

# The Scarlet Cap

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*The Scarlet Cap* is the Undergraduate Journal for the Organizational Leadership Program of the School of Arts and Science, Rutgers University.

## About *The Scarlet Cap*

The essays presented in this journal were original presented as apart of the capstone experience in the Organizational Leadership Program. These writings represents the student's perspective on contemporary topics in the field of Organizational Leadership.

In this, our inaugural volume, we feature four works that reflect the range of topics which students consider in our program.

Ishani Patel's essay is based on her understanding of leadership as a social construct. She examines the impact and value that Web 2.0 technologies have on leadership and communication, particularly in large organizations.

Leadership development is critical to personal and organizational success. In her essay Nicole Taylor explores the notion that developing leaders through personal mentorship is beneficial to both the emerging and established leader.

Ashely Waldman using research from psychology and education encourages leaders to foster creative learning environment in their organizations.

Using the world of sport as a metaphor. Asha Jones provides support for the notion that effective leadership is more important to organizational success the outstanding individual performances.

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# COMMUNICATION 2.0 AND LEADERSHIP

Ishani Patel '11

One of the most important aspects of effective leadership and achieving goals is interaction and communication, between a leader and his/her group. We are moving towards an integrated global network of economies. Globalization and a wave of new technologies are changing the way we communicate. An innovative and a collaborative culture are important in developing new approaches to communication and leadership. Recently there has been a shift in communication strategy due to Web 2.0 technologies like twitter; these types of technologies can be leveraged for leadership. These technologies can prove to be very powerful in a leadership toolbox. It is now up to leaders to tap into the potential of these technologies, embrace them and experiment with these new communication strategies in order to build an efficient and involved workforce. "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northhouse, 2009, pg.10). Within the organizational context leadership is applying principles understand the functioning of an organization (Patel, 2010). Communication is a primal aspect of being human and communication strategy is central to the type of leadership a leader executes, "The golden thread tying all leadership functions together is clear communication" (Froschheiser, 2008). The communication style of the leader establishes the organizational culture and will be emulated by its members. In a previous paper How Web 2.0 Technologies like Twitter are changing the strategy of communications for organizations I described how charismatic leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., Winston Churchill, John F Kennedy and more recently Barack Obama are great orators. An article by De Vrie, Bakker-Pieper and Oostenveld (2010), presents a study that was conducted among 279 governmental organization employees, operationalizing communication styles. It showed that leader's communication style was strongly related to knowledge sharing behaviors and subordinate's team commitment. The study concluded that charismatic and human-oriented leadership are mainly communicative and that a core part of leadership is interpersonal communication.

Classically communication within organizations was a one way conversation. There is little to no input from low level employees within the organizational decision making space. Most businesses viewed communication from leaders as having only a minor role in

organizational strategy. Hierarchical ways of communication fail to motivate and empower an employee which in turn disregards leadership principles of inspiration and encouragement.

Traditional means of communication are unable to provide multinationals and larger companies the leverage to sufficiently engage all their employees. Information flows down the management ladder, but getting insights back up to management and encouraging collaboration among people throughout the enterprise is harder. Conventional technologies are not very good at facilitating group conversation. This is where web 2.0 technologies come into the picture; they "cater the needs of large organizations to connect with their customers as well as their employees" (Patel, 2010). They add another dimension to an organizations communication strategy. "A culture that allows communication to flow openly and evenly across all levels and departments will find that employees even in entry-level positions have the tools necessary to envision opportunities for better ideas" (Agin & Gibson, 2010). The point here is to create an integrated communication strategy that is involving, interactive and far reaching in the organization. "Above all, leadership communication entails nurturing and maintaining a workplace environment in which communication flows freely and quickly in all directions with minimal distortion or lag time," (Nostran, 2004).

