



REGENT  
RESEARCH  
ROUNDTABLES

*Fall 2022*



## 2022 Editorial Board

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*The Regent Research Roundtables* is the proceedings of the School of Business & Leadership Regent Research Roundtables that provide a forum for scholars in the field of business and leadership studies. Participants in the Research Roundtables are selected through a peer-review process. Inclusion in the proceedings follows an editorial selection process with the specific roundtable chair selecting specific articles that fit the style and structure of a proceedings document.

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From the Editors  
Dr. Bruce E. Winston and Dr.  
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2022

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Welcome to the Proceedings of the 2022 Regent Research Roundtables. In addition to presentations of empirical studies, the Roundtable format allows presenters to discuss new concepts, possible future research topics, consulting methods, new teaching methods, and panel discussions of topics that are of interest to our academic communities. The topics are wide-ranging in content and delivery, and we trust you find nuggets of truth, things to think on, and lessons for your own research, leadership, followership, and organization.

*NOTE: All authors own responsibility for APA and/or formatting.*

**An Advancing Profession: Teams, Trends, and Technology in Coaching: Chair Narrative Reflections on the 2022 Regent University School of Business and Leadership Professional Coaching Roundtable**

Dr. Diane M. Wiater

Roundtable: Professional Coaching

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This article highlights insights from three live panel discussions about professional coaching presented at the Regent University School of Business and Leadership 2022 Annual Roundtables. Ten presenters from this event are featured in this reflective narrative. The live panels provided an opportunity for all professionals who recorded presentations to have a voice in the live element of the roundtables. These panel discussions advanced the professional coaching conversation, as presenters included research and ideas from recorded presentations. The panel content was collaborative, engaging, and authentic. My reflection of this event is intended to expand the professional coaching field as a whole.

Key words: coaching, development, organizational, leadership, teams, global

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**An Exploration of Team Coaching: Coaching Through Psychological Safety and Trust with Teams**

Kelly M. G. Whelan

Roundtable: Professional Coaching

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With 80% of organizations operating in teams, team coaching is quickly being recognized as a way for teams to significantly impact those they serve. Psychological safety in teams is paramount to this success and is established when team members feel valued, wanted, accepted, and heard. When the collective body is psychologically safe, trust and powerful team learning is the outcome. As teams learn to operate in a state of psychological safety, they become more than high-performing teams, they become confident, high-value teams that create transformation and impact (CVTI) for their stakeholders. This paper outlines the difference between individual, group, and team coaching and psychological safety and trust. Further, this paper offers practical application for coaches and teams to generate psychological safety through agreements, processes, and systems.

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Keywords: psychological safety, trust, team coaching, high-value teams, transformation, impact

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## **Virtual Coaching is Inevitable and Effective**

Dr. Jeffery S. Doolittle

Roundtable: Professional Coaching

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The world has changed and the hybrid workplace with work-from-home opportunities has shifted in-person meetings and events to virtual. Technology enables individuals and teams to work collaboratively remotely. As the world changes, professional coaching has changed and will need to continue to change. Both coaching professionals and their clients have adapted to the circumstances of the times, with more and more utilizing technology tools for coaching sessions. Virtual coaching is a technology-facilitated partnership between a coach and a client to maximize the client's personal and professional potential. Virtual coaching differs from traditional face-to-face coaching by offering added convenience, service, and support benefits, such as accessibility, rapid response to needs, affordability, access to resources, and evaluation.

Thoughtfully incorporating virtual coaching has many positive impacts, but that does not mean it is without challenges. It is best to assess the situation, coach/client, and context to determine its best use. Coaching does not have to be face-to-face to be personalized and effective. A skilled coach with virtual coaching competencies can effectively utilize virtual technology to achieve lasting results.

Key Words: virtual, coaching, competencies, leadership

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## **Charles Spurgeon and Followership**

Lance Croy

Roundtable: Followership

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The paper examines the exemplary followership of Charles Spurgeon while pastoring at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. It may appear odd at first to ascribe followership attributes to such a high-profile leader, but Spurgeon's correspondence between himself and the deacons displayed courageous followership behaviors. Followership is a mutual reciprocation of communication, compensation, and collaboration that concurrently forms and re-forms between both parties, furthering the organization's primary cause. Over the last few years, the Christian industrial complex has seen the downfall of many of its most prolific figures. Given the pitfalls of power many leaders face, the need to study exemplary followership is critical. The paper's methodology is a bounded case study in the field of pragmatic qualitative research utilizing primary (autobiographies), secondary (biographies), and tertiary sources (followership theory). Additionally, Spurgeon's sermons underwent syntactic concordancing to determine

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what the Prince of Preachers thought and taught about leadership. The paper's underlying theme is that Christian leadership is paradoxically followership, and Spurgeon's life exemplified it.

Keywords: Charles Spurgeon, followership, qualitative research, case study, biography

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### **Followers Ready for Leadership as Demonstrated by St. Mary and St. Josephine**

Jane R. Caulton

Roundtable: Followership

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This presentation explores the link between Chaleff's (2009) courageous followership model and Kellerman's (2007) diehard and Kelley's (1988, 2008) star performer models as demonstrated through the lives of Mary, mother of Jesus, and Josephine Bakhita, canonized in the year 2000. As shown through a sacred texture analysis, these female followers exemplify characteristics that lead to preparation for higher levels of organizational responsibilities (Hersey et al., 1979; Robbins, 2004, 2010; Schermerhorn, 1997). The study is a contribution to research on females as followers.

Keywords: star performer, diehard, follower, sacred texture, courageous follower, Chaleff, Kellerman, Kelley, St. Mary, Bakhita, St. Josephine

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### **Followers' Independent Critical Thinking and Active Engagement for Collocated vs. Virtual Work Teams**

Kellie Playter

Roundtable: Followership

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There is a gap in the research on followership in the virtual space. As such, this study explored the levels of active engagement (AE) and independent critical thinking (ICT) between collocated followers who work in a traditional office setting alongside coworkers and followers who work entirely virtual and rely on technology to connect, make decisions, and accomplish tasks. Current research has indicated that there are both strengths and limitations to virtual teams. However, it is often found to be more challenging to be as engaged and display ICT as a member of a virtual team. This study employed Kelley's (1992) Followership Scale to determine the difference between followers' AE and ICT to determine how most followers are classified in these different contexts and explored whether there are differences by gender. Followers who work in either virtual or collocated teams were recruited through online social media platforms. The survey results indicated no significant difference between collocated and virtual followers for AE or ICT; both types indicated they were exemplary followers. There was also no significant difference for gender, although that was expected for ICT, even though COVID-19 and childcare responsibilities have impacted more women. This study can contribute to this body of research, or lack thereof, by helping people better

understand exemplary followership within different types of work arrangements to find out where the differences are and offer tools for organizations to develop followers who work in these spaces (Finlayson, 2021).

