The Importance of Leadership

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In the second study (which consisted of some participants from the first study plus a few new sites) data were collected over seven consecutive 18-day periods, which I will refer to as the seven phases of the study. Once again food and liquid intake were measured for both lunch and supper. The colors of the plates and cups used for each of the seven phases were as follows: Phase 1: white plates and cups; Phase 2: bright (high contrast) blue plates and cups; Phase 3: white plates and cups; Phase 4: pastel (low contrast) red plates and cups; Phase 5: white plates and cups; Phase 6: pastel (low contrast) blue plates and cups; Phase 7: white plates and cups.

Group results revealed that when bright (high contrast) blue plates and cups were used, there was a significant 25.1% mean increase in food intake and a 29.8% mean increase in liquid intake. Increases were noted for both lunch and supper. Once again, intake values dropped back down again when the white plates and white cups were re-introduced. The use of the pastel (low contrast) red plates and cups and the pastel (low contrast) blue plates and cups also revealed a significant increase in either food or liquid intake across conditions. Group results of food intake collapsed across lunch and supper, along with the collapsed group results from the first experiment for comparison, are given below.

These results suggest that high contrast tableware (in this case bright red and bright blue plates and cups) significantly increases food and liquid intake in severely demented individuals. Use of low contrast tableware (pastel red and pastel blue plates and cups) is ineffectual. These data disprove the novelty effect and support the idea that the saliency of the color of the tableware is a crucial factor, thereby demonstrating that the enhancement of contrast is a simple yet effective intervention for increasing food and liquid intake in individuals with AD.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

When we present our research findings at various conferences or even AD care facilities, the audience is often interested in knowing the more practical application of our findings. Specifically, they are interested in learning ways in which they can change contrast in the environment in order to maintain or improve functional abilities in individuals with AD. The following suggestions are adapted from a book chapter written by Dr. Tracy Dunne appearing in Visual as Alzheimer’s Disease edited by Cronin-Golomb and Hof. Ideas for enhancing contrast in the bathroom and kitchen are briefly discussed.

One of the major challenges in caring for individuals with AD is getting them to bathe. Because of deficiencies in depth and contrast perception, individuals with AD may have difficulty transitioning into the bathtub. Placing a non-skid bath mat inside the tub that is a contrasting color to the tub should help alleviate this difficulty. Moreover, using different colored knobs for hot and cold faucets (for e.g., red for hot and blue for cold) and using grab rails that contrast to the walls should also provide some assistance. Contrast can also be used to aid with toileting behaviors, which pose a major concern for caregivers. As the disease progresses, it is not uncommon for individuals with AD to mistakenly use plants, hampers, and wastebaskets as toilets. By avoiding contrast around the toilet area, either by using colored toilet water and/or by placing a contrasting toilet mat around the base of the toilet, it will help to provide a cue as to where the individual should sit or stand.

Moreover, placing a light inside the toilet bowl or right above the toilet using commercially made products that use a light-emitting diode may also be beneficial. Finally, installing safety rails of a contrasting color is another way to draw attention to the toilet itself.

To encourage independent functioning in the kitchen, use light switches and electrical outlets that contrast with the walls, and provide high-contrast knobs and handles on cabinets. If, however, use of switches, outlets, and cabinets poses a safety hazard, use plate covers and handles that are the same color as the walls and cabinets to discourage use. Kitchen cabinets can easily enhance or minimize contrast depending on whether they want to encourage or discourage particular behaviors. Other ideas for the kitchen include the use of large, multicolored buttons on appliances and the use of open shelving or glass cabinet doors to aid in finding items used on a daily basis such as bread or cereal.

In conclusion, by visually manipulating the environment we can begin to compensate for brain-based visual deficits, such as those noted in contrast sensitivity, and thereby ultimately improve the quality of life for both individuals with AD and their caregivers.

