Personality and Leadership

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Abstract

This paper examines the links between personality and leadership, with the goal of understanding leadership effectiveness. We define personality in terms of its bright- and dark-side manifestation; we define leadership in terms of the performance of the team, group, or organization being led; and we then review the literature linking the two. We conclude that personality and effective leadership are indeed linked, and the two key factors mediating the link are: (a) the leader's socio-political intelligence—his/her ability to understand within and between group political dynamics; and (b) the degree to which the leader is seen as having integrity. These conclusions are empirically robust and challenge the view that leadership is the function of "situational contingencies."

Key Words: bright side and dark side of personality, team effectiveness, leader integrity

Personality and Leadership

Personality and leadership are related in important ways that may not be immediately obvious. Specifically, if we ask about the origins of leadership effectiveness, then there are only two general explanations. Effective leadership can either be a function of "circumstances" (i.e., factors outside individual leaders) or it can be a function of "personal characteristics" (i.e., factors inside individual leaders).

There are three problems with the claim that effective leadership is a function of circumstances, or contexts, or situations. The first concerns accountability—if leader performance is caused by circumstances, then it will be difficult to hold individual leaders accountable for poor performance … or give them credit for success. The second problem concerns the definition of contexts or situations—there is no agreed upon definition of situational contingencies, there is no accepted taxonomy of situations, and there is no way to measure them; consequently, it is hard to study, *in a systematic way,* how contexts impact leadership performance. If we say that a leader's performance is a function of the interaction between situations and individual characteristics, we still have the problem of defining situations. We will return to this topic later in the paper. The third problem concerns the fact that, as the old saying goes, "Winners win and losers lose." Horatio Nelson, the great British Admiral during the Napoleonic Wars, never lost a fight; Ulysses S. Grant, the commander of the federal army during the American Civil War, never lost a fight. In athletics, winning coaches win as they move from organization to organization (Vincent Lombardi, Paul Brown), and some CEOs prosper regardless of the economic climate (Collins, 2001). Yet if we define leadership effectiveness as mastering one context— or exhibiting mastery across contexts—we have both begged the question (what context is being mastered?), and engaged in circular logic (an effective leader is a leader who is effective).

We do not mean to deny the significance of contexts as a determinant of performance. Consider the case of Chelsey B. "Sully" Sullenberger, a highly competent but (then) anonymous Captain for U. S. Airways. Moments after taking off from La Guardia

Table 2.1 Dimensions of the Bright Side of Personality

Dimension	Definition
1. Adjustment/Emotional Stability	Self-confidence, self-esteem, stable moods
2. Sociability/Social Ascendance	Extraversion, energy, status seeking
3. Agreeableness/Interpersonal Sensitivity	Charm, tact, warmth, diplomacy
4. Prudence/Conscientiousness	Rule following and compliant
5. Inquisitiveness/Openness	Imagination, curiosity, tolerance

airport in New York City, on January 15, 2009, his plane struck a flock of geese, wiping out the plane's engines. Captain Sullenberger calmly landed the crippled plane in the Hudson River, helped the passengers off, and saved the lives of everyone on board. These particular circumstances allowed Sullenberger to reveal to the public leadership qualities that were previously known only to his colleagues. Human behavior always takes place in specific contexts, but economists refer to these contexts as "imponderable contingencies." It is not an ideological argument to say that, in the absence of a robust method for classifying and measuring contexts, it makes sense to focus on the determinants of leadership that we can classify and measure—personality. This chapter reviews what we know in an empirical way about the links between personality and leadership effectiveness.