Keywords: followership, independent critical thinking, active engagement, collocated teams, virtual teams

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### **Servant Leadership Through Selfless Sacrifice: An Examination of John 10:7-18, 13:1-20, and 21:15-19**

Johann Acuña and Derrick Bledsoe  
Roundtable: Followership

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Leadership is essential in the church of Jesus Christ, however the term itself is ambiguous. This paper will argue that leadership should be understood through the agency of a vice-regent to the Lord Jesus, and thus subject to His power, truth, and authority, such that the leader is merely subject to what Christ has commanded. A careful examination of John 10:7-18, 13:1-20, and 21:15-19 demonstrates that leaders should adopt a slave mentality and submit to Christ's commands, love their Lord, and express their love to Christ through shepherding His sheep as they themselves follow Him.

Keywords: Vice-regency; leadership; followership; Christian leadership; John; shepherd; slave; servant leadership; feet-washing; sacrifice; sacrificial leadership

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### **Leadership and Culture: What Difference Does it Make?**

Michelle G. Segundo  
Roundtable: Global Consulting

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Culture is a complex, multilevel, and multidimensional phenomenon consisting of visible and invisible traits that directly and indirectly influence people and behavior (Aymin & Korabik, 2010). As culture is embedded into the way people think and live, it also significantly influences leaders who in turn influence employees and organizations as a whole. Leaders attempting to conduct business on a global level and lead teams cross-culturally, must not only have an understanding of diverse cultures but must also appreciate core cultural values to lead effectively. Hofstede's (1980b) four dimensions of cross-cultural leadership: (a) power distance; (b) masculinity; (c) individualism; and (d) uncertainty avoidance contributed to House's (1993) twenty-year, cross-cultural GLOBE research project asserting that certain leadership styles such as transformational, servant, and autocratic were optimal leadership methods in certain cultures. The purpose of this paper is to explain how culture affects leadership and how certain leadership theories (transformational, servant, and autocratic) are applicable to certain

cultures (Latin American, Confucian Asian, and Anglo) based on their dimensional scores.

Keywords: transformational leadership, servant leadership, autocratic leadership, cross-cultural leadership

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## **Managing Today's Employees for Business Success**

Melody Avery Cazort  
Roundtable: Global Consulting

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It is common knowledge that our social, economic, wellness, cultural, and especially sense of security are in an unprecedented era. Fear thrives in the environment as people suffer losses from COVID, mass shootings, housing, inflation, and a pending war. Thus, people changed; they have merged from working at a brick and mortar location or they are new members of "The Great Resignation". The purpose of this article is to explore the current situation, meet the emerging values, and provide recommendations from a consulting perspective for success. To recruit and retain employees, mid-level and senior managers must offer more for a successful enterprise. Motivating employees, whether in the workplace or remotely, increase productivity for success. To assure the latest information for the paper, research only derives from December 2021 (revised in 2022) and 2022. The paper concludes with recommendations to leaders on how to encourage productivity by adapting to employees. A goal is a positive organizational culture fulfilling employees' current needs, thus creating more success for business today.

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## **Agility in the Age Of Amalgamation and the Role of HRD**

Alina Wreczycki  
Roundtable: Human Resources Development

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It appeared that the contemporary organizational environments undergo rapid amalgamations stemming from the necessity to alter business processes to realize maximum effectiveness and efficiency. It was also apparent that high-intensity rivalry in this dynamic global setting marked by uncertainty called for expeditious decision making that necessitates agility. While being expeditious within the context of this research meant the ability to combine velocity and effectiveness, agility applied to human condition reflected an individual's level of resilience to quickly embrace the speed and the implications of change for amalgamation and sustainability. It was hypothesized that resilience necessitated the presence and the active involvement of an intellectually curious adult learner based on (a) the need to know, (b) the learners' self-concept, (c) the role of learners' experiences, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation toward learning, and (f) motivation (Knowles et al., 2015) to be committed to life-long learning also known as the andragogy learning and self-development to acclimate to



rapidly changing and amalgamating environments. Agility appeared to be the framework of organizations that focused on not only developing and sustaining technical competencies through human resources development (HRD) based on training and knowledge transfer, but creative and critical reasoning empowered by compassion and collaboration. HRD in short was perceived as the training and development of a company's personnel. While HRD could be delivered in a formal fashion such as training and training transfer into the existing or evolving processes for retention and sustainability, fostering agility appeared to call for the informal aspects of HRD such as coaching and mentorship to create and sustain a workforce of enthusiastic adult learners. This research involved analyzing qualitative data from four participants – two males and two females – to examine how closely their perception of agility matched the working definition presented and what traits they attributed with agility. Further inquiry examined the application of agility as interpreted by the participants into the organizational environments as they interacted with other firms to amalgamate and to incorporate changing conditions while doing business and their views on the role of HRD in sustaining agile and amalgamating organizations.

Keywords: agility, amalgamation, andragogical model

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### **Building a National Kingdom Business Culture Through Integrated Discipleship and Entrepreneurship for the Youth: Lessons From Rwanda**

Richard L Miller and Patrice Habinshuti  
Roundtable: Kingdom Business

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Christian research has revealed that one effective and sustainable way to transform people and nations is through business from the heart or kingdom business. Koshal (2008) noted that kingdom businesses are businesses started by Christians that pursue a multiple strategy – (a) profitability and sustainability and (b) job creation and income generation – and affirm that such businesses help make both an economic, as well as a spiritual, impact in developing countries. As Rae (2005) affirmed, exposure to entrepreneurship education and training delivers orientations to the cognitive features and skills necessary for initiating and managing entrepreneurial ventures. In the same way, efficient prior discipleship and transformation training is believed to inculcate kingdom business principles (Miller, 2012). This paper outlines the process of building a national kingdom business culture in developing countries through equipping youth to run kingdom businesses by integrating discipleship and entrepreneurship in high school teaching. The process has been developed by the authors and tested in Rwanda for over a decade (2012-2022).