Latest surge of communication technologies known as the Web 2.0 Technologies, provide a wide range for collaborative cultures to develop, as opposed to their



## Abstract

**Web 2.0 technologies can have a significant impact on communication strategies for leaders. Communication approaches effect organizational behavior and commitment. Web 2.0 technologies like twitter, YouTube and social media create a collaborative and distributed social structure. These forms of communication have become predominate for a new generation. Examples are provide of companies that are leveraging these technologies to establish and maintain organizational culture and values. These new media are potentially powerful tools to build an efficient and involved workforce.**

traditional counterparts. They are also changing the power dynamics of the social architecture. Social networks are horizontal and the dynamic of power is distributed and diffused. In "the web 2.0 era, there are no barriers to entry...everybody has access to value chain." (Dutta, S & Fraser, 2008). The social web is different from other revolutionary technologies, for example the printing press was a machine whose ownership was initially restricted to elites. In the case of social web, these technologies are highly accessible and extensive and the cost of production is almost zero. Consumers can also become producers. Web 2.0 encompasses a variety of different meanings that include an increased emphasis on user-generated content, data and content sharing and collaborative effort, together with the use of various kinds of social software, new ways of interacting with web-based applications, and the use of the web as a platform for generating, re-purposing and consuming content" (Ware). Traditional communication media such as TV, Radio, Newspaper offer a very unidirectional approach, whereas technologies like Facebook, YouTube, Wikis, Twitter, Blogs etc. are highly interactive and offer active participation and integration of different media. Social networking and Web 2.0 Technologies act as catalyst for creating a greater global community. Given that the next generation of employees' uses social software as a dominant communication means, "companies need to bridge generational gaps and boundaries by supporting this method of communication between employees" (DiMicco J. Millen R., Geyer. W Dugan. C, 2008).

Cisco has done a wonderful job in encouraging adoption of Web 2.0 technologies within its organization culture. "We're changing the way in which we interact as teams by moving over to more collaborative workspace environments that encourage greater interaction among coworkers" (Baron, 2008). Cisco has various internal technologies like WebEx, Wikis and Directory 3.0 that provide collaboration focus for the future. WebEx Connect is a great tool that includes discussion forums, shared file space and the ability to start audio and video calls with team members in one click. Cisco's internal wiki strategy includes specific team wikis, as well as Ciscopedia, which is an online topical encyclopedia written collaboratively by Cisco employees. There is also a tie in with blogs and video wiki through RSS and tagging features. The goal is to have a wiki environment where teams can store, maintain man

perspective to all of this great information. This encourages a better view of employees and their expertise. Cisco's teleconferencing software provides the 'in-person' experience. At Best Buy Blue Shirt Nation was created to listen to what employees had to say. "What Best Buy didn't anticipate is that it would not only educate management but also enable employees to help each other" (Li C. & Bernoff J, 2008) Leaders can leverage these technologies to establish the type of organizational culture they need to lead effectively.

Various CEOs and leaders understand that "Web 2.0 tools are not just a technological add-on, but must be integrated into a company's entire operations in order to bring about a fundamental shift in values and perception" (Dutta, S & Fraser, 2009). "Being entangled and involved is part of being a leader" (Patel, 2010). Web 2.0 technologies can help shed an authentic light on the leader. The overall communication strategy needs to be integrated with these social media technologies in order to be effective. The strategy should focus on the overall "listening, talking, energizing, supporting and embracing" (Li C. & Bernoff J, 2008). In the Groundswell, Clark Kokich, the CEO of Avenue a/Razorfish describes the various benefits of using Web 2.0 technologies internally in the organization. In 2006, he wrote a blog post about his favorite guitar solos. "This post didn't serve any specific business purpose, but it was an opportunity [for our employees] to be connected to the leadership. You can do this with a few people over a beer, but how do you accomplish that with a whole company?" In May 2007 when Microsoft announced that it was taking over Avenue a/Razorfish, Clark wrote a blog post addressing these concerns and then addressed comments and questions as they came into the blog and wiki. He explained "I could have made the announcement by email, but this was more conversational. This kind of dialogue is comforting to people because change is stressful. There is openness, and things aren't happening in secret." Personal involvement from management and leadership is extremely important to help facilitate the openness culture.