Defining Personality

In a classic paper, MacKinnon (1948) noted that German, a language that is rich in psychological nuance, defines personality with two terms: *person-licheit* and *personalitat*. This distinction parallels the distinction between "reputation" and "identity" in English. It is the distinction between how people are perceived by others (reputation) and how they perceive themselves (identity). Historically, personality research has focused on identity and ignored reputation, but this emphasis is misplaced and we say this for three reasons. First, over the past 100 years, the study of identity has produced interesting insights and arguments but few defensible generalizations. It has not devised an agreed on taxonomy, and its measurement base is underdeveloped—the emphasis on identity has been empirically unproductive. Second, the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior; peoples' reputations (largely) reflect their past behavior; therefore, reputation is the best data source we have about people's future behavior. Third, we have a virtually universally accepted taxonomy of reputations; it is the well-known Five-Factor

Model (FFM; Wiggins, 1996—see Table 2.1). The FFM provides the basis for developing systematic measures of personality and for organizing research on the links between personality and any interesting outcome (substance abuse, happiness, job satisfaction, etc.). A moment's reflection will indicate that all observer rating data (including 360 degree feedback processes) are indices of reputation—they reflect the observer's view of an actor. The focus on reputation has been highly productive in terms of discovering empirical relationships—i.e., links between reputation and important life outcomes.

The distinction between reputation and identity parallels the distinction between prediction and explanation. We use reputation to predict *what* people will do; we use identity to explain *why* they do it. Thus, identity and reputation serve different logical purposes in the study of personality. For empirical research, it is useful to focus on reputation; for theory development, identity is an important starting point.

It is also useful to distinguish two facets of reputation, which we refer to as "the bright side" and "the dark side." The bright side of reputation reflects people's behavior when they are on guard, when they are engaged in self-monitoring—for example during an employment interview. Table 2.1 defines the components of the bright side. As noted, these are the dimensions of the FFM. (There are, of course, other personality dimensions that predict performance—e.g., masculinity and femininity—but for the purposes of parsimony and generality, the FFM is a useful organizing framework.) Later we will review the data linking these bright-side aspects of personality to leadership performance.

The dark side refers to people's performance when they are "just being themselves," when they let their guards down, when they stop self-monitoring. Table 2.2 defines the dimensions of the dark side from the perspectives of Horney (1950), Hogan and Hogan (2001), Moscoso and Salgado (2004), and Dotlich and Cairo (2003); the reader

Table 2.2 Dimensions of the Dark Side

Horney's (1950) orientation Definition	Author		
	Hogan & Hogan (2001)	Moscosco & Salgado (2004)	Dotlich & Cairo (2003)
Moving away			
Trying to succeed by intimidation and avoiding others	Excitable	Ambivalent	Volatile
	Skeptical	Suspicious	Distrust
	Cautious	Shy	Excessive Caution
	Reserved	Lone	Aloofness
	Leisurely	Pessimistic	Passive Resistance
Moving against			
Trying to succeed by charm and manipulation	Arrogant	Egocentric	Arrogant
	Mischievous	Risky	Mischievous
	Colorful	Cheerful	Melodrama
	Imaginative	Eccentric	Eccentricity
Moving toward			
Trying to succeed by ingratiating others and building alliances	Diligent	Reliable	Perfectionism
	Dutiful	Submitted	Eagerness to please

Note. Scales presented in the same row are measures of the same personality dimension.

will note that these writers largely agree about the structure of the dark side. Meanwhile, we believe, and many writers agree, that in many cases the dark side dimensions are simply extensions of the bright-side dimensions past the point at which the behavior is fully adaptable. We also believe that there are positive and negative behaviors associated with high and low scores on the dimensions of both the bright and dark side. In an important sense, there is no such thing as an ideal personality score—scores must be interpreted in the context of total profiles. Later we will review data linking the dark-side dimensions to managerial performance—performance mostly defined in terms of ineffectiveness and failure.

Defining Leadership

The leadership literature can be neatly classified in terms of the question researchers are trying to answer. Most research concerns identifying the characteristics of people who are in charge of various organizations at a particular point in time (cf. Kaiser, Hogan, & Craig, 2008). However, reflect for a moment on the kinds of people who successfully climb to the top of large, hierarchical, bureaucratic, male-dominated organizations. Such people

are politicians who may or may not have talent for inspiring their subordinates. Moreover, ascending any hierarchy is a Darwinian process in which luck and happenstance play a major role, and this may be the reason that mainstream research on leadership effectiveness doesn't converge—cf. Hamel, 2008, Khurana, 2008, or Kramer, 2008; that is, different kinds of people reach the top of different organizations for reasons related to the peculiar context of their organizations. In addition, the data indicate that the base rate for managerial failure (worldwide) is 50% to 65% (cf. Hogan, Hogan, & Kaiser, in press); because over half the people in top positions in business today will fail, it seems odd to use them as avatars.

