadership.

### Women in Leadership

Gender issues in leadership are the center of much research and discussion. I will not attempt to present a broad view of gender issues in leadership but will concentrate solely on women in leadership. Rosener (1990) concluded the command and control leadership style associated with many men is not the only way to succeed. She also noted women in leadership are not succeeding in spite of certain feminine characteristics, but because of them. She concluded from her research the respondents described themselves in ways that characterize Transformational Leadership. The women who responded indicated they attempt to get followers to transform their own interests into the interests of the group. They attributed their leadership power to charisma, interpersonal skills, hard work, or personal contacts. Rosener further concluded her research indicated women lead with an interactive style. For example, they encouraged participation, shared power and information, and sought to enhance the self worth of others.

Burke and Collins (2001) acknowledge there is an ongoing debate surrounding the different leadership styles between females and males. The authors noted in the early 1990s

research proposed there were no gender differences in leadership. Burke and Collins noted Rosener's research in 1990 challenged the conclusion that there were no gender differences in leadership. Burke and Collins concluded the evidence for gender differences was not conclusive, even though Rosener and others have been strong advocates of gender differences in leadership. Therefore, they further pursued the subject. Their research findings seemed to support the recent notion that there are differences in gender leadership. Along with Rosener, they identified the way women lead as interactive or transformational. They defined Transformational Leadership as a way to develop positive relationships with followers in order to increase organizational performance.

Masini (2001) wrote an article on maternal leadership that further defined the role of women in leadership to include how mothers lead. He concluded, when looking at basic leadership models, very little deals with the role of mothers in society. He paraphrased from ancient Chinese literature, if mothers negotiated peace treaties, there would be no more wars. Masini went on to conclude, if materialism makes sense in the rearing of new citizens, why not municipalities, or better yet, the world?

Masini (2001) intimated maternal leadership is the way to organizational action and reflection. He noted, the achievement of action signifies the organization's realization its actions have changed its environment. His review of literature revealed five characteristics of maternal leadership: *Mystical Powers of Mothers*, *Women in Power*, *Critical (Maternal) Literacy in the Workplace*, *Maternal Leading and Radical Feminism*, and *Maternal Leadership*. Masini proposed maternal leadership involved strength through caring for people, an emphasis on love and a positive vision of the future, regardless of the situation.

Trait Leadership, Style Leadership, Situational Leadership, Path-Goal Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Servant Leadership, and Women in Leadership have served to lay the foundation for the consideration of leading in times of organizational transition. Table 4 presents a summary of the leadership theories presented in this chapter.

Table 4

*Summary of Leadership Theories*

Leadership	Theories Summary
Trait Leadership	Focused mostly on the innate characteristics of a leader (i.e., looks, heredity, and gender).
Style Leadership	Concerned with the amount of guidance a leader gives a follower, how the leader treats the follower, and the readiness and willingness of the follower.
Situational Leadership	The behavior of the leader affects the success of the organization. This theory attempts to match the leader's style to the situation.
Path-Goal Leadership	The leader clearly defines the path and stands ready to help remove any obstacle. The focus is on reaching the goal.
Transformational Leadership	When the organization is confronted with the need to change, the change process starts with the leader looking within to see how he or she can change. Transformational Leadership is sometimes called moral leadership (i.e., integrity, trust, honesty).
Servant Leadership	Seeks to serve first and then aspire to lead. The focus is on service to all mankind. Ideally, a servant-leader would make a great difference in an organization by serving the followers.
Women in Leadership	Women may lead differently than most men. It is proposed they lead by interaction and transformation. Maternal

leadership is characterized by strength through caring for people, an emphasis on love, and a positive vision of the future regardless of the situation.

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### Followers

Followers have always been important to the health of an organization; but, as the transition of organizational instability increases, followers will become more important to organizations. It appears there will be a greater need for teamwork, collaboration, employee ownership, and empowerment. Kelley (1992) pointed out that, “The word ‘follower’ has its etymological roots in Old High German *follaziohan*, which meant to assist, help, succor, or minister to. This parallels the Old High German root word of ‘leader,’ which meant to undergo, suffer, or endure” (p. 34).

Through an increased focus on teams, collaboration, employee ownership, and empowerment, followers are getting stronger. There seems to be resentment building toward the leadership aristocracy who get astronomical pay, “perks,” and “golden parachutes” – all while downsizing the rank and file. Most people are both leaders and followers. The roles of followers and leaders are no longer clearly separated (Kelley, 1992).

Suspicion and lack of trust tend to disrupt the productivity of leaders, followers, and organizations. Followers often want to know “why” and “why not.” Because of the dynamic and volatile climate followers live with, they do not always follow orders as many did in the past. Today’s followers seem to be less committed to the organization and the leader and more committed to their own needs. They are often more concerned about their rights than responsibilities (Page, 1996).

Some of the basic emotional needs most followers seek to meet are feelings of significance, being part of a community, and excitement about their work. Most people have a driving desire to be valued and seek meaning for their lives. If this is the case, the leader who

shows respect for the follower and his work has gone a long way toward receiving loyalty, commitment, and productivity.

Followers often feel a part of a community when they realize there is a purpose in their work. Building healthy relationships among leaders and followers is one way to create community. People, not just followers, want to be a part of an organization where there is an environment of excitement and challenge. It makes them feel engaged and fully alive (Goffee & Jones, 2001).

Traditional forms of leadership are often depicted in the form of a pyramid. The bottom or base represents a great number of lower-level workers; the middle represents a few middle managers; and the top represents one person, the leader. There seems to be a need for a gradual transformation to take place; the pyramid may need to be inverted.

An inverted pyramid positions the leader at the bottom (the foundation) and the followers at the top, the widest part of the pyramid. The inverted pyramid places more responsibility on the followers.

Maxwell (1993) used two pyramids to represent the traditional model of organizational design and a new approach to organizational leadership. The traditional pyramid shows rights increasing as one moves up the pyramid toward the top. The nontraditional pyramid (the inverted one) shows the responsibilities increase as one climbs in the organization.

Hutchenson (1999) stated the centralized, command and control style of leadership is dead. Organizations today are focusing more on team building. This new emphasis replaces the bosses with a network of leader and leadership teams. This shift does not replace the leader. Leaders are needed, but the leadership needs have changed.

Hutchenson (1999) used the sculpture of an American Indian carrying water, located in the lobby of the corporate headquarters for the Herman Miller Company, as a good example of the need for a leadership paradigm change. He noted, American Indians believed the water

carrier was one of the most important persons in the tribe because water, like food and air, is essential for survival.

Leadership is very complex and ever changing, but there are two key sides to leadership. It takes both leaders and followers working together to lead during times of uncertainty. Leaders are vital to the success of an organization; but, without mature and motivated followers, few if any organizations will move to average or above.

### Followers and Leadership Theories

This section will compare the followers' role and responsibility in relationship to each of the leadership theories presented in this work. The first to be considered is Trait Leadership.