Sandra Neargarder is Associate Professor of Psychology

Why is the topic of leadership important? History is rich with stories of leaders who have shaped the course of nations, the economy, and society. It is well recognized that effectively run organizations are more productive and successful while poorly run organizations suffer at the hands of ineffective leaders. Compounding the need for effective leadership is the unethical and illegal behavior of numerous business and public sector leaders that has led to the failure of many organizations. The scandals at Enron, WorldCom, HealthSouth, OfficeMax, Tyco, Marsh & McLennan, Putnam, and Boeing, to name just a few, have focused on the importance of strong, effective, and ethical leadership. Dissatisfaction on the part of stockholders and boards of directors has increasingly led to the termination of high-profile CEOs. The recent termination of Hewlett-Packard’s CEO Carleton (Carly) Fiorina has focused considerable attention on the qualities a leader needs to have in order to achieve the organization’s goals.

Employees have suffered at the hands of ineffective leaders. Job satisfaction has declined over the last decade, with the biggest declines in on-the-job happiness among workers earning $25,000 to $35,000 and among workers between the ages of 35 to 44. The biggest reason for people leaving their organizations is that they are being treated poorly by their bosses. Hundreds of studies support the fact that leadership makes a profound difference in followers’ performance and satisfaction. However, often a chasm exists between what is expected of leaders and what they produce.

The discussion on leadership begs for definitions. Several definitions suggest that leadership is a process used by an individual to influence group members toward the achievement of group goals through change. Early studies of leadership focused on an examination of traits of leaders, those characteristics accounting for leadership effectiveness, such as high energy, aggressiveness, and persuasiveness. The belief was that leaders were born, not made. Such assumptions were replaced by an examination of leaders’ behavior, those distinctive styles used by effective leaders. This evolved into contingency leadership theories that attempted to explain the appropriateness of leadership style based on the leader, followers, and the situation. Contemporary approaches tend to have a more integrative view that combines the trait, behavioral, and contingency theories to explain successful leader-follower relationships.

Research has also focused on the attributes of leaders, that is, the inner or personal qualities that constitute effective leadership. Terms used to describe attributes include traits, competencies, style, motives, skills, and character. Some researchers claim that leadership attributes fall into three broad categories: who leaders are (values, motives, personal traits, and character), what leaders know (skills and abilities), and what leaders do (behaviors, habits, styles, and competencies). Using this leadership attribute model, leaders can be seen as setting direction (creating a vision, developing strategies, defining the future), mobilizing individual commitment (engaging others, sharing power), and enabling organizational capability (building teams and managing change).

The Importance of Leadership

by Dorothy J. Mulcahy
Leaders typically exhibit behavioral patterns to influence their followers and perform several roles. The interpersonal role consists of the figurehead, leader and liaison. They assume the figurehead role when they represent their organizations at ceremonies and symbolic activities, such as commencements and official signings or openings. In the informational role, they will be seen as the spokesperson for the organization. Terry Lundgren, CEO of Federated Department Stores, aptly performed the spokesperson role at the news conference announcing the acquisition of May Department Stores. The decisional roles are seen in the entrepreneurial, resource allocator or negotiator functions.

When organizations undergo serious turmoil, particularly brought on by negative public attention, the figurehead of an organization is frequently the sacrificial lamb. Beset by a football recruiting scandal and upheaval over a professor who compared September 11, 2001 victims to notorious Nazi Adolf Eichmann, the University of Colorado President Elizabeth Hoffman resigned in March 2005. The symbolic resignation or removal of a CEO in a case like this is an attempt by governing boards to assure the key stakeholders that the organization will recover from the controversies that led to its calamitous state.

Massachusetts also had attention drawn to it by the President of Harvard University, Lawrence H. Summers, whose decision-making and leadership style have received widespread notice almost since the day he stepped onto Cambridge soil. During a January 2005 speech to the National Bureau of Economic Research, Summers discussed possible reasons for the current underrepresentation of women at the top in many fields, especially in science, engineering, and math. He contended that reasons could include social issues, such as willingness to commit fully to a highly demanding career and biological differences between the genders.