"Even when people have ready access to the internet or a firm's intranet, people are more likely to turn to other people for information than to impersonal sources" (De Vries & Bakker-Pieper & Oostenveld 2010). Leadership will primarily be more effective in person, but with organizations growing globally and increasing distances in teams, it is hard to achieve balance and gain control of the group. This is why Web 2.0 technologies are becoming increasingly vital, they can enable leaders to develop a collaborative, team work oriented culture that allows information to flow freely and is based on learning and listening. Leaders will need to adjust their leadership style to the changing settings around them and make it more congruent with the communication style of the new generation

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# MENTORSHIP: LEADERSHIP NOT ONLY FOR THE MENTEE

## Nicole Taylor '11

*One "Why did you do all this for me?" [Wilbur] asked. "I don't deserve it. I've never done anything for you."*

*"You have been my friend," replied Charlotte. "...By helping you, perhaps I was trying to lift my life a trifle. Heaven knows, anyone's life can stand a little of that."*

*-Charlotte's Webb by E.B White*

From a historical perspective, mentorship has taken on many unique forms. As seen in many major world religions, mentors lead their followers over a period of months, years, even life times to serve a greater purpose. The top Hindu and Buddhist educators have learned everything they know about spirituality and truth from their respective Gurus. Discipleship, in Judaism and Christianity, has proven to hold a similar role in guiding students or followers closer to the Lord. Furthermore, successful mentor-mentee/protégé relationships have made substantial impacts on philosophy, science, mathematics, even music and entertainment (Wilson, 2010). Take the trio, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, for example. Historical accounts contend Socrates mentored Plato, who in turn mentored Aristotle - which led to some of the most important literary, scientific and political advances of our time. The positive impact that mentorships have on the mentee is clear and for the most part, undisputed. However, the role that mentorships have on the men-

## Abstract

**Mentors and leaders- are these terms one in the same? Does becoming a mentor make someone a leader? Or alternatively, does being a great leader require you to mentor? More importantly for some, how can mentoring affect you? The effects on the mentee are often obvious, but does mentoring positively affect the mentor as well? Is mentoring a true test of leadership with benefits beyond what we typically see in leadership study? This chapter will explain the benefits of mentorship and the impact these benefits may have on individuals as well as organizations.**

tor and of course, the organization, can prove to be even greater.

MENTOR, which is the "lead champion for youth mentoring in the United States," outlines eleven specific benefits that mentors can expect to gain from mentoring: "1) An improved sense of health and well-being 2) An enhanced self-image and sense of self-worth 3) A sense of feeling valued and appreciated 4) A sense of feeling competent and accomplished 5) A sense of spiritual fulfillment 6) A feeling of having gained deeper insights into one's own childhood experiences 7) A deeper understanding of and appreciation for one's own children 8) A sense of satisfaction from "giving back to the community" 9) A sense of feeling needed 10) A sense of helping oneself through the act of helping others 11) A feeling of being respected by others for contributing to society in a very important way" (Baldino, 2009). The positive benefits on the mentee can often be tracked and measured in regards to their future successes. However, these eleven things do something for the mentor that is possibly more important and almost impossible to effectively measure. Most men and women who have participated in formal mentorships explain that the relationship has had a positive impact on them emotionally, and on their lives overall. This, in turn, often creates a positive upward spiral for all parties involved (Murray, 2001).

Mentorship is most closely compared to "authentic leadership". In Positive Organizational Scholarship, Fred Luthans and Bruce Avolio explain that:

"Authentic leaders are guided by a set of end-values that represent an orientation toward doing what's right for their constituency. Central to



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these end-values is a belief that each individual has something positive to contribute to their group. One of the authentic leader's core challenges is to identify these strengths and help direct and build them appropriately. Second, authentic leaders try to operate with no gap... between their espoused values.. and values in use or actions. This requires that they deepen their understanding of their own core values, enabling leaders to project them with consistency to their follower or broader constituency." (page 248-249)

In this sense, the role of the mentor and authentic leaders are very much intertwined. The "belief that each individual has something positive to contribute to their group" overlaps with the mentor's goal to see the best in their mentees and establish more authentic ways to direct their life in a positive way. In addition, mentorship challenges mentors to better understand themselves and their own core strengths and values in effort to make a truly positive impact on the mentee (Rhodes, 2006, p. 157-169). One clear example of this positive, authentic impact is the role that mentors have in bringing out the best in others and their ability to turn weaknesses into new strengths. Although it is possible to become an authentic leader without being a mentor and vice versa, the role of one plays a significant role in strengthening and developing the other.