Originally, Trait Leadership focused solely on the leader. Generally, the leader was a man who had certain physical characteristics that seemed to qualify him for leadership. Some Trait Leadership studies then moved toward innate consideration of characteristics such as character, motivation, and personality. Then the theorists began researching how followers responded to these characteristics (Northhouse, 1997).

Style Leadership focus is on the task and relational orientation of the leader. The task leader is primarily concerned with getting the job done. The relational leader shows more concern and care for the follower. Studies seem to indicate no one style is superior to the other. The differences are in the situation and the followers' needs (Blake & McCause, 1991).

Path-Goal Leadership points out the path to the goal. The path and the goal are clearly defined. The leader supervises the followers' progression toward the goal, standing ready to step in when delay or obstacles appear. This leadership theory is centered on the follower's need to be motivated by interaction with the leader and achieving the goal (Hughes et al., 1996).

Situational Leadership assists leaders in assessing the followers' need of direction in light of the situation and the followers' readiness and willingness to work toward the goal. The

Situational Leader then adapts his or her interaction in accordance to the followers' readiness and willingness (Hersey et al., 1996).

Transformational Leadership works from the paradigm of the need for change within the leader. Once the leader has begun the change process, he or she can then assist others in their need to change. The Transformational Leader is primarily concerned with personal change. He or she knows that, for change to be accepted, he or she must first change to meet each new challenge (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

The basic tenet of Servant Leadership is to seek to meet the needs of others and then self. If the needs of the individual are met, then the individual and the leader will benefit. In this model, the follower is given more attention than the leader (Greenleaf, 1977).

Women may lead differently than most men. It is proposed they lead by interaction and transformation. Maternal leadership is characterized by strength through caring for people, an emphasis on love, and a positive vision of the future regardless of the situation (Masini, 2001).

### Summary

This chapter presented a very limited definition of leadership, a description of several leadership theories, followers' importance to an organization, and compared the followers' roles and responsibilities to the major leadership theories presented. Chapter 3 presents the methods used to conduct the case studies of three institutions during a time of organizational transitions.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the rationale for selecting a qualitative research design (interpretive mode of inquiry) and the focus of the study. It will also describe the selection of participants and the means of collecting data.

#### Rationale for a Qualitative Multiple-Site Case Study

A qualitative multiple-site case study approach was chosen as the vehicle for studying organizational transition. Three very different organizations were chosen in order to gain a broad understanding of leadership before, during, and after a major organizational transition. In an effort to maximize variations, a hospital, manufacturing plant, and a public library were chosen for study. Each of these organizations had gone through a significant organizational transition in the preceding two years. The top organizational leader and selected subordinates who directly reported to the leaders were interviewed.

Behavioral research can be divided into at least two general forms or approaches: quantitative (positivist) and qualitative (interpretivist). The interpretivist mode of inquiry differs from the positivist mode in the assumptions made about research purpose, research approach, and the researcher's role in the research process (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

The positivist approach assumes social facts have an objective reality and that variables can be identified and relationships measured. The interpretivists propose that reality is socially constructed and variables are complex and difficult to measure. The positivist seeks to collect data from a sample that is representative of a larger population. The findings from this sample are used to generalize to the larger population. Cause and effect are often used to predict future happenings.

The interpretivist conducts research within a context not intended to represent a larger population. The focus is more on the participants and their interactions with some event or circumstance. The positivist begins with a hypothesis and the interpretivist may conclude with a hypothesis. The positivist uses instruments tested for their reliability and validity. The interpretivist (researcher) is part of the instrument. He or she interacts with the participants. The positivist role in research is to remain detached and objective in order to avoid biasing the findings. The interpretivist role is to be personally involved (Glesne, 1999).

Qualitative or interpretivist research was used in this multi-site case study to examine leaders' responses to the complexities of transitions that could possibly threaten the health of an organization. This type of approach allowed for deep, rich, and probing questioning in order to secure as much information as possible.

#### Focus of the Study

This study focused on how three leaders dealt with major organizational transitions in their three separate organizations. Most, if not all, organizations go through times of transition and even crisis, major or minor. Often, this transition or crisis may threaten the survival of the organization. This may come suddenly or gradually. The transition may come as the result of an anticipated or unanticipated force from within or without.

Major changes in society have influenced almost every aspect of organizational life. The workplace has changed, communities have changed, and families have changed. Goods and services are now produced and exchanged differently from in the past. Leaders and followers must adapt, adjust, and seek to survive and prosper in what is sometimes a volatile and even hostile environment.

## Participants

A pilot test for this study was conducted at a Bible college in Central Ohio that had undergone a transition within the preceding two years. The participants in the pilot test were the president and three followers. The three followers were the president's secretary, a faculty member, and a staff person. The president and three followers were interviewed using a guided interview schedule (see Appendices A and B, respectively). These interviews were audiotape recorded and then transcribed. Each interview lasted approximately one hour.

The pilot test allowed me to determine if the guided interview questions would assist in answering the research questions. Conducting a pilot study also gave me an opportunity to practice using the audiotape recorder, hone my interviewing skills, work on taking field notes, and determine approximately how long each interview would take.

Each taped interview was transcribed. I learned by reading the transcriptions that I needed to allow the participants to interject more of their comments than mine. I analyzed the transcripts from the pilot study to determine if the guided interview questions would assist in answering the research questions. There were several changes made to the guided interview as a result of this pilot study (see Appendices C and D).

I merged questions 1 and 2 of the guided interview for the president of the Bible college into one for the three leaders of the multiple-site case study. Question 3 was changed from identifying the major organizational transition myself to having the leaders identify and describe the transition. Question 6 was omitted because it did not align with the emphasis of the study. Questions 7, 8, and 9 were changed to one question. Instead of asking the leaders to describe the climate and culture of the organization prior to the transition, when the transition first became public, and after the transition, I simply asked how the transition affected the climate and culture. I also omitted questions 10 and 11 because I did not believe they were a part of the defined purpose of the study.

The guided interview for the followers was also changed. Instead of just asking them how long they had been at the Bible college, I changed question 1 to, "Please spell your name, identify your position, and how long you have been in your position." This was changed because of the trouble identifying and spelling the person's name (when transcribing the audiotape) and to determine if they were in their position before, during, and after the major organizational transition. Question 4 was omitted because the study did not center on the followers' response to the transition. Questions 5, 6, and 7 (dealing with the climate and culture) were changed to one question. These three questions were combined into one question: "As a result of the previously defined organizational transition, how, if at all, has the climate and culture changed?"

Three criteria were used in choosing the sites for this case study. First, they needed to be located fairly close to my home and work for ease of interviewing and gathering data. Second, they were organizations that had gone through major organizational transitions within the last two years. Thirdly, they were chosen because they represent varying types of organizations.

Because of the nature of the research topic (Leading Before, During, and After a Major Organizational Transition), each leader was given the opportunity to identify the organizational transition and choose two persons to be interviewed.