His remarks set off an outburst of protests not only by members of the Harvard community but also by his peers at similar universities. In an effort to quell the controversy and avoid votes of no confidence by the faculty, Summers pledged to “set a different tone” with the faculty. Such a pledge was too little too late for the faculty, which voted to censure him on May 15, 2005 that “the Faculty lacks confidence in the leadership” of Summers.

Campus critics have contended that his leadership style had frozen out critical voices on campus, that he has consolidated too much power in the president’s office, and tends to rule by intimidation. Such an allegation is consistent with an autocratic style of leadership, where a leader makes decisions, tells employees what to do, and does not closely supervise employees. Even more pronounced in analyzing President Summers can be a leadership attitude developed by theorist Douglas McGregor who classified attitudes as assumptions of Theory X leaders that employees dislike work and must be closely supervised in order to do their work. On the other hand, Theory Y leaders hold the attitude that employees like to work and do not need to be closely supervised in order to do their work. The Theory X leader generally has a pessimistic attitude about employees and uses a coercive style, controlling through threats and punishment. The Theory Y leader has a positive, optimistic view of employees and uses a participative leadership style, providing rewards as incentives. A more recent theory, referred to as Theory Z, is characterized as found at colleges and universities. Theory Z organizations support clear, detailed goal statements and supportive policies that encourage individuals to transcend self-interests and focus on the good of the organization. Theory Z organizations are typically found where charismatic leadership behavior is not welcomed by followers. Researchers have suggested that followers resist charismatic leadership when employees are self-confident, highly educated, and have a strong belief in human equality.

Charismatic leadership can be effective or ineffective, depending on the organization and situation. German sociologist Max Weber is credited with applying the term charisma to a type of authority or influence based on exceptional characteristics, demonstrated by heroic acts or by advocating a revolutionary mission or program of action to resolve a crisis. Today charismatic leaders are viewed as passionate, driven individuals having personalities that inspire devotion and commitment from followers. These leaders make inspirational speeches, describe a desirable mission or vision for the future, take risks to achieve the mission, and model their own behavior for followers to emulate. Charismatic leaders often emerge during times of crisis when dramatic change is required. A subset of charismatic leadership is transformational leadership, in which the status quo is changed by appealing to followers’ values and their sense of how things should be. Jim Collins is an example of a charismatic, transformational leader whose style was needed at a critical time in South African history. He provided a clear vision of a nonracist society and made personal sacrifices demonstrated by his 27 years in prison for his speaking out about his beliefs.

Charismatic leadership is not always the formula for success. Some researchers have found that the most effective leaders lacked charisma. In his book Good to Great, Jim Collins refers to the level of Level 5 Leadership. Based on a five-year research study of all the companies that were on the Fortune 500 list from 1965 to 1995, Collins discovered examples of leaders turning a merely good company into a truly great company are led by this Level 5 leader. Level 5 refers to the highest level in a hierarchy of executive capabilities. Collins states that “Great leaders build enduring greatness through personal humility plus professional will.” Such a leader is calm in crises, never boastful, takes responsibility for failure, and is courteous and polite.

Level 5 leaders spend a considerable amount of time surrounding themselves with the right people and build high-performing teams. While leaders at the other four levels can produce high degrees of success, they do not elevate their companies from mediocrity to sustained excellence.