One of the primary reasons that mentoring and authentic leadership are so closely aligned is they both lead to high quality connections. Jane Dutton and Emily Heaphy outlined the impact that high-quality connections (HQC) have on individuals and organizations in their article titled "The Power of High Quality Connections" (Cameron, 2003). They argue that individuals that experience HQC have a greater feeling of vitality and aliveness, a "heightened sense of positive regard" and a sense of shared mutuality in their relationships. In addition, those who are involved in HQC have "lower physiological responses to environmental stressors" and see improvements in their over-all health and mood. (p. 267-268) High quality connections within individuals in turn affect the way we look at organizations by "provid[ing] a window into understanding organizations' dynamic capabilities" (p. 276). The ability for members or employees to have an open, honest dialogue with others in their group has proven to be extremely beneficial. One example of this can be seen when employees start at a new firm. Often times employees are scared to ask questions or "waste other's time" so they take

much longer to adjust to a new environment than usual. An immediate high quality connection allows the new employee to feel comfortable more quickly which in turn reduces the learning curve and allows the new employee to begin adding value in his or her role sooner.

In the introduction to the Leaders Companion, J. Thomas Wren explains that many prominent experts in the field of leadership argue that there is a "crisis of leadership". John W. Gardner explains that "To some extent the conventional views of leadership are shallow, and set us up for endless disappointment... A great many people... want leaders—leaders who are exemplary, who inspire, who stand for something, who help us set and achieve goals." (Wren, 1995, p. 3-4). However, such individuals are rare, and leaders are not being developed as genuinely as they should be. Instead of truly desiring to lead others, often men and women take on leadership positions to move up the ranks or gain more prestige and power. The "crisis of leadership" can be solved through mentorship. A study of IT professionals by the Educause Center for Applied Research shows that purely having a mentor in the IT field is highly correlated with positive leadership. The author broke down leadership styles into three types: Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-Faire and measured which had the most positive scores among followers. They then asked the men and women with the most positive leadership styles, Transformational and Transactional, whether or not they had mentors. They found that the "relationship between mentoring and leadership behavioral scores was highly statistically significant and suggests that although individuals can develop good leadership behaviors without a mentor, they're less likely to do so than those with mentors." (Katz, 2004). These findings suggests that the only way to end the crisis of leadership is develop more great leaders and one of the strongest ways to develop someone is through mentorship.

Many experts recommend that budding leaders begin their leadership journey as a mentor due to the similar characteristics and skill sets that are required (Schira, 2007, p. 289-294). The ability to inspire and motivate others is a skill that is necessary for leadership and that being a mentor can help to develop. Mentorship can be viewed as a test of true leadership. However, leading one person, as opposed to leading an entire group, requires a different approach. The leadership style used while mentoring must cater to the needs of the mentee, not necessarily the skills of the mentor. This requires the mentor to display valuable leadership skill sets, such as flexibility, patience and relate ability.

When you read an article about a famous, inspirational figure, one of the most common questions always asked is "Who has been your greatest inspiration?" or "Who do you look up to?" Most prominent figures of our day and throughout history haven't made their mark

on the world by themselves; they've had help. This help may not always come in the form of a "direct" mentor, sometimes it's a parent or best friend; however, the role they play is certainly very similar to the role and the position of a mentor. Whether or not mentorship is considered the "true test of leadership", the benefits and impacts on everyone involved are very clear. If Wren is correct, and there is in fact a "crisis of leadership" beginning, mentorship may be an extremely effective way to solve the crisis.