The leaders were given two criteria to follow when choosing the participants. They must have been with the organization before, during, and after the organizational transition and report directly to the leader. I also requested that the third participant must be the administrative assistant, thinking this person would have a great deal of awareness of the transition and the leader's behavior before, during, and after the transition.

I believed the participants would provide richer and deeper insights if they had a measure of control in the interview process. Four persons from each organization were interviewed, except in one instance when two persons from the same department chose to be interviewed together. (This did not seem to be proper procedure, but it was the only way they would agree to

be interviewed.) I included them in the case study thinking they might have confidential information that might impact the study.

Five persons participated in the case study at the hospital. They were the chief executive officer (CEO), corporate vice president of finance (CFO), corporate vice president of human resources, human resources coordinator, and executive assistant to the CEO. The participants at the hospital had worked there from two to three-and-a-half years. The CEO had been with the hospital for two years. The CFO had served in that office for two-and-a-half years. Both the corporate vice president of human resources and the human resources coordinator had worked at the hospital for approximately three years. The executive assistant had served three-and-a-half years.

There were four participants from the manufacturing plant: the president/owner, chief financial officer (CFO), sales manager, and executive assistant to the president/owner. Those interviewed at the manufacturing plant had worked at the company from five to 15 years. The president/owner started the company approximately 15 years ago. The CFO had served for five years. The sales manager had been with the company for 10 years. The executive assistant to the president/owner had been with the company for five years.

At the public library, I interviewed the director and three subordinates. The subordinates were the treasurer, deputy clerk/secretary, and technology specialist. The library participants had been in their respective positions from 9 to 24 years. The director of the public library system had served 24 years in the system. The treasurer had been with the library for 13 years, deputy clerk/secretary 10 years, and technology specialist 9 years.

### Collection of Data

After the leaders had chosen the participants and sought their permission and willingness to be a part of the case study, the leaders then communicated their names, addresses, positions

held, phone numbers, and email addresses to me. Each participant was sent a letter explaining the research project and asking him or her to participate in this study.

An informed consent form (see Appendix E) was sent along with each letter, describing the purpose and duration of the study, procedures and possible risks/discomforts, persons to contact for questions, a statement of confidentiality, compensation for medical treatment, and a section on voluntary participation. It also provided a place for the participants and researcher to sign and date. The consent form contained a dated and initialed stamp of approval from the Institutional Review Board of East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee.

Before starting each interview, the participants were directed to examine the consent form and ask any questions they might have. If they had not already signed the consent form, I had them sign it. After the consent form was signed, each participant was given a signed copy of the consent form.

The interviews were conducted at each of the three organizations. Each interview was conducted in the privacy of a comfortable conference room. The door was shut and only the participant(s) and the interviewer were in the room. An audiotape recorder was placed in the middle of the table. I explained the purpose of the tape recorder and sought each participant's permission to tape the interview and received permission from each one.

I started each session with a brief discussion of the research. I also gave each one an opportunity to address any questions or concerns he or she might have had about the research and the interviewing process.

The interviews began by asking demographic questions (position, title, years with the organization, and previous position). The time spent in this process seemed to relax the participants and started the development of a measure of rapport. Throughout the interviews, I was seeking to build rapport by allowing the participants to lead the discussion, with the interview questions serving as a guide. I worked for a naturalistic exchange of information.

The first person to be interviewed in each case study was the leader. The leader was asked to identify and describe an organizational transition. I explained that the phrase organizational transition was an event in the life of the organization, within the last two years, that had a major effect upon the entire organization. The leader was also told the transition he or she chose would be used as a basis for interviewing the other participants.

In-depth interviewing is used in qualitative research to allow for a more informal exchange between the interviewee and interviewer (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Probing questions were asked as part of the interview. Glesne (1999) emphasized interviewing should be “structured, open, and deeply probing” (p. 93).

Although interview questions were structured, I sought to remain open to new insights and directions as they surfaced. The deep probing allowed for thick, rich dialogue. Each participant was given an opportunity to add any additional comments at the conclusion of the interview.

The audiotaped responses were transcribed and returned to the interviewee with a self-addressed/postage-paid envelope for his or her review of the accuracy of the interview. Each participant was asked to review the transcript then return it with any corrections. A letter (see Appendix F) was enclosed, along with the transcript, thanking him or her for participation in the study, with a deadline (44 days) to return the corrected manuscript. The letter also stated, if the transcriptions were not returned by the deadline, I would assume all was correct. Only 4 of the 13 participants returned transcripts with corrections.

No more than two interviews were conducted in one day. Lincoln and Guba (1985) believed spending sufficient time with the individual and focusing in detail on the elements that are most relevant to the study is important in establishing credibility.

### Data Analysis

Each transcript was read and reread using constant comparison analysis. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) defined data analysis as the process of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. They noted this process starts before, proceeds during, and after data collection (constant comparison analysis). The process of data reduction is to take a vast amount of information and reduce it to a conceptual framework. In my study, data reduction is reflected in my listening to the audiotapes and reviewing each transcript and field notes.

Data display is the process of organizing and compressing the collected information. At this point, I went through each transcript, writing down key words or phrases. Then I took the list of key words and phrases and started writing them on index cards, under specific headings (each card had a specific title). Then I pasted the index cards on the poster board under compressed categories. I then went to the transcripts to cut sections of the transcripts into pieces and pasted them on poster board under the compressed categories.

I used the displayed data on the poster boards to draw conclusions. It was at this point I sought to interpret and draw meaning. I started noting patterns, themes, and clustering of information.

### Trustworthiness

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) noted that member checking is very important to trustworthiness of qualitative research. My member checking consisted of having each organizational leader review my conclusions to determine if they were consistent with the information they provided during the interview.

Krista Stonerock, who is a Ph.D. candidate at Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, served as the auditor for this study (see Appendix G). She was chosen because she is in the process of concluding a qualitative dissertation and is a fellow faculty member at the college where I teach. She reviewed the data analysis process, conclusions, and member checking.

### Summary

Methods used to conduct these case studies were described in this chapter. A pilot study was conducted to refine my interview skills, questions, and the interview protocol. Individual in-depth interviews were conducted with three organizational leaders and 10 direct subordinates of the leaders. Chapter 4 describes the organizational transition for each case study.

## CHAPTER 4

### ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSITION

Understanding organizational transition is preeminent to the understanding of the three case studies chosen for this study. The purpose of conducting on-site interviews was to seek to determine what, if any, effect a major organizational transition had on each leaders style and the climate and culture of each organization. Interviewing allowed me to observe physical expressions and body language. An observance of voice tones and level also helped me understand the intensity of the conversation. A short narrative about the hospital, manufacturing plant, and public library will seek to define each setting and the organizational transition.

#### The Organizational Transitions

##### The Hospital

The hospital provides both inpatient and outpatient services. It is also involved in other joint ventures: physician practices, home health care, Hospice (care for the terminally ill), and laundry service for other hospitals. The hospital employs approximately 575 people.