Keywords: kingdom business, entrepreneurship, discipleship, youth, Rwanda

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### **Business by the Stomach, Head, or Heart**

John E. Mulford  
Roundtable: Kingdom Business Track

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This exploratory paper posits a typology of business thinking and behavior, draws logical implications of how each type would think and behave, and suggests how business results might differ under the three patterns of thinking and behavior. The paper draws on a biblical analysis of human nature to classify thinking and behavior into three categories: (a) stomach—controlled by the flesh, (b) head—controlled by the intellect unsubmitted to God, and (c) heart—controlled by the Holy Spirit. As defined here, stomach and head are manifestations of man’s sinful nature, whereas heart represents thinking and behavior led by the Holy Spirit. Scripture supports the description of each category; however, are the categories non-overlapping descriptors of reality that exhaust all possibilities of thinking and behavior in business? Are those categories useful for understanding and guiding thinking, behavior, and results in business? Further research is required to answer these questions.

Keywords: kingdom business, business as mission, theology of business, marketplace ministry, faith at work, Christian worldview and business

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### **Heart, Soul, and Mind: Basis for Spiritual Transformation for Kingdom Business**

Richard L Miller  
Roundtable: Kingdom Business

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In *Waking the Dead*, Eldredge (2003) wrote, “The story of your life is the story of the long and brutal assault on your heart by the one who knows what you could be and fears it” (p. 34). Therefore, if you are seeking to be transformed to the image of Jesus, Get ready for the battle! This paper records the results of various courses of study and investigations conducted by Richard Miller to determine the effectiveness of selected change agents with the ultimate goal of identifying change agents and processes to enhance biblical, spiritual growth in believers. Miller (1992) reported the positive change in soil quality from adding various levels of nutrients. This project also proved beneficial as a learning vehicle to conduct research. Miller’s (2003) doctoral dissertation reported the results of a correlation study to evaluate the change in spiritual traits using scripture verses as change agents. The results of this study led to the development of a seminar titled *Tools for Transformation* (TFT; Miller, 2004), which uses Scripture verses as the change agents to enhance spiritual development in believers. The TFT seminar was beta tested with a group of 15 believers over 6 months, which confirmed the hypothesis that ingesting scripture verses increases spiritual development. The TFT seminar was adapted for use in Rwanda as a joint effort between Richard Miller and Patrice Habinshuti and was titled *Rwanda Kingdom Entrepreneurship Caravan*.

Keywords: heart, soul, mind, zone of congruence, transformation

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## **Abraham Lincoln: A Wise and Just Servant Leader Motivated by Natural Law Principles, Faith, and Virtue**

Jacqueline A. Faulhaber

Roundtable: Servant Leadership

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One can hardly doubt the servant leader's contribution toward a more just society. Well-researched are the virtuous qualities of the servant leader. Not as well explored are the steadfast convictions and principled beliefs driving the servant leader's reasoning. This paper explores Abraham Lincoln's conviction of beliefs and steadfast principles primarily noted in his 1860 Cooper Union speech through the lens of natural law theory that serves as a foundation for his servant leadership style. It further asserts in companion to virtue in the servant leader is the principled belief in justice and unity that contributes to a just and flourishing civil polity for all. It is hopeful that this study of Lincoln's servant leadership, rooted in natural law, could benefit society in improving race relations, just public policy making, and just public leadership.

Keywords: Abraham Lincoln, natural law, servant leadership, virtue

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## **Nelson Mandela: Leading in Volatile and Uncertain Environments**

Joycelynn Green

Roundtable: Servant Leadership Roundtable

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The purpose of this article is to make it possible for leaders to have a better understanding of the overarching idea of servant leadership as well as the qualities that define servant leaders. An examination of Nelson Mandela's style of leadership is used as a model to better comprehend the notion of servant leadership as described by Robert Greenleaf. Greenleaf is widely regarded as the person who pioneered the idea of servant leadership. This report aims to discuss the significance of servant leadership from the perspective of one of the greats in a turbulent and unpredictable environment with base points on leading through service, remembering servant leadership is a choice, and leading with servant leadership. Compassion, respect, and sacrifice are just a few of the components that are essential to the servant-leadership style of leadership. An examination of Mandela's leadership style as that of a servant leader offers a context within which servant leadership can be better understood, while also attempting to determine whether or not leadership in today's world exhibits attributes that are characteristic of servant leadership.

Key words: servant leadership, leadership, characteristics

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## **Beyond Traditional Risk Management: Integrating Horizon Scanning and Strategic Risk Prioritization**

Dr. Rodney B. Woods  
Roundtables: Strategic Foresight Roundtable

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This journal article examines current efforts to merge horizon scanning and risk prioritization methodologies to comprehend emerging concerns better and classify them as either risk-related problems to be resolved or strategic opportunities to be exploited. Continuing to concern governments and global enterprises is the lack of correlation between data on developing challenges and credible strategic decisions. As demands for time and money expand, these obstacles are expected to intensify. Gathering insights would guide strategic choices at every level of the firm. Efforts to merge horizon scanning and risk prioritization using a qualitative weight of evidence framework is one method for developing a systematic procedure. This strategy detects all potential signs of future change with a significant influence on risk-stratified strategic missions and underlying values. Moreover, this approach supports the investigation of elements beyond the control of organizations, understanding that resilience is contingent upon the adaptability of management methods and the readiness to deal with various unforeseen events. I will also examine how leaders may utilize this framework to develop an excellent strategic plan with consistency. Last but not least, there will be proposals for future improvements to bolster trust in using horizon scanning for risk-stratified strategic planning.

Keywords: futures, horizon scanning, prioritization, risk, strategic decision-making

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# An Advancing Profession: Teams, Trends, and Technology in Coaching: Chair Narrative Reflections on the 2022 Regent University School of Business and Leadership Professional Coaching Roundtable

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Dr. Diane M. Wiater  
*Regent University*  
*Roundtable: Professional Coaching*

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This article highlights insights from three live panel discussions about professional coaching presented at the Regent University School of Business and Leadership 2022 Annual Roundtables. Ten presenters from this event are featured in this reflective narrative. The live panels provided an opportunity for all professionals who recorded presentations to have a voice in the live element of the roundtables. These panel discussions advanced the professional coaching conversation, as presenters included research and ideas from recorded presentations. The panel content was collaborative, engaging, and authentic. My reflection of this event is intended to expand the professional coaching field as a whole.