The study found eleven companies dramatically exceeded all the other companies in terms of financial success. The leaders of these companies did not let their egos get in the way of building great companies. These leaders avoided the spotlight, but were focused on creating companies that produced outstanding results. They channeled all their energy toward the success of their companies, as opposed to the pursuit of personal aggrandizement. Collins cites particularly the former CEO of Kimberly-Clark, Darwin E. Smith, a shy, unassuming, awkward person, but with an iron will and ferocious resolve. He transformed the company from a stodgy old paper company with poor performance into the world’s leading consumer products company in the world. While other factors are critical to transformation, including having the right key people in the organization, good-to-great transformation must have Level 5 leaders. Collins found that CEOs with large egos contributed to the demise or continued mediocrity of an organization. Even though many companies showed a shift in performance under a talented yet egocentric Level 4 leader, the companies declined in later years. Collins cites Lee Iacocca as a Level 4 leader, one who set a clear and compelling vision. However, such leaders’ ego often changes from transforming the organizations to transforming themselves. In spite of this empirical evidence, many boards of directors have not paid attention to Collins’ findings and continue to look for charismatic leaders to be the Level 5 CEOs to lead their organizations.

Leadership takes place within the context of an organizational culture. Cultures begin with leaders who reflect their own values and assumptions on an organization or group of individuals. Eventually the assumptions are taken for granted, leading to a culture that defines for future members what kinds of leadership are acceptable. While there are many definitions of culture, it is generally seen when things in organizations or groups are shared or held in common, such as customs and traditions, group norms, espoused values, and formal philosophy. Well-known organizational culture theorist Edgar H. Schein defines it as “a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.” A failure of merging organizational culture and leader style was seen at Hewlett Packard.

Receiving considerable attention during the last year is Carleton (Carly) S. Fiorina, former CEO of Hewlett Packard. She has been described as unshakable, self-relatable about the big picture, and embracing change as a way of life. With the image of a charismatic leader, Fiorina was the first outsider to be CEO of a very conventional, sturdy, and oldest Silicon Valley company that was deeply entrenched in its paternalistic culture known as “The HP Way.” In spite of leading the successful acquisition of rival Compaq Computer in 2002, she was unable to revitalize the sluggish computer businesses. HP struggled against Dell in the PC business and IBM in the corporate computing industry. Many viewed Fiorina as an inspiring speaker, but lacked the skills to fix HP’s operational problems. Fiorina was an outsider brought in to revitalize a struggling organization. It had a deeply rooted engineering culture that needed to revise its strategies. Analysts cited Fiorina ignored simple rules of successful leadership. The first accusation was that she was more concerned about her own image rather
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The decisional roles are seen in the entrepreneurial, resource allocator or negotiator functions. When organizations undergo serious turmoil, particularly brought on by negative public attention, the figurehead of an organization is frequently the sacrificial lamb. Beset by a football recruiting scandal and upheaval over a professor who compared September 11, 2001 victims to notorious Nazi Adolf Eichmann, the University of Colorado President Elizabeth Hoffman resigned in March 2005. The symbolic resignation or removal of a CEO in a case like this is an attempt by governing boards to assure the key stakeholders that the organization will recover from the controversies that led to its calamitous state.

Rhode Island-based Brown University, whose decisional and leadership style have received wide-spread notice almost since the day it stepped onto Cambridge soil. During a January 2005 speech to the National Bureau of Economic Research, Summers discussed possible reasons for the current underrepresentation of women at the top in many fields, especially in science, engineering, and math. He contended that reasons could include social issues, such as willingness to commit fully to a demanding career and biological differences between the genders.

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Receiving considerable attention during the last year is Cadet (Carly) S. Fiorina, former CEO of Hewlett-Packard. She has been described as unshakable, self-relaxed, passionate about the big picture, and embracing change as a way of life. With the image of a charismatic leader, Fiorina was the first outsider to be CEO of a very conventional, stuffy, and oldest Silicon Valley company that was deeply entrenched in its paternalistic culture known as “The HP Way.” In spite of leading the successful acquisition of rival Compaq Computer in 2002, she was unable to revive the sluggish computer businesses. HP struggled against Dell in the PC business and IBM in the corporate computing industry. Many viewed Fiorina as an inspiring speaker, but lacked the skills to fix HP’s operational problems. Fiorina was an outsider brought in to revitalize a struggling organization. It had a deeply rooted engineering culture that needed to revise its strategies. Analysts claim Fiorina ignored simple rules of successful leadership. The first accusation was that she was more concerned about her own image rather than the company’s.
than the success of the company (this fits Collins’ Level 4 leader). She combined impressive visions with charis-
matic but egotistical and demanding styles. CEOs need to place their organizations’ well-being above all else,
even including themselves. Fiorina failed to understand the dynamics of HP and lacked a technical background,
which focused on marketing and resisted the board’s efforts to appoint a strong chief operations officer to off-
er her expertise in its operations. In addition, she is accused of firing top executives after HP missed
earnings targets as a way of deflecting attention away from herself.