Recently, the hospital has gone through leadership changes. The CEO retired and an interim person served in that position for approximately two years. Then the vice president of finances resigned. These changes caused some upheaval in the business office. “Just from my perspective, I do know that the finance office was in disarray,” said the senior executive assistant to the president and CEO.

When discussing the organizational transition, the corporate vice president of human resources recounted, “There was a Thursday or Friday at the end of one week that there was pretty much a meltdown over at the business office.” The corporate vice president of human resources and the human resources coordinator were called over to the business office shortly

after the “meltdown.” The business office is located away from the hospital but in the same city. There were employees standing around complaining about a variety of operational issues. They also discovered another vice president, who had no responsibility for the area, taking employee complaints, further complicating the problem. The corporate vice president of human resources observed, “There was a lot of anger, a lot of dissatisfaction, a lot of confusion on the part of the managers as well as the employees.”

In order to get the situation under control as quickly as possible, the corporate vice president of human resources and the human resources coordinator decided to sit down with everyone involved to gather all perspectives on the situation. The vice president, to whom the employees were complaining, was consulted first about what had happened. Then they interviewed the manager of the business office and sought his observation of what precipitated the “meltdown.” After that, they decided the best plan to address the situation would be to “meet individually with each employee and hear [their] perceptions of the situation,” recalled the corporate vice president of human resources.

The leaders of the human resources department found there were multiple issues that led to the “meltdown.” There were issues such as work overload, lack of clearly defined job descriptions, and lack of leadership. The employees also stressed that they had not been adequately trained on the different programs being used in the business office.

Shortly after this event, the vice president of finances resigned and an interim vice president of finances was appointed. The resignation added to the stress of the situation, but the interim vice president of financial affairs “took on the facilitation of the change . . . to at least stabilize the situation,” recalled the human resources coordinator. Later, the interim vice president was appointed the vice president of finance.

The new vice president of finance worked with the new CEO to develop a plan for restructuring the business department. It was decided the first place to start was to look at the mission and vision of the hospital. The name was changed from “business office” to “patient

financial services.” “Let’s realize who we serve. We need to serve the patient,” noted the vice president of finance. The new name, patient financial services, represented a change in the focus of the department. The CEO of the hospital explained their reasoning for the name change:

First of all, the focus was upon the patient. The patient was identified as the customer. Without the customer, there would be no need for the business office. The word *patient* was also a reminder of the department connection to the mission and vision of the hospital. For the most part, the department had been viewed as a collection service; now its mission is service to patients.

By the time the present CEO arrived, the accounts receivables were way beyond the industry norm for bad debt (monies not likely to be collected). The vice president of finance commented, “The norm is to have bad debt within 5% to 6% of gross revenue, and we were dramatically higher than that.” The hospital’s rate was 11% to 12%, double the industry standard. It was estimated that in the year 2000, \$3,500,000 to \$4,000,000 was left uncollected. Bills were being sent out with very little expectations of their being paid. The CEO found that \$125,000 per year was being spent on envelopes and postage alone; this did not count the cost for employees to handle these bills. By 2001, the amount of patient debt had risen to \$25,000,000. Through many efforts, this financial risk was lowered to \$9,000,000 in just one year.

After the name was changed, a collection firm was hired to collect the accumulation of debt in order to free up the department to work on present billing and collections. The CEO said, “I went to each department and said, ‘You now have a new start; forget about the old debt. This is a billing service, not a collection agency.’” The vice president of finance created what he called an “early out program” for collection of debt. It involved four points of correspondence: two letters and two phone calls. This is almost opposite to the way it had previously been done. Under the previous system, if patients were late paying bills, they were sent to a collection agency. This process meant most of the bills went to a collection agency. The new system with

four points of correspondence meant only a small portion of debt was going to a collection agency.

Throughout this entire process, the functions of each employee in the new department were being restructured. The next step in reorganization was to align employees with the positions that best suited their knowledge and abilities. Each person had to apply for the desired position and be interviewed. “No one lost their jobs, but they had to interview for those jobs . . . this represented upheaval too,” said the corporate vice president of human resources. The corporate vice president of human resources went on to say, “This process could have been very stressful. No one would lose their job, but they would have to convince the human resource department they were best aligned with the job for which they were interviewing.” In some cases, employees were reassigned to new positions and departments, but most continued in their present positions.

Along with the employees’ reactions came the reactions from the community. As the CEO commented, “The business department’s billing process was alienating the public . . . making them so mad that they would go somewhere else versus trying to work with our billing system. And when they would call in, the customer service was poor to nonexistent. So, in my mind, we needed to get the community back to the table with the hospital. In order to do that, we needed to get the employees back to the table with the hospital.”

When the corporate vice president of human resources first moved to this community, she recalls, “There were people asking me where I got a job and I told them; and my neighbors said to me, ‘Do you know how bad it is there? I think you’ve made a mistake. You must not know enough [about the hospital].’” This is just one example of the community’s perception of the hospital. Other employees had similar reactions from their neighbors.

Since the changes in the billing office have been implemented, the community has a different view of the hospital. The human resource coordinator stated, “People in the community

see the change. People know it's better. People know that they aren't getting old bills. You know things aren't perfect, but it's improved."

### The Manufacturing Plant

The manufacturing plant is a privately-owned company that sells various types of steel fasteners. The company had its beginnings 15 years ago with the owner working out of his parents' house. "I started this company, actually, out of my parents' bedroom. They had passed away, and I still owned the house. I set up a little table and chairs and worked over the telephone," recalled the owner. He would purchase coiled steel and contract with another company to process the steel into fasteners. Approximately two years later, he hired his first employee.

As the business grew, a house was purchased and converted into office space. Staff were hired as the business continued to expand. After approximately five years, a key personnel decision was made with the hiring of a sales manager. The sales manager remains with the business some 10 years later.

Three years before this case study, the plant had grown to the point it needed a larger facility. "We decided to build an actual facility so we could do things that we were having done on the outside right on site," the owner noted. A large dilapidated manufacturing facility was purchased and torn down. A multimillion-dollar plant was built to accommodate the growing company and to help make that part of town a little nicer. After the plant was built, they stored steel for another company and shipped it to them as they needed it. At the time of the interview, the staff had grown to approximately 50 people, and the entire process of manufacturing fasteners was being done at one site.

The event used for this case study was the relocating and building of the steel plant. The president/owner was also very excited about the next step in his vision for the company. A two-

and-a-half-million-dollar slitter, that slits the steel into the desired shape and size, was due to be delivered in October, 2002, and functional in December, 2002.

### The Public Library

The organizational transition for the public library was the building of a new branch and the subsequent moving of some administrative offices away from the main office. The public library was a county library that had grown from 45 employees to approximately 60 full-time employees in a five-year period of time. The county library system has one main location and six branches.