The second question *some* leadership researchers try to answer concerns what it is that people who build and manage successful teams and organizations do. The first question—who gets to the top—concerns the fate of individual careers. The second question concerns the fate of organizations. The two questions are largely independent. Horatio Nelson, the hero of the Battle of Trafalgar, did not have a particularly great career in the Royal Navy. While he was at sea saving his country, other officers, jealous of his accomplishments, were in London undermining

his organizational career and promoting their own. Ascending to the top of any organization is a political game. Building a winning organization is a leadership game.

We approach the second question from the perspective of biology, evolutionary theory, and the study of human origins (cf. Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008)—because this ensures that the analysis will be grounded in functionality rather than changing fads in psychology or business. People evolved as group-living animals, the groups were in more or less constant conflict (a principle factor driving human evolution was warfare—cf. Bowles, 2009; Keegan, 1994; Wade, 2006), and the groups that lost these conflicts disappeared from the gene pool. There was evolutionary pressure within groups (which promoted intragroup rivalry), and evolutionary pressure between groups (which promoted intragroup cooperation). In this context, leadership would have been a resource for group survival—people are naturally selfish and need to be encouraged to cooperate and work together in the face of an external threat. These considerations lead to at least four conclusions.

First, leadership should be defined in terms of the ability to build and maintain a team, group, or organization. Second, from a functional perspective, leadership is primarily a resource for the group, and only secondarily a source of privilege for the leader. Third, leadership should be evaluated in terms of the performance of the team in competition with other teams or groups. And fourth, people probably have prewired cognitive schema that they use to evaluate the leadership potential of possible candidates; this turns into implicit leadership theory (discussed below).

If leadership is defined in terms of the ability to build and maintain effective teams, and if this definition is used to review the literature, then the research findings begin to converge and certain features of leadership effectiveness begin to emerge. We will review these findings next.

The Links between Personality and Leadership

The links between personality and leadership can be evaluated in three ways, in descending order of empirical rigor and robustness. The first concerns the links between the bright side and leadership; the second concerns the links between the dark side of personality and leadership; and the third concerns the links between personality and leadership using data based on implicit leadership theory.

To evaluate the links between the bright side of personality and leadership, one needs scores for individual leaders on the FFM, and quantitative indices of performance in leadership roles. The more of this sort of data we can find, the better we can make the evaluation. Judge, Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt (2002) aggregated the results of 222 correlations contained in 73 studies of personality and leadership performance. Their sample contained more than 25,000 managers from every level in organizations across every industry sector. They report that four of the five dimensions of the FFM were significantly correlated with leadership emergence and effectiveness (see Table 2.3), with adjustment/emotional stability as the best predictor, and agreeableness/interpersonal sensitivity the weakest predictor. In this study, conscientiousness/prudence, extraversion, and openness each had significant correlations with leadership (0.29, 0.27, and 0.21, respectively), and the multiple correlation between personality and leadership was 0.53. For people who believe in data, this study definitively seals the argument: Personality (from the bright side) predicts leadership performance across all organizational levels and industry sectors, and does so more powerfully than any known alternative.

Regarding the links between the dark side of personality and managerial performance, the connections are primarily with failure. Bentz (1967; 1985) pioneered the research on managerial derailment. Using data from a 30-year study of failed managers at a large retail chain, Bentz noted that the organization hired managers who were uniformly bright and socially skilled. However, over half of them failed, and they failed because they: (a) lacked business skills; (b) were slow to learn; (c) were unable to deal with complexity; (d) were reactive and tactical; (e) were unable to delegate; (f) were unable to build a team; (g) were unable to maintain a network of relationships; (h) let emotions cloud their judgment; and (i) had an "overriding personality defect."