HP is obviously in need of major transformation. The new CEO will need to develop a vision and strategy to undertake a
global competition, lead major technology initiatives and transform employee morale. Vision is the force that creates the future. Leadership is a
dialogue, not a monologue. Leaders ignite their con-
stituencies’ flame of inspiration. HP’s next CEO should be a transformational leader, someone who can change
the status quo by articulating to followers the problems in the current system and a compelling vision of what a
new organization should be. On April 1, 2005 former
CEO and president of NCR Mark Hurd assumed the positi-
on as HP’s CEO and president. Hurd’s style is in
sharp contrast to Fiorina. He spent 25 years at NCR,
culminating in a two-year term as CEO where he quiet-
ly led an ambitious turnaround of the company. He was seen as a relentless cost-cutter familiar with nearly
every facet of management. His leadership was marked by
successful efforts to improve operating efficiency, increase the position of NCR’s product line, and build a
strong leadership team.

A classical transformation process can be viewed as a
divided into four phases. The first step is to recognize the
need for change. In John Kotter’s book Leading Change,
his process of creating major change calls first
for establishing a sense of urgency, wherein the market and
competitive realities are examined and major oppor-
tunities are identified. HP definitely senses such a sense of urgency. The second phase of transformation calls for
creating a new vision, followed by managing transition,
and finally institutionalizing the change. Some have
described transformational leaders as motivating fol-
lowers to strive for higher-level values and moral values.
Kotter emphasizes the consciousness of followers to
reflect real societal needs and values rather than person-
al self-interest.

While much focus in the media has been paid to CEOs
who have been unsuccessful, spotlight should be placed
on leaders who have been successful in transforming or
propelling their organizations forward. HP would be
wise to heed the transformation process of one of its
main competitors, IBM, under the leadership of its for-
mer CEO Louis V. Gerstner, Jr. Gerstner led one of the
most dramatic corporate turnarounds in business histo-
y. He became CEO in 1993 when IBM was near col-
lapse because of its lumbering size, innumerable corporate
culture, and lack of understanding of what its cus-
tomers needed for computing solutions. He led a corpo-
rate transformation and re-established IBM as a leader in
its traditional mainstream and large-server markets.

CEOs Anne Mulcahy of Xerox and Ed Breen of Tyco
have turned around their companies through no-non-
sense leadership with strict financial controls. Following
in the wake of charismatic leader Jack Welch, Jeffrey
Immelt of General Electric has transformed GE by cre-
aturing a customer-driven, global, and diverse culture.

Strong and effective leadership is also vitally important in
the not-for-profit sector, specifically higher education
institutions. These institutions operate in increasingly
complicated environments where an adaptation to environ-
mental changes is critical. Effectiveness of organizations
is influenced by the degree of fit between organizations and their environment. How effective a college or
university is at capitalizing emerging opportunities and
addressing threats depends on leadership’s ability to cul-
tivate a strategic mindset among individuals within the
institution.