*Key words:* coaching, development, organizational, leadership, teams, global

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Leadership coaching is a viable growing leadership development tool. According to Training Industry (2021), the reported global organizational spending in 2020 is \$357.7 billion. In data presented by Prokopeak (2018) in Chief Learning Officer, leadership coaching was the second highest preferred method of leadership development, behind instructor-led training and followed by e-learning. The above is data from the organization officers. Adding to that, according to Day (2000), leadership development



builds leader capacity. There are a variety of circumstances and situations in which leadership development takes place. Leadership development can result from intentional investment. Abel and Nair (2015) report that “executive coaching is an experiential and individualized approach to leader development that builds a leader’s ability to achieve short- and long-term development goals” (p. 8). This data concerns one trend in coaching: leadership development. Much of the reflections that follow focus on coaching and leadership development.

As part of the Regent Roundtables proceedings, this article highlights input from 10 professional coaching practitioner research presentations. The presentations were prepared for the Regent University School of Business and Leadership 2022 Annual Roundtables. What follows is an overview of the roundtables, general reflections concerning the process of determining live panel participants and topics, highlighted contributions from panelists, and reflections and summaries from the roundtable chair.

## **The Call - An Advancing Profession: Teams, Trends, and Technology in Coaching**

In 2022, the Regent University School of Business and Leadership (SBL) hosted virtual roundtables. The overall theme was “Continue the Mission,” reflecting our commitment to Regent University’s mission of Christian leadership to change the world. Professional Coaching was one of nine field-specific roundtables. A call for abstracts was issued to researchers and practitioners and noted the following:

The intentionality of continuing the 2021 Professional Coaching Roundtable theme opens the door wide for the expected variety of papers, presentations, and cases. Team coaching is expanding globally. The trends include executives, nonprofit leaders, individuals in every generation, and church leaders, utilizing coaching to strengthen their leadership. Technology is an expanding tool for connecting with clients and supporting individual change. What models are being used and developed? What is happening to the best practices of coaching? How are professional coaches adapting to meet client needs? How are organizations using coaching to strengthen leaders? How is coaching expanding globally? Perspectives and topics abound in consideration of “An Advancing Profession!” (Regent University 2022 Annual Research Roundtables)

Through the roundtable presentations, registrants were provided a glimpse of the vast and expanding impact of coaching.

### **Components of the Professional Coaching Roundtable**

The SBL Roundtables included three components: a recorded presentation, a written article, and live panel discussions. Presenters were not required to participate in all three aspects of the roundtables. All were required to prepare a recorded presentation



which was available to roundtable registrants prior to the scheduled live roundtable panels. In the Professional Coaching Roundtable, all presenters were invited to and did participate in live panel discussions during the two days of the scheduled roundtables held September 9–10, 2022. All presentations in the Professional Coaching Roundtable were from professionals and practitioners who are also researchers and academics. These combined roles forward ideas, practices, and perspectives taking place in professional coaching trends. The live panels provided an opportunity for all professionals who recorded presentations to have a voice in the live element of the roundtables. Three panels were created within the Professional Coaching Roundtable to highlight concepts and practices, create collaborative discussion, and advance the professional and academic conversations about coaching while engaging participants. Each live panel's moderator and participants spouted off spontaneous questions to open the conversation around the panel's topic. Dr. Diane M. Wiater, Regent University School of Business and Leadership adjunct professor, served as the Professional Coaching Roundtable chair and moderated the three panels: 1) Technology and Communication, 2) Coaching as a Tool for Preparation, and 3) Coaching Globally and in Teams and Organizations. Panel topics and groupings were determined by the roundtable chair after abstracts and proposals were accepted.

Two individual presentations to highlight focused on crucial coaching components: communication and psychological safety, presented by Cara Conley and Dr. Kelly Whelan, respectively. These components and competencies embodied the coaching experience. If coaches do not build and create a safe environment, clients may not open up or trust the coach to partner with them and support them in a coaching relationship. This is problematic and damaging to the intent of coaching.

The three live panel discussions advanced the conversation, as presenters included research and ideas from experience, practical research, and recorded presentations. The panel content was collaborative, engaging, and authentic. This written reflection focuses on the panel presenters and their insights and includes quotes from each presenter. Recordings of the live panel presentations are not available to the public. Panel highlights and summaries are presented in the sequence of live airing (see Appendix).

### **Panel 1: Coaching, Technology, and Communication**

Three presenters comprised Panel 1. Dr. Thomas Anderson, II presented, "The Double Entendre of Coaching Technology." Dr. Jeffrey Doolittle presented, "Virtual Coaching is Inevitable and Effective," and Conley presented, "Coaching Conversations and Communication Theory" (see Appendix). These three presentations were selected for this panel, as communication is core to coaching. Anderson noted in his opening comments that he examined a couple of questions: "How is virtual coaching, disrupting communication and leadership and organizational norms?" and "What effect does technology have on coaches and coaching practices?" Anderson, noted that he views

“coaching technology as a double entendre,” interpreting it “in two ways, . . . coaching technology being interpreted as number one . . . and technology can be used to deliver coaching.” Anderson continued, “Digital coaching is converging with the act of coaching being adopted into your larger organizations that never used coaching.” Presenting another point of the segment, Anderson noted, “Digital coaching platforms are here to stay.”

As Anderson added his closing comments in the panel, he noted, “digital coaching is disruptive.” “I would suggest leaning into that disruption and getting ahead of it.” And finally, “you can use those (digital coaching) tools, whether you're an internal or external coach, to get ahead of the disruption.”

Doolittle opened his comments with, “Coaching doesn't have to be face to face to be personalized and effective.” He continued, “Research supports effective skilled coaches can effectively utilize virtual technology to achieve lasting results.” “We need to think about coaching competencies broader than we have traditionally and consider virtual collaboration.” He noted, “I do believe with the technologies, they enable personalization if you know how they're used.”

Doolittle closed with a bold challenge:

It's not about virtual coaching or in-person coaching but coaching and using virtual collaboration tools need to be considered most effective to the situation, the context, and the leader and coaching competencies, coaching competency models, that we use for the development and advancement of the profession need to start accounting for the rapid advancements in technology around virtual collaboration.

Conley opened her comments in the panel noting, “You don't have coaching without coaching conversations.” She continued, “Trust is the precursor for deeper and more meaningful conversations . . . as your relationship [coach and client] progresses, trust increases, you're going to have deeper conversations.” Conley's roundtable presentation highlighted the emotional intelligence of the coach, and coaches needing to build EQ skills. She noted the five constructs of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills) and encouraged coaches to tap into EQ as they “lean into the conversation, it shows you're there, listening and learning, empathizing, awareness . . . and increasing interest.”