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# CREATIVE LEADERSHIP: UTILIZING TRAITS FOR SUCCESSFUL GROUP DYNAMICS

Ashley Waldman '11

Creative leadership is a cutting-edge style of leadership that can be used to provide organizations with a competitive advantage. There are two exceptions when utilizing creativity: not all individuals are innately creative, and competitive advantage will only occur if creative leadership is correctly applied. Researchers that have studied creative leadership extensively have provided information about how to overcome these obstacles and how to utilize traits in order to maintain successful interpersonal group dynamics. While critiquing a comprehensive study of research, this paper will explore the following questions: Can creativity be taught? Is creativity an innate trait? Does creative leadership give an organization a competitive advantage? Does creative leadership positively influence the dynamics of a group? Are there external factors that can negatively influence the accessibility of creative leadership? Creativity is a unique trait that leaders can utilize in order to motivate the group toward a common goal while sustaining a competitive edge when used in the correct way.

To begin, defining creativity is essential in answering the aforementioned questions. Harding (2010) explains that creativity is a broader concept than simply imagining something in a different way than others. He defines creativity as, "that force in each of us that begins with a yearning to answer an unanswered (or ill-answered) question by imagining more

## Abstract

**A creative approach to leadership can be a valuable tool in leading organizations. It can provide the spark that make an organization distinctive. Leaders can benefit from understanding and promoting a creative learning environment in their organizations.**

than one correct answer" (Harding, 2010, p.51). Harding (2010) also adds the notion of creativity as a process where the end product is the point in which an answer is concluded.

To further define and conceptualize creativity, Harding (2010) introduces the concepts of thinking, acting, and leading creatively by arguing that these abilities are intertwined and fully dependent on one another. First, thinking creatively is the act of imagining potential answers to the unanswered questions that intrigue an individual (Harding, 2010). Next, Harding (2010) describes acting (behaving) creatively as "realizing an imagined answer in the real world (p. 51)." A comprehensive summary of his theory is best understood through a model in which imagining change leads to creative thought and leading change to creative behavior.

Educating an individual to use the tools towards creative thought is another main point in Harding's article. He suggests elements that aid in developing a positive, creative learning environment: teacher preparation, evaluation, research, and policy (Harding, 2010). Teacher preparation deals with instilling the presence of a creative classroom environment. Cameron, Dutton, and Quinn (2003) state that positive emotions in organizational settings can transform individuals into more creative workers. This supports Harding's idea of teacher preparation aiding in creative leadership. If an individual is in a creative environment they will feel more creative and, in turn, begin to think, act, and lead creatively. This theory may then bring up the question: how might one create a creative environment? A creative environment is one in which communication is always flowing and there are no boundaries in dealing with possible outcomes to questions. An individual is more likely to utilize



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creativity in an environment that is accepting of this trait as opposed to one that has closed communication and maintains textbook solutions as the only solutions.

The second aspect of creating a creative learning environment is evaluation. Harding (2010) states that evaluation is vital to nurturing creative leadership qualities. He believes that resources help develop and evaluate a student's progress on becoming creative and a teacher's progress on creating a creative environment. Evaluation an important tool to use to be sure that the team is progressing satisfactorily and through this tool comes feedback that can be used to tweak a situation in which more can be done to achieve the final result.

Next, research is used to provide the resources and statistics that help foster a creative environment. Without research, teachers would not have concise information and ways in which creative environments could be constructed would be blind guesses. It is always important to have facts behind ideas because the outcome will be more likely to be successful.

Lastly, Harding discusses the role of policy in creating creative environments. Policy focuses on the actual techniques involved in fostering creativity in individuals and how these techniques can translate into leadership. In other words, policy is putting the techniques into action and not simply verbalizing what makes for a creative environment. This element is paramount because it enforces words into actions and helps students critically think about what could be done as creative leaders. These elements, although possibly used separately, are most effective when used as a whole; thus, relying on one another, similar to the theory of creative leadership.

Jung (2000) hypothesizes that creativity alone is not enough to maintain positive group dynamics. Jung (2000) states, "There are several personality traits that prior research has indicated help people increase their level of creativity skills" (p. 186)." He goes on to further elaborate on the concept by stating that individuals are more adept to be creative when the factors around them, along with their own personality traits, go against the status quo free from punishment (Jung, 2000). Individuals typically do not want to be separated from the status quo

for fear of being excluded from the preferred group. In order to foster creativity in oneself, Jung believes it is important to think outside of the box without fear of rejection for unique ideas. For example, an individual that is naturally open to change and new ideas, able to work well in groups, and able to think outside of the box is typically more creative.