Change needs to be viewed as an opportunity, not a
threat. Pressure on academic leaders for accountability
(particularly in the form of learning outcomes), increas-
ing competition from not-for-profit institutions and not-
for-profits (for-profit Universities of Phoenix in particular
with over 300,000 students and continuing to grow), and
reduced state funding has created the need
for strong, capable leadership. Dr. Patrice
De St. Phalle has met this challenge on many fronts and has system-
atically shown strategic leadership. The college initiated
this process under President Emerita Adrian Tinsley
and the entire college community was involved in
developing the Vision Statement. Building upon this
foundation, President Dana Mohler-Faria is leading a
sophisticated strategic planning process that is moving all of
us at the college think more clearly and strategically about
the future.

—Dr. Dorothy J. Mulcahy is Professor of Management.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


BSC CityLab: Teaching Tomorrow’s Technology
to Today’s Youth
by Jeffery Bowen

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP AT BRIDGEWATER COLLEGE

HISTORY OF BSC CITYLAB

For the past decade, BSC CityLab has provided exciting and authentic science laboratory experiences for students in
Grades 5–12 through classroom visits, lending labs, and summer programs. Additionally, many professional development opportunities exist through BSC CityLab for science teachers in southeastern Massachusetts to provide
them with much needed background and experience in the field of biotechnology. BSC CityLab began as a satellite
of Boston University School of Medicine’s CityLab (BUSM CityLab). As part of its mission, BSC CityLab promotes and supports STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) partnership activities to strengthen pedagogy for pre- and in-service teachers and to improve outcomes and increase science enthusi-
asm among students.

In the fall of 2000, the faculty associated with BSC
CityLab received an $800,000 Science Education Partnership Award from the National Center for
Research Resources of the National Institutes of Health, a division of the Department of Health and Human
Services (Dr. Michael Carson and John Jahoda were Principle Investigators on this grant). Science Education Partnership Awards (SEPA) are designed to improve life
science literacy throughout the nation. These grants
promote partnerships between biomedical and behav-
ioral researchers, educators, community groups, and
other interested organizations to create and disseminate
programs that give K-12 students and teachers and the
general public a better understanding of life sciences. In
short, SEPA grants are the idea that BSC CityLab
also promotes and the SEPA grant provided BSC
CityLab the help it needed to grow and develop.

During this granting period (beginning in the Fall of
2000), BSC CityLab expanded from an initial partner-
ship with two school districts, Brockton Public Schools
and Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District, to
one serving more than twenty school districts in south-
eastern New England. In the academic year 2000-2004,
approximately 1600 students participated at BSC
CityLab in highly engaging hands-on science modules
that follow a “progression of inquiry” model that was
designed and developed at BUSM CityLab.

Additional 500 students received an authentic
CityLab experience in their classrooms as a BSC CityLab Lending Lab with their CityLab-
trained teachers. In-service and pre-service teach-
ers enrolled in graduate level courses in science content
related to biomedicine and biotechnology, and are trained in the CityLab curriculum and pedagogy includ-
ing Lending Labs. Faculty associated with BSC CityLab have also led more than fifteen workshops or presenta-
tions for educators at various Regional and National
conferences and have helped to develop new inquiry-
based modules.

Below, an example of one of the programs run at BSC
CityLab is described. In this case, it is the summer
biotechnology program called Whale of a Mystery
developed by Dr. Jefferey Bowen.

WHALE OF A MYSTERY

Imagine you are a newly hired scientist working for the
Bridgewater Animal Forensic Laboratory (affectionately
known as BAFL) located on the third floor of the presti-
gious Moody Hall at Bridgewater State College. It is
your first day of “work.” So far, the morning has been
quite busy with new employee orientation where you
heard about the history of the company, filled out some
new employee information, and received a laboratory
notebook – standard stuff. It became a lot more exciting
when Dr. Mike (one of the Senior Scientists) told every-
body of the infamous case that BAFL solved that
involved around a canine celebrity that was “dog-
napped” and disguised as a toy poodle (the courts have
placed a gag order on the specie of the case) and how
using a “protein fingerprint” helped to break the case
open. Even though you were nervous at first, you feel
that this is a positive learning environment, a good
company, and they clearly need your help.

BSC CityLab

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