Conley offered her final comments in the live panel, centering on client uniqueness and honoring the client. “There is nothing else in all creation that is made in the image of God.” “Technology can't replace us [Christian coaches], it's not made in the image of God.”

## Chair Summary and Comments on Panel 1

Coaching is people centered. Coaches serve clients through trusted relationships and coaching competency. Coaching competency includes skill, wisdom, relationship, and process. The disruption of technology can greatly benefit clients. Online learning was peaking its head through the new technology window 25–30 years ago. Now, the field of education and learning would be nearly non-existent without technology. Coaches, let us lean in. One means of leaning in will be setting standards and expectations. Anderson tells coaches they can and should evaluate the technologies as they consider and then select them for use. He offers the reminder of possible monetary benefits to coaches for using and promoting various technologies. Doolittle raises a flare and a banner suggesting the development of virtual coaching competencies, in essence, saying that we know this is happening, let's not just let it free flow. Boundaries around virtual coaching and a foundation under it can intentionally develop this modality of coaching.

In this live panel's closing comments, Conley noted that people are the only creatures created in the image of God. In one of its foundational documents, "Christian Coaching Distinctions," the Christian Coaching Network notes, "In Christian coaching we understand that respect and impression of self are based not on personal accomplishment or goal attainment, but on the value of life because we have been created in the image of God" (Christian Coaches Network, n.d.). Conley's note of needing discernment to honor the client in the coach's tool selection keeps the client's dignity at the forefront. In my roundtable presentation, my definition of coaching states, "Coaching is an agreed upon, client-centered, and client-driven partnering relationship, skill set, and process honoring the client which leads to growth and transformation for the client." Honoring the client is, has been, and remains central to coaching.

## Panel 2: Coaching as a Tool for Preparation

Four practitioners comprised Panel 2. Dr. Shanita B. Brown presented, "C.O.D.E. Leadership Development Curriculum." Dr. Shoneen N. Brown presented, "A Model for Coaching in Enrollment Management as a Proactive Development Tool for Incoming Students." Dr. Carmellia Shivers-Cole presented, "Coaching the Future Workforce," and Dr. Sophia Rudisill-Holmes presented, "Sustainable Infrastructure for a Growing Mentoring District Initiative" (see Appendix).

Through the live Panel 2 conversation, we were presented several generational situations that demonstrated the use of coaching as a tool for leader preparation. Rudisill-Holmes's presentation demonstrated the development of a viable infrastructure through which coaching and mentoring are being tested and used to create a path to success in a school system reaching tens of thousands of students. Shanita Brown demonstrated the flexibility of a coaching model she created, known as the C.O.D.E. model (connect-obstacles-development-execute), as she implements it with

adults and students. Shoneen Brown developed a coaching model to support and engage non-traditional students in higher education; non-traditional students can be characterized as individuals who did not go the traditional route of immediately continuing their education after graduating high school. She is implementing aspects of this model particularly connecting students to their “why” or their motivation in returning to higher education in pursuit of a degree.

Shanita Brown noted, concerning young people, “The C.O.D.E coaching model comes in to help them [students] create that awareness and authentic power around their thinking, feeling, and choosing.” This centers around the leadership principle of self-leadership. In talking about empowerment, she added that the curriculum is “all about integrating the learning and the coaching together so that people can have a hands-on experience with their learning where they can be accountable, where they can create this awareness to take control.

Shoneen Brown, in talking about her coaching model as a proactive tool, stated that non-traditional students noted their need for support:

They need partnership and they need someone to believe in them that they will be able to meet their goals. I believe coaching is the perfect tool to implement . . . to help them to be able to meet their goals.

Brown noted that coaching could assist them as they “unpack their talents” and provide insight into who they are as a person. She further noted that her “model is going to disrupt the current admissions process,” adding it can assist in reframing what “success looks like . . . and move into identifying success markers” for individuals. Brown closed her comments by noting “40% of students who begin courses, or adult learners that are non-traditional students, don't finish. And a lot of that is because of the fact that they probably don't feel supported.”

Shivers-Cole addressed the need for culture and perspective change through her career development curriculum designed to integrate individuals of multiple generations in the workforce. She noted the necessity for embracing younger generations in the workforce and using coaching as a means of preparing them and taking care of them. Shivers-Cole also noted that the current workforce cannot ignore the coming generations but must adjust. A means of helping the existing generations adjust is through the use of coaching. Shivers-Cole explained that the generations must “work together to adjust Generation Z to the workforce so everyone can have balance.” She noted a 40 million people gap from those exiting the workforce through retirement to those entering it in the younger generations.

Rudisill-Holmes’s model and infrastructure incorporate three core components of leadership development: training, mentoring, and coaching. Her model focuses on mentors. In her model, “mentors, caring adults, as we call them, provide a relationship

that supports young people in navigating complex systems as they build their self-efficacy practices.” Coaching is one activity that occurs through the mentoring relationship, and Rudisill-Holmes noted “Coaching conversation is foundational between mentee and mentor because it creates an exchange that facilitates that transformation that we've all come to know and love.” According to Rudisill-Holmes, her work “is not easy, putting a scalable, sustainable infrastructure in place that will yield impact in the lives of youth, not only in the city of Baltimore but across the nation.” Rudisill-Holmes continued sharing that while it is not easy, “it is essential for our future emerging leaders.”

### **Chair Summary and Comments on Panel 2**

In the second live panel discussion, Drs. Shanita Brown, Shoneen Brown, Shivers-Cole, and Rudisill-Holmes discussed rising generations and how their coaching models and processes are being used as tools for leader preparation. Through their research, the self-awareness of the coming generations and their needs for focus and tools for building confidence in decision-making and designing actions are gaining traction.

In my recorded presentation, I coined the phrase, the “Golden Trifecta of Leadership Development.” Furthermore, I suggested that it includes, 1) training, 2) mentoring, and 3) coaching, which happen in the expanse of experience. In order for one to develop as a leader, there has to be the context of experience. The experience is the backdrop, fore drop, and present drop, which give life and activate the impact of leadership development. What we see trending in the field of coaching is that it is being offered or provided to younger generations. Even Gallup is using a version of CliftonStrengths© in schools. Coaching can bring disruption because it brings change and transformation.