Subsequent research on managerial derailment has refined but not altered these conclusions. For example, McCall and Lombardo (1983) interviewed 20 senior executives about "successful" and "derailed" executives that they knew. Both groups were seen as bright, hard working, ambitious, and willing to sacrifice. The derailed executives failed for ten reasons: (a) specific business problems; (b) insensitivity; (c) arrogance; (d) betrayal of trust; (e) inability to delegate; (f) too ambitious; (g) inability to build a team; (h); inability to think strategically; (i) inability to adapt to a new boss; and (j) too

dependent on a mentor. According to Morrison, White, and Van Velsor (1987), every failed manager in this sample had problems maintaining relationships (for a detailed review, see Hogan, Hogan, & Kaiser, in press).

Hogan and Hogan (2001) reviewed this literature and concluded that the core cause of managerial derailment is overriding "personality defects." They developed the Hogan Development Survey (HDS; Hogan & Hogan, 1997) as a way to assess these personality issues (see Table 2.2). To illustrate how dark-side personality dimensions are related to managerial performance, consider the following correlates of the HDS scales:

Managers with high scores on the *Excitable* scale are described as moody (0.37), easily stressed (0.33), temperamental (0.30), self-defeating (0.46), overreacting (0.39), and quick to anger (0.32). Managers with high scores on the *Skeptical* scale are described as unforgiving (0.33), unkind (0.32), and quarrelsome (0.25). Managers with high scores on the *Cautious* scale are described as easily embarrassed (0.50), avoids taking risks (0.39), easily hurt by criticism (0.39), and cautious and worried (0.47). Managers with high scores on the *Reserved* scale are described as detached (0.48), cold and aloof (0.27), kills enthusiasm (0.42), and unkind (0.30). Managers with high scores on the *Leisurely* scale are described as mistrustful (0.23), uncooperative (0.11), inconsiderate (0.12), and resentful (0.15). Managers with high scores on the Bold scale are described as very confident (0.31), arrogant (0.36), direct and assertive (0.33), and self-promoting (0.25). Managers with high scores on the *Mischievous* scale are described as smooth talker (0.32), bends the rules (0.41), enjoys the fast lane (0.68), does not follow through (0.21). Managers with high scores on the *Colorful* scale are described as careless (0.26), testing the limits (0.27), craving recognition (0.33), and the life of the party (0.52). Managers with high scores on the *Imaginative* scale are described as imaginative (0.29), careless (0.15), dislikes routine work (0.25), and unreliable workers (0.15). Managers with high scores on the *Diligent* scale are described as organized (0.57), good with details (0.40), overly conscientious (0.42), and perfectionistic (0.32). Managers with high scores on the Dutiful scale are described as unimaginative (0.28), shallow thinker (0.23), followers (0.15), and gets nervous easily (0.24) (cf. Hogan & Hogan, 2009).

It is worth remembering two final points about these dark-side dimensions. First, each dimension has positive features. For example, people with high

scores on excitablity bring energy and enthusiasm to new projects—but they are easily discouraged and lack persistence. People with high scores on skepticism are astute about organizational politics—but they are too mistrustful. People with high scores on reservation easily handle pressure and criticisms—but they are indifferent to morale issues and communicate poorly. People with high scores on boldness are willing to take on seemingly impossible tasks—but they won't accept responsibility for their mistakes. People with high scores on dutifulness are intensely loyal to their bosses—but they won't support their subordinates. These dimensions are associated with short-term career wins and long-term career losses.

Second, the reason these dark-side dimensions are associated with managerial failure is that they all concern behaviors that alienate subordinates and prevent managers from being able to build a team—the defining feature of leadership.

Regarding the links between personality and implicit leadership theory, we would note first that implicit leadership theory assumes that people have shared cognitive prototypes bout the characteristics of effective leaders (cf. Lord, DeVader, & Alliger, 1986). Specifically, Hogan and Kaiser (2005) point out that, if people are asked to list the attributes of the best and worst bosses they have known, the attributes fall into four reliable categories, as follows.