The branch was described as large and equal in size to the main facility, and the other five were much smaller. “The main library and the new branch function almost like two halves of a main library,” recalled the director. The main library was housed in a Carnegie building approximately 100 years old, which the administrators thought needed to be expanded; however, it was landlocked. The director noted, “We tried everything to expand, but we’re next to residences and a school is back of us. We can’t expand on this site.”

The transition involved the building of a new facility, splitting of staff, and hiring of additional personnel for the new branch. At the same time, they implemented changes involving the Internet. “A lot of change in a short period of time,” recalled the director.

It seemed as though an “us versus them” mentality quickly developed, especially at the new branch. The director stated, “Almost instantly, when this happened, we started having an ‘us and them.’ I mean almost instantly.”

Formal meetings were established to help with decision making and the flow of communication between the two branches. “Before the new building came along, we didn’t have a lot of formal meetings set up because we didn’t need to. If I wanted to go talk to somebody, I would just go to talk to them, also keeping an eye on how the building looked and what was going on in different parts of the building,” recalled the director of the public library.

### Summary

The hospital had been through a series of transitions that led up to one key transition. Some viewed the previous CEO as a micro-manager, and the CEO believed he had to have his hand in everything. Over time, this led to inefficiencies in many areas, especially in the business office. The major organizational transition for the manufacturing plant was the purchasing and demolishing of an old factory building to make way for a new plant. The company had outgrown its makeshift offices, and the president/owner made the decision to build a multimillion-dollar manufacturing plant. The first step was to construct the building and move the offices. The second step was to start manufacturing fasteners on-site. The library's organizational transition was the building of a new branch to house library services and some administrative staff.

## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This chapter will analyze how the leaders led before, during, and after a major organizational transition and will seek to determine how, if at all, the leader changed as a result. The second aspect sought to identify some commonalities in the way the leaders approached the transitions. Finally, I examined what effect the major organizational transition seemed to have had upon the climate and culture.

#### The Hospital

In this particular case study, the present CEO was not involved with the hospital before the event occurred. The previous CEO's approach to leadership may have precipitated the need for major organizational transition.

The senior executive assistant to the president and CEO compared the current CEO with the ones who had been in that position before. She noted, "It's a complete 180-degree turn from what I had worked with before. The other two previous [CEOs] were very controlling." His previous experience seemed to make him the right choice for the position. The present CEO stated, "I spent 22 years in the Air Force as a hospital administrator. We lived all over the United States, outside Tokyo and London."

The corporate vice president of human resources held the opinion the retired CEO had paralyzed the organization by his micro-management and also noted "the 'meltdown' occurred because the manager of the business office was not directing the office and the employees were frustrated with the CEO's method of management." The corporate vice president of human resources said, "The retired CEO was a micro-manager of the greatest sort." The CFO noted that the retired CEO "was the only one who could make a decision." The administrative assistant

said, “If there was a decision to be made, the department heads had to line up at his office and wait their turn.”

When the present CEO arrived, he assured everyone that his leadership style was different from that of his predecessors. The senior executive assistant said, “He [the new CEO] believes that everyone here in management, as well as employees, was hired for your expertise and your knowledge, your skills. You run your department. If he has to step in, it’s not going to be a good thing.” He obviously trusts his employees and managers, which will, in turn, be a motivating factor for them to excel in their positions.

After 100 days in his administration, the present CEO identified the key event as customer service and low morale in the business office. The CEO stated:

Customer service was non-existent, especially in the business office. I spent the first 100 days of my administration visiting with persons in the community and walking around the hospital. I heard horror stories from the community, mostly related to billing and collections. We would save their lives and then kill them with billing and collections. The corporate vice president of finance said of this approach, “[The CEO’s] philosophy, coming into this organization, making it better, was to serve the community. We didn’t have any pride in ourselves, and so one of the initiatives in changing things was, ‘let’s just have a little bit of pride, and let’s realize who we serve.’”

His leadership was also reflected in the manner used in dealing with an irate patient. An employee was speaking with a patient on the phone and, without putting the patient on hold, discussed the conversation with coworkers. The patient overheard and was extremely irate. Because this was the main problem with the business office – bad customer service – the CEO wanted to correct the situation. The CEO said of the situation, “Why punish someone for doing something wrong? We’re going to find out why [this happened] and we’re going to make sure that it doesn’t happen again.” In doing this, the employee came forward and recalled why this happened and they were able to keep that same scenario from occurring again. Because the

employee knew he or she would not be punished, he or she probably felt more comfortable coming forward.

The leader described his leadership style as participative. The CEO saw himself as a facilitator and guide. He said he believed in encouraging his followers by showing them appreciation and respect.

According to the CEO, “Much of a leader’s responsibility involves encouraging, mentoring/training, and confidence building.” In times of crisis or stress, he would say to his staff, “Unless God comes to get us, the sun is going to come up tomorrow.” After assessing the situation in the business office, one of the first things he did was to assess the employees’ skill. He said:

After I had assessed the situation in the business offices, each employee had to apply for a position and be interviewed. Everyone was assured they would not lose their job, but they might be reassigned. If their skills did not match the job, we assigned them to a position we felt better matched their skills. The department already had skilled personnel, but they were not strategically aligned to best utilize their skills.

The present CEO said, “After the employees were matched to a job, they were encouraged to go do it. Go do your best and have courage. Don’t be afraid to fail; just do your best.”

In reference to transition, he said, “A leader should prepare his people for a transition on the front end, before it occurs.” According to his philosophy, “Transition will come and mistakes will be made, but the key is to do your job and learn from the mistakes.”

The followers’ described the CEO as: intelligent, trustworthy, someone who hates redundancy (doing a follower’s job), easygoing, practices walk-around leadership, has great integrity, supportive, provides clear vision, and is a morale builder. One follower described the CEO as a catalyst for change.

## The Manufacturing Plant

The president/owner of the manufacturing plant started his business on his own. He did everything himself by working over the telephone for two years, and then he hired his first employee. While he was building his company from scratch, he was making contacts and preparations for growth. He realized that he needed to hire more employees and relocate to a new facility. Regarding this change, the president/owner recalled:

Starting my company as a one-person operation in the bedroom of my parents' home and progressing to building a multimillion-dollar operation and adding staff along the way has had its rewards and responsibilities. Building and occupying the new plant was a big financial move with greater risks.

The leader was confident the company would be successful in this new plant. He emphasized that teamwork, guidance, encouragement, respect, responsibility, communication, leader accessibility, confidence, training, and customer service would mean success.

He said he does not lose sleep over the move. He stated that, if things go south [go bad], that would present new opportunities. He compared running this company to playing a game and instilling a sense of a team in his employees. The president's philosophy was one of a "locker-room mentality": To him, planning was spending time in the locker room preparing and planning for the game. He also believes in no bonuses based on individual performance, but rather on the overall performance of the company. The president/owner said, "Pete Rose is my hero. Pete played every game as though it was the World Series." The president/owner went on to say, "If the team does well, we all do well." The president/owner said he believed there are no certainties in life, and people do not perform well under duress.