### **Panel 3: Coaching Globally and in Teams and Organizations**

Three participants comprised Panel 3. Dr. Sally Fry presented, “From Vision to Implementation: Coaching in a Church Denomination (A Case Study).” Dr. Ulf Spears presented, “360° Global Kingdom Leadership Coaching Journey ‘From Graduation to the Globe,’” and Dr. Kelly Whelan presented, “Coaching through Psychological Safety with Teams” (see Appendix).

Through this panel, a case study demonstrating successful implementation of a coaching initiative was presented by Fry. The process and techniques used by Fry revealed the importance of leader support in such initiatives as well as the value of empowering organizational members through choice in tool selection. Fry noted a key to the success of the initiative was in providing members with a coaching experience.

Spears developed a family coaching model more than 10 years ago and has been training leaders of families in it since. This model approaches the family as an

organization and assists in developing healthy family constructs, relationships, and practices.

Whelan presented on trusted relationship as a component contributing to the transformative experience of coaching. Through relationship, coaches partner with clients, support clients, and demonstrate belief in clients. It is not a false or manufactured belief, but a genuine heartfelt conviction about the client and their potential. It is partnering with the client to help them fulfill their potential.

Fry is successfully implementing coaching as a leadership development tool within her organization. She noted that part of her success is in presenting coaching as part of a toolbox rather than the sole solution, and shared, "Our leaders are now beginning to recognize coaching as a distinct skill, as we were talking about previously, within their leadership toolbox." Leaders select when to use coaching and coaching skill. Fry further attributed the success of the leader and program development to providing a coaching experience, and shared:

I would say one of the key things that I have noticed is allowing that individual to experience coaching. I think once they have personally found the transformation, the accountability, those aha moments where they are, they're discovering answers to their challenges. Once they personally experience it, they have that willingness to say, "I've got to use this with my staff. I absolutely have to do this when I'm talking with people."

As Whelan opened her comments on trust and psychological safety, she drew from a panel earlier in the day stating, "Cara Conley, earlier in the live session [Panel 1], talked about trust and this being the precursor to deeper conversations and relationships." Whelan continued, "We, as coaches, must understand how to assess trust, how to assess psychological safety," and then further noted:

Trust is the outcome of the experience that our teams are having. And psychological safety is that experience. So, as coaches and coaching leaders working with teams, we must open that door for others to enter and feel safe, so together, they can serve, and we can serve as coaches more effectively and productively.

In responding to a question concerning culture and how the organization receives coaching, Whelan emphasized that as coach, consultant, facilitator, or trainer, "I'm able to see what is coming up in the data, what it is this team is really experiencing. Many times, the readiness may not be there right away for coaching." When this happens, Whelan notes, "We step back and always meet the team where they're at."

In Whelan's closing comments, she noted:

And as we just move into all God is calling us to and through as coaches, as coaching leaders, let's never discount the ability to create spaces for people to step in and up. It is our responsibility to do this. Your clients are uniquely created and need others to open the door so each of us can do the work that God is calling us to.

In contributing to the discussion of creating a psychologically safe environment, Spears noted he and his wife, Carrie, have to be aware of this. He added, "What we do sometimes is we just would teach people basic skills and coaching, to not harm each other and not tear down the family." Noted in their training, "We make sure they know that we are coaches, not counselors, we do refer people to counselors if they have deep-rooted issues. The other thing we do is we do separate coaching in some ways from mentoring and training." He went on to say, they work at keeping the boundaries of coaching intact. Spears noted that 10 years ago when he began this global journey of implementing his model and teaching others to use it, he had no idea his pioneering would lead to more than 3,000 family leaders being trained in coaching skills.

### **Chair Summary and Comments on Panel 3**

In organizations, teams, and global environments, psychological safety and trust are paramount. In the final live roundtable panel, the conversation cycled to psychological safety and trust. The roles each contributor had in this discussion varied. Among those roles were training pastors in coaching, training family leaders as coaches, training coaches, and coaching teams. Yet, each panelist stressed creating psychological safety and trust as primary for successful training and coaching in their situations.

In addition, Fry highlighted the value of experiencing coaching as a path to building awareness and enthusiasm for pastors who are learning coaching skills. Spears, in discussing the differences between coaching and counseling, presented the integration of scripture as part of the ebb and flow of the coaching conversation in the model he developed and is using. Whelan challenged leaders to take on the responsibility to create spaces for leaders to step up. From these three practitioners, we can learn that professional coaching is strengthened by a coached experience, integrating scripture, and creating safe spaces for leaders to step up.

### **A Continuing Call**

The overarching theme for the 2022 Research Roundtables was "Continue the Mission," reflecting our commitment to Regent University's mission of Christian leadership to change the world. Coaching is a means of bringing about change for individuals, teams, and organizations. There is no sector untouched by coaching and coaching experiences, particularly when we look at leader development. Through the highlights of these three

live panels, we heard of the impact of coaches on individuals, teams, and organizations around the globe. Research practitioners shared models and the integration of theory as they pertain to the application of coaching. Coaching is a partnership through which performance is raised and potential is fulfilled.

As the roundtable chair, I express gratitude to those who responded to the call and participated in the 2022 Regent University School of Business and Leadership Professional Coaching Roundtable: Trends, Teams, and Technology. Coaching done well is transformative and honors the client and their uniqueness. These presentations demonstrated the influential and transformative impact professional coaching is making globally.

I now raise my voice to the call for researchers and practitioners to partner for research, model development, and more case studies utilizing assessments, demonstrating processes and coaching models, particularly concerning the following areas.

- Intergenerational workplace productivity
- Global and team impact
- Use, value, and disruption of technology in coaching
- Honoring individual uniqueness
- Communication skills in coaching effectiveness
- The use of coaching in education
- Coaching as a leadership development tool
- Developing trust and psychologically safe environments
- Virtual coaching competencies.

I challenge practitioners and researchers to heed this invitation for submission to the call for the 2023 Professional Coaching Roundtable.

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### **About the Author**

Dr. Diane M. Wiater received her Doctor of Philosophy in Organizational Leadership from Regent University. She is an adjunct professor with Regent University in the School of Business and Leadership and has chaired the Coaching Roundtables since 2012. Dr. Wiater is a coach's coach. She served on the inaugural board of the Christian Coaches Network International and is a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach, a coach trainer through Lifeforming Leadership Coaching, and is certified to administer the MBTI. Dr. Wiater has been teaching and training coaches for nearly 25 years. She is the founder and CEO of Wiater Consulting Group, LLC.