Jung's ideas are useful in studying creative leadership because they consider the impact leaders have on the creative dynamics of the group. Jung (2001) states, "Even if subordinates work on the same problem using the same resources, whether they try innovative and creative versus conventional and traditional approaches may depend on the way their leader facilitates this working process" (p. 187). In other words, if the leader of the group takes a more transactional approach, it is likely that the followers will also adopt that leadership style. This correlation could affect the creativity of a follower, regardless of if he or she has innately creative traits. .

Lastly, Stoll and Temperley's discusses the implications and challenges an individual faces while on the journey to foster creative leadership skills. The authors believe that it is crucial that teachers are susceptible to the most cutting-edge tools used for fostering creativity because in today's society it is increasingly difficult to be creative based on the abundance of technology (Stoll & Temperley, 2009). To take Harding's definition of creativity a step further, Stoll and Temperley will aid in the definition of creative leadership. The authors define creative leadership as follows:

An imaginative and thought-through response to opportunities and to challenging issues that inhibit learning at all levels. It is about seeing, thinking, and doing things differently in order to improve the life chances of all [followers]. Creative leaders also provide the conditions, environment and opportunities for others to be creative (Stoll & Temperley, 2009, p. 66). This definition is exhaustive and comprehensive. It is fair to say that creative leaders need to have an active imagination, the ability to execute the creative ideas, and the want to motivate group members or followers to be creative. Not unlike the previous authors' ideas on fostering creativity, Stoll and Temperley (2009) believe that individuals whom are not naturally creative still have a chance to enhance and nurture their creative leadership skills. Individuals can do this by following Stoll and Temperley's suggestions for promoting creative leadership. A few of these tips are as follows: model the creativity of other leaders, use failure as learning and growing opportunities, have high creative expectations, relinquish control, and share creative experiences with members of the group.

Creativity is a great tool that leaders can use to be a step above the rest. In today's society, it seems as though everything has been done. In order for an individual to lead his or her organization towards success, the plan must have something special that stands out from similar organizations with similar goals. This "something special" can be the creative outlook and abilities of the leader. Elaborating on Jung's idea of creativity spreading from leader to follower, can be used in a broader

sense. If a leader demonstrates creativity in his or her plan for the team, not only with the followers become creative, but also the organization as a whole. Creative leadership can give an organization a competitive edge by having a positive influence the dynamics of the group through the synergy of creative energy.

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## THE NEW MVP: LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN GROUPS

### Asha Jones '11

In 2007, with the recommendation of the National Football League's six-member player advisory council, the league decided to officially designate team captains of all of the 32 participating clubs. The NFL had used the long time tradition of choosing team captains but the use of the yellow "C" patches worn on the upper right hand side of players' jerseys was a new practice. National Football League Commissioner Roger Goodell announced that "we felt that re-establishing the role of captains, where you could see that leadership come through in the locker room on a season-long basis, was critical," (Powell, 2007). Traditionally, the most valuable player or MVP is defined as the player judged to be the most important to the sport or activity. This honor is used in other contexts besides athletics, such as the music industry and in business. An individual's performance is recognized amongst those of their fellow group members as a key contribution to the group's overall performance.

One of the earliest theories of leadership is the Great Man theory, popularized by Thomas Carlyle. He advocated the idea that the history of the world is the biography of great men, reflecting his belief that heroes shape history through both their personal attributes and divine inspiration (Carlyle, 1888). He glorified the idea of a Hero, and the greatest of all Heroes was the King. Carlyle defined the King's role to "command over us, to furnish us with practical teach-