The president/owner referred to the company as a team and the business as a pie. His philosophy was that, if the leader and followers do a little extra work, the entire team will not have to share a piece of the pie with any other company. Another one of the president/owner's approaches to team leadership was that when an issue or problem arises he asks himself and

others, “How can we get better or do it better (president/owner)?” The CFO pointed out that the president/owner lets people make mistakes without fear of punishment. He also said he “gives them their head” [analogy of riding a well-trained horse] without a lot of interference.

The sales manager pointed out one key aspect of the leader that inspired him was that he steps right up to the edge and even hangs over the edge. The sales manager noted that the president/owner’s willingness to take risks gave the followers confidence to do the same.

The followers described the leader as someone who is precise. The office manager noted that, during the organizational transition, the president/owner was in control of the construction and move to the larger plant. The office manager said he was very precise, wanted everything to be laid out before we even started, as to whose responsibility was what, and everybody was to take care of their own paperwork, their own organizations, but he had a plan lined out that everybody should try to follow so there was no confusion, no lost materials. “And he gives a lot of thought to the beginning process before it’s ever started.”

The office administrator went on to describe his willingness to empower others by delegating the daily activities to those in charge of each department. The office manager said he wanted to know what was being put into the process but he trusted his employees to take care of the details.

The sales manager also pointed out, “He identified early on that there were things he was good at and there were things he had shortcomings in, and he has been able to seek confidence from people who might have areas of expertise that he doesn’t have.”

Throughout the transitions with the manufacturing company, the president/owner did not change his leadership style and approach. He found what works best for his company and has been extremely successful. He subscribes to giving everyone a chance and guiding them through each day. The president/owner also maintains a sense of team throughout his company. Whether it is with the plant employees or the business office, he wanted his employees to work

as a team and even as a family. He looks for opportunity in every situation. He said, “I just don’t see any situation that would come about that we couldn’t work our way out of.”

### The Public Library

Prior to the construction of the new facility, the director’s leadership style was informal. “We didn’t have a lot of formal meeting structures set up because we didn’t need to. So, if I wanted to go talk to somebody, I would just go talk to them,” she commented. Because everyone was working in close, cramped quarters, she was able to “keep an eye on how the building looked and what was going on in different parts of the building” when she would walk through and talk to her employees. It appeared she resisted the transition because she did not want the staff divided and out from under her watchful care.

During the construction process and hiring of new employees, the director was not completely happy; however, she was tolerating the change. The staff being split between two branches caused some turmoil among the employees. The director was not excited about the new building because she was losing some of the staff with whom she had worked very closely. “I think there was really some sadness, almost a grieving process going on, because we didn’t see each other everyday. It was like kids leaving home,” the director noted.

The board of directors informed the director that they did not want her to take on all the responsibility of building the new branch. She noted, “I would say I definitely delegated more and would give the managers more responsibility and expect them to take more responsibility. I had to figure out what things they could do on their own and what they needed to check with me about.” The director seeks input on major issues, but she makes the final decision.

The director acknowledged the two parts of one-half (a split staff) was not the ideal situation but it was better than what they had. She noted that the ideal situation would be to build a facility that would house all the administrative offices under one roof. The treasurer of

the library said, “I think she [the director] is looking forward to the day when it can all be under one roof.”

The deputy clerk/secretary of the library was working in the library two years prior to the event. She has worked with the director before, during, and after the event took place. The deputy clerk/secretary stated, “[The transition] was stressful for [the director]; she always had to be on top of things, and she had to be the hard one. She couldn’t let her guard down.” She commented that before the construction took place she was intimidated by the director but is not now. Most likely the reason she is not intimidated by the director now is because she said, “I have to be the tattler at times.” The deputy clerk/secretary has become the director’s informant, another method for the director to maintain control.

After the transition from one branch to two was completed, the library staff needed a new form of communication. They had to stay informed on what was happening at both branches. The director never liked having formal meetings, but she was forced to develop a meeting structure to keep the lines of communication open. Some of the meetings take place in the older building, while others will be held in the new branch. The director said, “The managers especially are not forced to stay in their own building all the time.” She wants some interpersonal relationships to exist between the branches.

#### Commonalities Among the Case Study Leaders

There were several commonalities among the leaders’ approaches to organizational transition. The leaders were able to identify the need, recognize alternatives, and choose what he or she thought to be the best course of action.

The proper identification of the need was critical to the transition. Once he or she identified the organizational need, they proceeded to seek alternatives. After recognizing alternatives, he or she then plotted the course of action they thought would best lead the organization toward meeting the need.

## Climate and Culture of the Organization

### The Hospital

When an organizational transition occurs, the culture and climate will most likely be affected. The hospital went through such a transition. The corporate vice president of human resources stated:

The event at the business office developed as a result of micro-management at the top, misalignment of employees, and a lack of adequate training. It was a dysfunctional department, a fractured group. Before the present leader came, there were many unhappy employees. The employees had little incentive, push, or desire to improve. They were underpaid and unappreciated.

The participants who were working at the hospital during this time described the CEO who retired as a micro-manager. The senior executive assistant noted, “The other previous [CEOs] were very controlling. People in management levels were not trusted to make decisions for their departments, and I think other people had trouble doing that because that was their crutch.” He observed the previous CEO needed to have his hand in every aspect of the running of the hospital.

It was as though only one person in the organization could make a decision and that person was the CEO. Some of those interviewed talked about the fear department heads had of the CEO. When the current CEO took over, the senior executive assistant observed, “[The new CEO] took that crutch away from [the employees] and they had to learn to make decisions on their own.”

The administrative assistant noted, “The entire atmosphere of the hospital has changed since the present CEO took over. Camaraderie is developing in the business office.” The corporate vice president of financial services told about a party the followers planned and

organized. He said, “At Halloween, they [business office employees] dressed up in costumes representing the 101 Dalmatian theme. The newspaper even came and took a picture of them in their costumes. They were so proud to see their picture in the paper.”

The vice president of the business office believed it was important to celebrate or even relish what is learned from mistakes. He told about the time he received a complaint about a patient being put on hold too long:

I addressed the issue by talking to all who were involved. I did this in an attitude of, “Let us learn from our mistakes.” The next day an employee came to me and told me she had been thinking about the complaint and remembered bumping into a phone, knocking it into a trashcan. The real issue was not customer service but limited working space.

Complaints represent opportunities to improve.

He noted a good leadership approach to problem solving is to listen to concerns; get to the center of the problem; take time for the employees; and demand accountability. He pointed out that:

Healthy teams are the key to a healthy organization. We used a team approach to reach our goal of a customer-friendly department. First, the right number of staff were hired. Second, employees’ skills were matched with a position. Once the person had reached a certain level of competency, they were then trained to perform other duties. The team was taught to take care of the little things. For example, watch the window where patients walk up for service, pick up the phone when it rings, call insurance companies to insure on-time payments, and watch for the ‘biggest fire.’ When they saw the ‘biggest fire,’ they were to approach it as a team.