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## Appendix

### Professional Coaching Roundtable, Presenter Biographies, Presentation

#### Titles and Descriptions

#### **Dr. Thomas E. Anderson, II**

Dr. Thomas E. Anderson, II is the founder of Teaiiano Leadership Solutions. As a coach, consultant, and workshop facilitator, Thomas helps founders, leaders, and managers navigate the multi-loop (and often elusive) process of vision development and realization. In fact, he measures results by how much he helps clients transform their vision into reality. Thomas is a recurring presenter at Regent University's Annual Research Roundtables and has published academic articles on coaching. He also has over 20 years of experience leading high-performance music ministry teams. Above all, Thomas enjoys being a devoted husband to his wife, Jamie, and dedicated father to his daughters, Arianna and Azalia.

#### **Presentation Title: The Double Entendre of Coaching Technology**

The current buzz around digital coaching points to a double entendre. On one hand, coaching represents a type of technology and nothing short of a communication innovation. On the other hand, technological advances combined with an abundance of venture capital have enabled unprecedented growth in the digital coaching space. Not everyone views this growth favorably and some have questioned whether the democratization of coaching has led to its commoditization. What a provocative claim! Because a review of coaching technology platforms can leave a practitioner with more questions than answers, this presentation will 1) explore the coaching tech landscape, 2) review a handful of platforms used for coaching within organizations, and 3) make recommendations of how human coaches are augmenting their practices with technology.

#### **Dr. Shanita B. Brown**

Dr. Shanita “Nita B” Brown is an inspirational leader specializing in leadership development. Dr. Brown empowers leaders to lead well through coaching, training, speaking, and teaching. After being in leadership for 18-plus years, Dr. Brown knows what truly defines leadership: leading yourself first.

Dr. Brown is passionate about the soul of leadership, which is the thing that gives leaders, leadership, and organizations purpose. Dr. Brown's research and proven coaching model and leadership development curriculum creates self-awareness and engages others, inspiring them to find meaning and wholeness by unlocking and maximizing their potential in their character and competence.

Dr. Brown is also a Bible teacher, licensed minister, and certified life and leadership coach, continuing her coach training credentialing with Coaches Edge and Christian Coaches Network (CCNI). She is a dynamic, engaging, and influential empowerment speaker. Her messages transform and challenge her audiences to be their best selves.

***Presentation Title: C.O.D.E Leadership Development Curriculum***

The C.O.D.E coaching model engages people and inspires them to unlock and maximize their potential by helping them find meaning, wholeness, value, and motivation in their thinking, feeling, and choosing. The C.O.D.E coaching model is the foundation for creating the C.O.D.E Leadership Development Curriculum. The curriculum has three pillars of focus to support leaders and strengthen their leadership to improve authentic power, self-awareness, sense of identity, and empowerment.

**Dr. Shoneen N. Brown**

Residing in Norfolk, VA, Dr. Shoneen Brown works as the associate director of admissions evaluations for Regent University. She is an accomplished leader and management professional, highly effective in incorporating coaching techniques, teaching, and creative leadership skills to achieve employee development and retention. Over 20 years of experience in various industries, including hospitality, food and beverage, and higher education, she is an innovative problem solver and decision maker. As the founder and owner of The Resilience Group, LLC, Dr. Brown believes coaching is an invaluable, powerful, and measurable tool for developing a wide range of skills. Her research centers around the practical implications of coaching in profound personal and professional development, student retention, employee engagement, and homelessness recovery. She enjoys cooking, traveling, and long drives in her spare time. Her life's goal is to introduce individuals to the love of Christ through the unique process of coaching.

**Presentation Title: A Model for Coaching in Enrollment Management as a Proactive Development Tool for Incoming Students**

Adult learners, typically defined as non-traditional students over 25, comprise close to 40% of the incoming college-going population from various social and economic backgrounds and experiences. These students negated the typical shift from high school studies to college – choosing to enter the workforce and start families. Most return to school to breathe new life into a career, increase financial stability, early retirement, or launch a second career. However, traversing from industry to academia requires overcoming several challenges, including culture shock, balancing personal responsibilities and academic requirements, and the need to revisit fundamental techniques. In higher education, coaching is a proactive springboard for success during the first critical semesters of a new student's academic career. Empowering students to

identify goals, break down barriers, and stay engaged and motivated, coaching maximizes the potential to achieve academic and professional success.

### **Dr. Carmellia Shivers-Cole**

Dr. Carmellia Shivers-Cole is a keynote speaker and coach specializing in character and leadership development. She coaches individuals, educational institutions, organizations, and athletic programs to be their best. Dr. Shivers-Cole uses her more than 25 years of coaching experience as a resource to educate others. Her passion is sharing skills to inspire, motivate, empower, and communicate for life and leadership. She educates on how the emergence of Generation Z will present the future multigenerational workforces with many challenges and opportunities for success. Her insights, ideas, and strategies with leading Generation Z are a catalyst for global talent that will truly change the world. She is married to Lieutenant Commander Randy B. Cole, Retired United States Navy. They have two sons, Houston and Austin, and a beloved dog named Stewie.

### **Presentation Title: Coaching the Future Workforce**

Currently, there are five generations in the workforce, including Generation Z; each approaches issues differently depending on their generation of birth. Organizations are seeking effective strategies to address the leadership skills gap that will exist in the future workforce. Coaching can help employees and leaders realize their full potential to facilitate transformation, motivation, and excitement during times of change. By 2022, market trends indicate that the coaching industry will have expanded by 89% (Uta, 2019). In light of these findings, it is my intention to contribute to the research and best practices for coaching Generation Z. My years of coaching and doctorate research at Regent University have enabled me to examine and add to the body of knowledge regarding the integration of Generation Z into the global workforce. This presentation will provide insight and understanding into the impact coaching can have on the success of the future workplace.

### **Cara Conley**

Cara Conley is a student at Regent University finishing a master's degree in organizational leadership with a Leadership Coaching and Mentoring concentration. She has a wealth of experience in the hospitality and higher education industries, but recently made a clarifying career change to disciple and raise her child. Her time at Regent has instilled a passion for embracing, living, and teaching a biblical worldview within the body of Christ, and she intends to use her coaching and organizational leadership studies to "train up" the next generation—especially other mothers and young children.