The first and most important category is integrity. People need to know that they can trust their leaders not to lie to them, exploit them, betray them, or behave foolishly. The data also suggest that followers are often disappointed here. The second category is decisiveness, the ability to make sound, defensible decisions in a timely way. This is crucial because the history of any business is the sum of the decisions that managers make over time (March & Simon, 1958; Mintzberg, 1973), and some decisions (e.g., to invade Russia in the winter) are worse than others. The third category is competence—leaders need to be a resource for their groups, and the respect a leader enjoys depends on his/her demonstrated expertise (French & Raven, 1959). Von Boeselager (2009) reports, for example, that senior officers in the German army began planning to assassinate Adolph Hitler in 1938, even though he was at the height of his diplomatic success and domestic political popularity. The reason: the senior officers had lost confidence in Hitler's competence as a military strategist and were gravely worried about the future of their army. Finally, good leaders project a vision that gives people confidence in the future and

facilitates team performance by clarifying roles and goals (House, 1971).

To summarize, implicit leadership theory maintains that good leaders are seen as having integrity, good judgment, competence, and vision, and bad leaders are perceived as lacking these attributes. This generalization raises further two questions. First, what is the relationship between the components of implicit leadership theory and the FFM, both of which are taxonomies of reputation? Second, do good leaders in fact have the attributes that people ascribe to them?

The FFM concerns the reputations of people in general. It concerns what we would like to know about anyone before we meet that person;is the person neurotic, approachable, charming, dependable, and imaginative or interesting? Implicit leadership theory is a special case of this, it concerns the reputations of leaders, it concerns what we would like to know about any candidate for a leadership position before we meet that person—is the person honest, decisive, competent, and strategic/visionary?

As for the empirical links between implicit leadership theory and the FFM, the question has not been dealt with explicitly in the research literature. We suspect that seeming honest (integrity) is a function of the FFM dimensions of adjustment/emotional stability, prudence/conscientiousness, and agreeableness (Hogan & Brinkmeyer, 1997; Ones, Viswesvaran, & Dilchert, 2005; Ones, Viswesvaran, & Schmidt, 1993). Seeming decisive (decisiveness) is likely to be a function of adjustment/emotional stability and inquisitiveness/openness. Seeming competent (competence) will be most closely related to experience and IQ or cognitive ability. Finally, seeming visionary (vision) is probably related to sociability/social ascendance and inquisitiveness/openness. However, these are speculations that remain to be evaluated.

As for the question of whether effective leaders are also seen as honest, decisive, competent, and visionary, the empirical literature contains little data to answer the question explicitly, but the following findings are relevant. Integrity is important in leaders because it engenders trust. Dirks and Ferrin (2002) show that being able to trust one's manager is associated with a range of positive leadership outcomes, including enhanced job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Kaplan, Klebanov, and Sorenson (2008) studied the characteristics of 302 CEO candidates for two types of financial firms and compared those characteristics with various indices of performance. From their large set of results, the following themes emerged. Successful and/or effective CEOs received higher ratings for: (a) integrity, maintaining commitments, and being accountable, which is clearly related to integrity; (b) being smart and open to criticism, which might be related to making good decisions; (c) being efficient, persistent, proactive, attentive to details, working hard, and having high standards, which might be related to competence; and (d) being creative and persuasive, which might be related to vision.

It is also important to note that there is some controversy about the degree to which charisma and social skill predict effective leadership. We would summarize the controversy in terms of three points. First, the evidence indicates that leaders who seem transformational and charismatic are also rated as more effective (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). However, in most of these studies, effective leadership was defined using subjective evaluations provided by followers. In many cases, leaders are probably described as charismatic because they are seen as effective rather than the other way around. Second, some writers (e.g., Collins, 2001) argue that charm, charisma, and social skill—the essential attributes of political actors—are not characteristics that typify effective CEOs; the myth of the charismatic CEO is just that—a myth. Third, research on ethical (Brown & Treviño, 2006) and authentic (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) leadership (of which there are several hundred examples in the past two years) implicitly recognize that charisma and charm are often used for illegitimate purposes: to achieve selfish goals at the expense of the organization's or group's goals; to lure a collective toward unstable, destructive, or delusionary ends; and to accumulate power or scarce resources for one's personal purposes. We do not deny that, put to proper use (the good of the group—what one might call "socialized charisma" versus the selfish ends of the leader—what Bass called "pseudo transformational leadership"), charisma can and does lead to effectiveness. Our point is that charisma is a gift for persuasion and influence, and the effect of this gift can be used for good or for ill.