## The Manufacturing Plant

Before the building and relocation of the company, the manufacturing company employed a few workers and was in a small office building. The culture and climate seemed to remain much the same throughout the transition.

The president/owner has been able to allow his employees to be a team. When he began hiring new employees for the upgrade in the company, he carefully chose each one himself. The sales manager of the company noted, “He [president/owner] has the innate ability to identify and motivate people without their even knowing it. He has the ability to surround himself with people who complement his strengths and compensate for his weaknesses.

By leading his company in the ways he has, the culture and climate have remained somewhat fixed. One participant said, “The employees are excited about coming to work and are excited to see their employer each day.” His administrative assistant said, “He wants his employees to feel comfortable coming to him and confiding in him. He encourages his employees to take time for their families.” The president/owner commented, “Why make [the employees] as miserable as possible? I think that, when they come in, they enjoy seeing me. At the same time, they know they can walk in here at anytime to talk about anything. I think they know that, if they have to go home because their kid is playing baseball that day, I let them.”

The administrative assistant said, “We want to do well for him, make him proud of us.” The sales manager said, “We want to make decisions the way we think [the president/owner] would. We are proud of him and our company. [The president/owner] is the spirit of this company. His smile and laughter give that little extra motivation. We miss him when he is not here. It seems like something is missing.”

The sales manager used the analogy of a family to describe the climate and culture. “We see ourselves as one big family. Like a parent, he [the president/owner] is preparing for us to be on our own. You will never hear him say ‘my company’; he always refers to it as our company.”

The CFO said, “We are a close-knit company.” The sales manager noted, “We are proud of him.”

### The Public Library

Before the new building was built and staff were split, there seemed to be a sense of camaraderie and close relationship. The older building was not the most efficient arrangement for the staff of the business office. Everyone was on top of each other in the crowded and cramped space; therefore, they were forced to have close interaction with one another. The director and the employees of the library could easily communicate with each other just by walking around.

Before the new branch was built, when they were all in one place, the director could walk around and talk with everyone. Now she cannot do that. Even though there was a great deal of clutter and overcrowding of personnel, the director seemed to function better in one setting.

The participants portrayed the new branch member as having more of an independent attitude. The director even noted that the followers at the new branch were going through the process of asserting their independence and finding a new identity. The deputy clerk/secretary for the public library noted, “When we were all in one building, it was easier to communicate and to organize our luncheons and our parties and outside activities that we liked to do.” It seemed as though the sense of a family and the close relationships were being lost in the move to the new branch.

The director seemed to be sad and grieving over the splitting of the staff. The leader said it was like “children leaving home.” Not only did they assert their independence and seek their own identity, they seemed to lack direction.

One follower described the issues with the new branch as an “east-versus-west syndrome” (the right side of the track versus the wrong side of the track). The technology specialist said there was “a lot of sounding out of people.” He was the only participant from the

original branch who relocated to the new branch. He also noted that communication became more impersonal (i.e., emails, FAX, memos, and phone calls).

One follower indicated that, once the building was built and there was a time for settling of feelings, the leader was starting to get a better handle on the situation. Formal meetings were established to improve communication and decision making. One participant's comment confirmed the leader's thoughts about formal meetings. She said, "The leader is not a meeting person; she is a walk-around leader." The followers indicated that they worked better under a more structured system of decision making. Work groups and functional committees seemed to help the followers with the functional aspects of the library.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions

This study focused on the effects on the leader as well as the climate and culture of an organization following a major organizational transition. To study the effect upon the leader, I sought to determine if the leader led differently during and after a major organizational transition. To determine if the climate and culture of the organization changed as a result of the transition, I simply asked the participants to describe the organizational climate and culture before and after the transition.

This portion of the research seeks to answer research questions one, two, and three. I used these three questions to determine if the leaders' style changed as a result of the organizational transition.

It seemed as though the transition affected each of the leaders in various ways, but their leadership style seemed to remain somewhat similar to what it was prior to the transition. It seemed as though each leader sought to adapt to the situation and, for the most part, was successful in doing so.

In my opinion, the CEO of the hospital faced the largest challenge. The transitions he led the hospital through had begun before his arrival, and there was a great deal of conflict in the organization. He realized his first 100 days would set the tone for the direction of the hospital. He surveyed the situation, listened to the community, and then took action.

The manufacturing plant was an enjoyable case study in that the transition was mostly positive. The CEO knew where he wanted to take the company and went out to make it happen. To make his vision a reality he knew he would have to surround himself with persons who could function together as a team. The followers seemed to like the fact the president/owner was in control, and it pleased them he would be willing to take them along on the journey. He adapted his style of leadership to meet the situation but moved quickly back into his original role once the transition was complete.

The public library case study seemed to exemplify what I would expect from a very traditional organization. There seemed to be resistance to the changes brought about by the building of a new branch and the splitting of staff.

The director had been at the library for a number of years. She took ownership of the library system. She talked about the transition as though it was very personal. She looked forward to the way things used to be (back under one roof).

Research question four sought to determine how the organizational transition effected the climate and culture. There appeared to be more of an effect on the climate and culture than on the leadership styles.

Before and during the transition at the hospital there was conflict, dissatisfaction, low morale, and distrust. After the transition conflict was subsiding, employees were more satisfied, morale was improving, and the employees seemed to be more trusting. The culture of the hospital shifted from a departmental mindset to patient services.

The climate at the manufacturing plant seemed to be energized by the building of a new plant and the relocation of the company. The culture of the plant was strengthened by changed lives and more community interaction.

Both the climate and the culture of the public library were affected by the transition. The climate went from the attitude of a close knit family to a family with step-children (the staff at the new branch were described as step-children). The culture of the library was altered from an informal organization (the director and staff walked around and made decisions) to a more structured organization (formal meetings).

### Recommendations

I recommend future researchers pursue each of the issues I presented, independent of each other. I believe I attempted too much when I combined the effects a major organizational transition had on the leaders and the effect the transition had on the climate and culture. One issue would be how transition effects the leader. For example, the effect of how a major transition effected a leader could be studied in light of the gender and age of the leader or in relationship to different types of organizations and transitions. The same would be suggested for: how the leader effects transition, how followers are effected by transition, and how transition effects followers.

The effects of a major organizational transition on the climate and culture could be studied separate from the effects the organizational transition had upon the leader. Variables such as types of organizations, different leadership styles, and the size of the organization could be considered when researching the effect of a major transition on the climate and culture.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### GUIDED INTERVIEW FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE BIBLE COLLEGE

1. How long have you been president of the Bible College?
2. What was your vocation before coming to the Bible College?
3. What do you think precipitated several faculty members leaving the College in the last two years?
4. Describe your leadership prior to the major organizational transition.
5. Describe any changes that occurred in your leadership, as a result of the major Organizational Transition.