### Abstract

**Organizational strategies such as team work and collaboration are also becoming more important in today's society. Its results have proven to be valuable to all types of organizations. As the leadership position becomes more essential to a group's success, it begins to overshadow the role of the star performer, the traditional designation of the "most valuable player". An individual's achievements do contribute to the overall performance of the group, but they do not create the greatest impact on the group's performance. An effective leader or team captain is what causes a group to move from good to great.**

ing, to tell us day and hour what we are to do," (Wren, 1995, p. 53); "us" being the group. Similar to modern definitions of a leader, Carlyle expects followers to learn from the King and follow their direction with fierce loyalty. This process is fine, but what is under scrutiny is why that man fulfilling the role of the leader is deemed King. As the most "Ableman," Carlyle believes whomever is King is able and worthy of those responsibilities (Wren, 1995, p.54). His emphasis is not on how the individual interacts, motivates, or collaborates with the group, but on his personal abilities and esteem.

This focus on an individual's characteristics is also evident in trait theories of leadership. The trait perspective suggests that "certain individuals have special innate or inborn qualities that differentiate them from non-leaders" (Northouse, 2007, p.4). Early research on leadership looked for differences among leaders and followers to determine what made leaders so unique. Many of the surveys conducted determined that those in a leadership role did possess qualities that general members did not. Common traits found were intelligence, self-confidence, and sociability (Northouse, 2007). Similar to the star player or MVP, the individual's attributes were what distinguished them from others and make them seem worthy of honor. More often than not, those celebrated attributes are natural talent and skill; very rarely is this recognition for how they empower other members or lead the group to a common goal through collaboration. A main criticism of the trait approach is that it fails to show how these qualities relate to positive outcomes such as productivity and group-member satisfaction (Northouse, 2007). It is true that leaders do have traits that differentiate them from other members, but those characteristics are not the only factors that make them great leaders.



Identifying positive qualities is only the first step in determining who can bring the most value to a group through leadership.

One of the latest theories that promote effective leadership is transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is when an individual engages with a group "in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality," (Wren, 1995, p.101). Through this engagement, overall performance of the group rises due to positive influence and commitment amongst the members. This type of influence based leadership is reciprocal; the leader strengthens its followers and the followers strengthen their leader. To be a transformational leader, external factors must be taken into account, especially those of the followers and the composition of the group led. As people begin to recognize these vital aspects in determining group performance, the role of the leader becomes more valuable. They realize that there is a need for a role that fulfills the ability to "help the group achieve its goals and maintain an effective working relationship among members," (Johnson & Johnson, 2003). The successful interaction of the leader and its group is what will fulfill that goal. Appointed team captains within the NFL demonstrate this type of interaction by being a "key element in building team leadership and enhancing communication between players, coaches and management. A perfect example of the benefit of this kind of communication is that the players themselves suggested the concept of re-emphasizing the team captains" (National Football League, 2007). A leader's individual achievements are still important, but what makes them the leader is that positive influence over members. A star performer has influence, but it is through inspiration for other members to emulate them. That type of influence is only a fragment of what is necessary to be a great leader, and in turn lead a great group.

The most difficult part of the transition from group member to leader is that the leader must focus on achieving through the group's performance rather than their own (Charan, 2001). They must "prepare themselves for the bigger decisions, greater risks and uncertainties that are inherent to the leadership level," (Charan, 2001, p. 25). It is not only their personal performance, but the performance of every member, that they are held accountable for.

Star performers may struggle with this transition because their individual performance is often their highest concern. Lance Winslow explains that "top performers are very ego-centric, and whereas this is not a character flaw as it comes from extreme self-confidence, it can be deemed as a leadership flaw. Looking at the star player is not the way to go when evaluating possible leaders (2008). Not all good leaders are the "brightest or best in the group, but neither [are] they passive players. They were connoisseurs of talent, more like curators than creators" (Bennis, 2007). Taking into account the factors that developed theories such as transformational leadership is what guarantees a strong leadership choice. With the enormous value a good leader can bring, it is important that the selection is based off a thorough assessment. Once they are chosen for the right reasons, the group performance will improve through their leadership. An NFL coach once commented that the new form of recognition of team captains is good because "I think it's important for the [players] to understand that these are our leaders" (Powell, 2007). This new form of recognition should also be used as a way for all involved in the organization to understand just how valuable that role is to the group.

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