Leadership and Team Performance

Understanding how leadership affects team performance raises the earlier question of how situations affect leader performance—because teams are key situations with which leaders must deal. We think that the impact that leaders have on their teams is mediated by how followers react to a leader's performance. This point requires some additional

discussion. First, Judge, et al. (2002) show that the FFM predicts leader performance rather well; this suggests that it would be possible to create an FFM-based composite index (regression equation) of leadership potential. Hogan and Hogan (2002) suggest this composite index is "socio-political intelligence," defined as the ability to read other people's reactions accurately.

Hogan and Hogan (2002) developed a measure of socio-political intelligence based on the Hogan Personality Inventory, a version of the FFM, and show that it is a robust predictor of leadership performance. This supports the notion that the ability to read social cues characterizes successful leaders and is a link between them and their teams. When managers are assigned responsibility for the performance of a new team, their success depends on solving two problems. On the one hand, they need to be able to read the new team and quickly determine who their allies, competitors, critics, or detractors might be. An entire on-boarding industry has sprung up designed to help new managers make this transition. On the other hand, as people rise in organizations, the demands of their jobs change, and those who are unable to detect how the demands have changed will experience real difficulties (Kaiser, Craig, Overfield, & Yarborough, in press). Socio-political intelligence is the key to making these transitions.

These generalizations prompt two further observations. First, the members of a manager's team and his/her colleagues and superiors—the people with whom a manager must interact—and the demands of the job are key elements of "the situation" to which managers must respond if they are to be successful. Second, successful responding depends on being able to read the cues in "the situation"; being able to read the cues is an individual-differences variable (socio-political perceptiveness, empathy, or intelligence) that can be measured and that in fact predicts leadership effectiveness. Regardless of whether one agrees with this argument, it is a more specific way of defining how situations influence performance than is typically found in the research literature.

Another way to evaluate leadership effectiveness is in terms of financial impact. Some of the best research on this topic has been done by economists. For example, Bloom and Van Reenen (2007) studied the performance of 732 manufacturing firms in the United States, Great Britain, France, and Germany and found that a firm's financial performance was a function of the degree to which it followed "well-established management practices" in the areas of operations, performance management, and talent management. They replicated these findings using an additional 3,268 firms, including a large sample from Asia, and three of their conclusions are worth noting. First, there are, in fact, some well established principles of management. Second, the companies that use these principles are more profitable than those who do not. Third, senior leadership decides whether to use effective management practices, so this is one sense in which leadership is linked to firm performance.

Lieberson and O'Connor (1972), using a data base of 167 companies, argue that "industry effects" account for about 30% of the variance in corporate profits, "company effects" account for about 23% of the variance, and "CEO effects" explain 14.5% of the variance. Joyce, Nohria, and Roberson (2003) also report that CEOs account for about 14 % of the variance in firm performance. Other studies estimate the effect to be as high as 20% to 45% depending on the measure of firm performance (Day & Lord, 1988; Thomas, 1988). Wasserman, Nohria, and Anand (2009) suggest asking not *whether* but *when* CEOs are important. In a study of 531 companies in 42 industries, they conclude that leadership matters least in regulated industries and matters most in industries in which the CEO has a great deal of discretion. They also caution that, when leaders have a lot of discretion, their influence can easily take a company in the wrong direction (cf. Kaiser & Hogan, 2006).

We believe the data support the notion that leaders (CEOs) make a difference (for good or ill) in firm performance. The next question concerns how, what are the mechanisms involved? Because leadership concerns getting results through other people, the essence of leadership is creating an effective team. Hackman (2002), using data from a wide variety of teams, argues that leaders influence their teams' success or failure by establishing the conditions that allow the team to function and collaborate. This involves setting clear goals, providing resources and feedback, and delegating appropriately. Hackman makes the important point that the ideal team size is about six people; as team size increases above that, the influence of the leader becomes quickly attenuated. The problem of span of control rarely comes up in the leadership literature; some writers even suggest that it is irrelevant, but Hackman's data suggest it is crucial, and we agree.