Probe: Did you lead differently during the transition? If so, how?

Did you lead differently after the transition? If so, how?

6. How did the followers respond to the consequences (intended or unintended) brought about by your response to the transition?
7. Describe the climate and culture of the organization prior to the transition.
8. Describe the climate and culture of the organization when the transition first became public knowledge.
9. Describe the climate and culture of the organization today.
10. What effects have the experience of dealing with the transition had on you personally and professionally?
11. Knowing what you know now, what (if anything) would you do differently?
12. Other

## APPENDIX B

### GUIDED INTERVIEW FOR FOLLOWERS AT THE BIBLE COLLEGE

1. How long have you worked at the Bible College?
2. What do you think precipitated several faculty members leaving?
3. Describe the President's leadership prior to the major organizational transition.  
Probe: Did he lead differently during the transition? If so, how?  
Did he lead differently after the transition? If so, how?
4. How did you and others respond to the consequences (intended or unintended) brought about by the President's response to the transition?
5. Describe the climate and culture of the Bible College prior to several faculty members leaving in the last two years.
6. Describe the climate and culture of the Bible College when the major organizational transition first became public knowledge.
7. Describe the climate and culture of the Bible College today.
8. What effects did the experience of dealing with the major organizational transition have on the President personally and professionally?
9. Knowing what you know now, what (if anything) should the President have done differently?
10. Other comments.

## APPENDIX C

### GUIDED INTERVIEW FOR LEADERS

1. Please spell your name, identify your present position, and how long you have been in this position.
2. What was your previous position or vocation?
3. Identify and describe an event in the last two years that you consider to be a major organizational transition?
4. Describe your leadership prior to the transition.  
Probe: Did you lead differently during the transition? If so, how?  
Do you lead differently now?
5. As a result of the previously defined organizational transition, how, if at all, has the climate and culture of the organization changed?
6. Other comments:

## APPENDIX D

### GUIDED INTERVIEW FOR FOLLOWERS

1. Please spell your name, identify your present position, and how long you have been in this position.
2. I will describe the transition the leader identified and then ask you to describe your perception of the transition.
3. Describe the leader's style and behavior before the transition.
4. Did his or her leadership style or behavior change during the transition? If so, how?
5. Did his or her leadership style or behavior change after the transition? If so, how?
6. As a result of the previously defined organizational transition, how, if at all, has the climate and culture of the organization changed?
7. Other comments:

APPENDIX E  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

East Tennessee State University

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR: Charles D. McCowan

TITLE OF PROJECT: Leading Before, During, and After a Major Organizational Threat

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to seek to identify the way leaders led before, during, and after a major organizational threat, how direct subordinates were effected by the leader's response to the threat, and what were the physical and professional effects on the leader. A hospital, manufacturing plant, and a public library will be the setting for this study. This research is connected to a dissertation.

The findings from this study may help leaders and direct subordinates of these three organizations better understand, prepare, and respond to future threats. It may also help similar organizations do the same.

DURATION

The participants will be interviewed for approximately 60 minutes. After the interview is transcribed, they will be asked to read the transcribed interview and make any additions or corrections. It is projected that they will not be directly involved in the study for more than three months.

PROCEDURES

The investigator will use a guided interview protocol to interview the participants. The interview will be tape-recorded (with the permission of the subject.)

POSSIBLE RISK/DISCOMFORTS

The discussion of a major organizational threat may cause the subject to experience some slight cognitive or emotional discomfort.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS and/or COMPENSATION

As the participants are interviewed and reflect on their response to a major organizational threat, they may learn how to better respond to future threats. The participants will not receive any form of compensation.

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or problems regarding this study, you may contact Charles D. McCowan (Dave) at 740-477-7850 or email at [cmccowan@biblecollege.edu](mailto:cmccowan@biblecollege.edu). The participant can also contact Dr. Louise MacKay, of The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at East Tennessee

State University, at 423-439-7615 or email at [mackay@etsu.edu](mailto:mackay@etsu.edu). Dr. James Fox, III, Chair-ETSU Campus Institutional Review Board, can be contacted at 423-439-6134 for any questions about participants' rights as a research subject.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every attempt will be made to see that the study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored, in a locked file, in the researcher's office for at least 10 years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming participants as a subject. Although participants' rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, The East Tennessee State University/V.A. Medical Center Institutional Review Board, the Food and Drug Administration, and the ETSU Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis have access to the study records. The records will be kept completely confidential according to current legal requirements. They will not be revealed unless required by law, or as noted above.

COMPENSATION FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) will pay the cost of emergency first aid for any injury that may happen to participants as a result of this study. East Tennessee State University will not pay for any other medical treatment. Claims against ETSU or any of its agents or employees may be submitted to the Tennessee Claims Commission. These claims will be settled to the extent allowable as provided under TCA Section 9-8-307. For more information about claims call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board of ETSU at 423-439-6134.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

The nature, demands, risks, and benefits of the project have been explained to me as well as are known and available. I understand what my participation involves. Furthermore, I understand that I am free to ask questions and withdraw from the project at any time, without penalty. I have read, or have had read to me, and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A signed copy has been given to me.

This study record will be maintained in the strictest confidence according to current legal requirements and will not be revealed unless required by law or as noted above.

---

SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER

DATE

---

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

DATE

## APPENDIX F

### LETTER SENT TO PARTICIPANTS WITH TRANSCRIPTION OF THEIR INTERVIEW

December 18, 2002

I appreciate your time and willingness to allow me to interview you. Your participation in this case study will help me finish my doctorate. Hopefully, my dissertation will add new information to the body of knowledge about how to better anticipate and deal with change in an organizational setting.

I have enclosed a copy of the transcribed taped interview for your review. Make any corrections, additions, or deletions to the master copy and return it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. If I do not receive your corrected transcript back by the end of January, I will assume everything was OK.

Sincerely,

Dave McCowan

Enclosure

APPENDIX G  
AUDITOR'S REPORT

Title of Dissertation: Leading Before, During, and After a Major Organizational Transition

Doctoral Candidate: Charles D. McCowan

School: East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee

Degree: Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership Policy Analysis

I acknowledge that I reviewed the data analysis process in Chapter 3. I consulted with Charles D. McCowan about his findings, conclusions, and recommendations. To the best of my knowledge, he has followed the processes and procedures detailed in this dissertation.

---

Auditor's Name (Print full name and degrees)

---

Signature

---

Date

## VITA

### CHARLES D. MCCOWAN

- Personal Data:      Date of Birth: October 21, 1953  
                            Place of Birth: Bowen, Kentucky  
                            Marital Status: Married
- Education:            Public Schools, Hamilton, Ohio  
                            Virginia Intermont, Bristol, Virginia;  
                                Applied Organizational Management, B.A., 1994  
                            Tusculum College, Greeneville, Tennessee;  
                                Applied Organizational Management, M.A., 1996  
                            East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee;  
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