The topics of leader/manager ROI and team performance come together in an important paper by Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002). They argue

that how employees view their supervisors (implicit leadership theory) determines their overall level of engagement and job satisfaction. In a study using 198,514 employees from 7,939 business units from all industry sectors, they show that employee engagement and satisfaction at the business-unit level correlate 0.37 and 0.38, respectively, with a composite index of business-unit performance that included turnover, customer loyalty, and financial performance. They have replicated these findings in subsequent research published in nonacademic sources.

Future Directions

Our reading of the literature suggests six themes as candidates for future research. First, the basic research paradigm of leadership research is changing, and the Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002) paper is an exemplar. In traditional research (e.g., Bentz, 1985), a group of candidates or managers in a single organization are tested or evaluated. Then performance data is gathered, the two data sets are compared, and conclusions are drawn regarding the nature of leadership. However, different characteristics are needed for success in different organizations (Goldman Sachs versus the U.S. Marine Corps), so that comparisons of leaders across organizations tend not to converge, which leads to the present state of the art (Khurana, 2007; Kramer, 2008). But if leadership is defined as the ability to build an effective team and is evaluated in terms of the performance of the team, then leadership research should be conducted at the business-unit level (Bloom & Van Reenen, 2007), not the individual level. Finally, when this is done, the results begin to converge.

Second, one can distinguish between subjective evaluations of a leader's performance and objective outcomes (the performance of the group for which a leader is responsible). In this paper, we argue for the importance of the latter. However, measures of group performance ("hard" outcomes) have problems of their own. Team performance—like survival—is not always the direct result of the leader's actions. Many extraneous factors contaminate objective measures. Moreover, the seeming chaos of our natural environment often presents paradoxes: Behaviors that work well in one place at one time may be, in another place and time, the undoing of the group and its leader. Consequently, it would be a mistake to abandon subjective appraisals of leaders' performance. Because subjective appraisals of leadership are easy to collect, they are used

much more frequently than objective measures of group or organization performance. Leadership research would benefit from comparisons of both sets of measures, something rarely found in the literature.

Third, research on implicit leadership theory shows very clearly that people expect leaders or leader candidates to seem honest, decisive, competent, and visionary, but we don't know whether these expectations are actually valid. Is it the case that effective leaders are indeed trustworthy, have good judgment and the relevant skills, and can think strategically? We would hope so, but, again, we don't know.

Fourth, critics of personality psychology since Boas (the founder of cultural anthropology) have argued that culture shapes human action much more strongly than personal characteristics. In the age of global business ventures, it is important to determine how this argument impacts leadership. Is it the case that all leadership is local, or as we suspect, is effective leadership a cross-cultural universal (Hogan & Benson, 2009)?

Fifth, leadership research should pay more attention to contextual factors. Nonetheless, prior research on contextual factors often used measures that offer minimal insights across situations. For example, if we develop a profile of a good leader's behavior, and show how this behavior led to effectiveness in a particular situation, we are faced with a paradox. If we "cherry pick" a single, narrow contextual factor, then that factor will be unlikely to generalize across situations. On the other hand, if we provide a comprehensive account of the context, such a context is unlikely to apply to other leaders, and the more comprehensive the description, the more likely that is to be true. Our advice: Select broad contextual elements, and show that they apply across different types of organizations and leadership levels.

Sixth and finally, there is the anomaly of what might be called "the Apple Effect." According to accounts in the popular press, the leaders of many successful organizations (Apple, the New England Patriots, Hewlitt-Packard) are cold, critical, demanding, and even abusive. How can this be? Our hypothesis is that the leaders of these organizations are so obviously competent that followers are willing to tolerate abuse in order to be on a winning team. This then points to the importance of the poorly understood topic of the psychology of followership and implicit leadership theory.

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