## **Presentation Title: Putting the Bread and Butter on the Table: The Importance of Applying Communication Theory to Coaching**

Conversations are the bread and butter of coaching; they sustain coaching relationships and give credence to the profession. Coaches rightfully advocate for adhering to the ICF and CCNI core competencies. Communicating effectively is arguably the most important competency. Naturally, this includes powerful questioning, active listening, and minimizing distractions, but isn't there more to communication? If coaching conversations are the proverbial mainstay of the profession, it stands to reason that coaches must understand, embrace, and employ effective communication theories and concepts. This article conceptualizes the literature on communication and coaching conversations, merging the discoveries to shed light on the importance of applying theory to practice. We are situated people coaching across cultural, generational, political, social, spiritual, and even emotional differences. For Christian coaches, applying communication theory to our coaching practice supports the biblical concept of there being one body with many parts; through informed, effective, and discerning communication, Christian coaches can draw out clients' unique God-given gifts. Their clients can leave the coaching table *fulfilled* and with directional clarity when coaches encourage and model effective communication.

### **Dr. Jeff Doolittle**

Dr. Jeff Doolittle has helped business owners and executives of small businesses to global Fortune 50 companies, and his work is taught in university classrooms. He is the founder of Organizational Talent Consulting, a premier executive coaching and business consulting firm for leaders and organizations interested in achieving success and significance. Jeff has helped hundreds of people on the road to recovery from life's hurts, habits, and hang-ups through a nonprofit community ministry he started in his hometown. Jeff received his Doctorate in Strategic Leadership from Regent University and is a certified International Coaching Federation executive coach. Jeff is the author of *Breaking 10 Leadership Bad Habits*, a comprehensive field guide for creating good leadership habits, breaking bad ones, and achieving success and significance. You can read his current articles on his blog [Organizational Espresso](#).

## **Presentation Title: Virtual Coaching is Inevitable and Effective**

The world has changed, and the hybrid workplace with work-from-home opportunities has shifted in-person meetings and events to virtual. Going to work for many employees today has taken on a new meaning. Technology enables individuals and teams to work collaboratively remotely. There is no need to ask if business owners and executives should use virtual coaching platforms. Instead, a better question is if quality coaching relationships can be developed through technology, and if so, what are the best approaches? This author's premise is based on research; virtual coaching offers added convenience, service, and support benefits over traditional face-to-face coaching.

Coaching does not have to be face-to-face to be personalized and effective. A skilled virtual coach can effectively utilize virtual technology to achieve lasting results.

### **Dr. Sally Fry**

Dr. Sally V. Fry serves as the leadership development specialist in the Northeastern District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Her passion is helping leaders expand their influence by deeply understanding their strengths, developing plans for growth, and providing accountability. As a clergy member, she provides coaching and training to ministry leaders, engages in church consultations, and teaches seminars on resolving conflict in a biblical way. She holds a Doctor of Strategic Leadership from Regent University, along with degrees in instructional design and technology, education, and psychology. Before joining the Northeastern District team, she worked in higher education for over two decades in student development and as a university adjunct faculty member while serving in lay ministry.

### **Presentation Title: From Vision to Implementation: Coaching in a Church Denomination (A Case Study)**

Pastors are becoming a scarce resource, and with the challenges of recent years, many are considering quitting ministry. This case study describes action that one denominational region is taking to implement a vision of coaching in their district. From training workshops to intentional conversations, the coaching culture of this denominational district has started to change. Dr. Fry shares specific examples of a workshop training schedule, the observed impacts resulting from a culture shift, their planned next action steps, and the anticipated future challenges.

### **Dr. Sophia Rudisill-Holmes**

Dr. Sophia Rudisill Holmes leads the Mentoring and Adult Relationships (MAR) Initiative within the Baltimore City Public Schools district. MAR is a district-wide strategy to ensure that over 77 thousand Baltimore City Public School students have a caring adult supporting them with a support plan that links them to post-secondary opportunities after high school completion. Sophia brings over two decades of local and national experience in programming, operations, and leadership development, focusing on access and opportunity while finding your voice. Sophia has a Doctor of Strategic Leadership focusing on Leadership Coaching from Regent University, a Master of Arts from New York University in Music Business, and a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance. Sophia lives in Baltimore, MD with her husband and two brilliant children.

## **Presentation Title: Sustainable Infrastructure for a Growing Mentoring District Initiative**

Caring adult relationships provide a safe, brave space for young people to unpack life as they navigate complex systems, manage change and make decisions that can lead to self-efficacy. Research suggests, “1 in 3 young people in the U.S. will reach the age of 19 without having a mentor. This is the mentoring gap in the United States” (MENTOR, 2021). Learn more about the newly launched Mentoring and Adult Relationships (MAR) Initiative and its plans to work toward closing the mentoring gap for close to 77,000 Baltimore City Public School students. This presentation will review the strategic approach, its impact, and the subsequent phases designed to increase the capacity of caring adults in students' lives in every school building through systemic alignment, coaching conversations, and equitable distribution of resources.

### **Dr. Ulf Spears**

Dr. Ulf Spears has more than 25 years in the fields of education, nonprofit, business, and leadership development globally. He is an author of four coaching and leadership textbooks: *Coaching Leadership Families*, *360° Global Kingdom Leadership*, books 1, 2, 3. Dr. Spears is a community leader and an advisor to leaders and their families in order for them to remain strong and healthy in society. He has served as an advisor, adjunct instructor, department lead, and dean at Warner Pacific University over the last 12 years. He holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Corban University, a master's degree in management from the University of Phoenix, a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Leadership and a Doctor of Strategic Leadership (DSL) degree from Regent University. Dr. Ulf and his wife, reside in Vancouver, WA.

## **Presentation Title: 360° Global Kingdom Leadership Coaching Journey “From Graduation to the Globe”**

360° Global Kingdom Leadership Coaching Journey “From Graduation to the Globe” is a presentation that chronicles my coaching journey starting with my 2012 graduation from Regent University through London, Poland until now. I will be presenting on what I learned in the real world about coaching strategies, context, presence, meetings, and much more. In addition, I will compare and contrast the differences, effects, and take aways of coaching global leaders and families throughout the world. Finally, I will be presenting coaching thoughts from my newest textbook called *360° Global Kingdom Leadership, Book III: Going Global with Coaching Leaders and Families*, which takes a fresh perspective on the topic of coaching. The textbook's content was refined in over three thousand coaching sessions and training hours along with extensive academic research and study.

**Dr. Kelly M. G. Whelan**

Dr. Kelly Whelan is a globally recognized executive and team development strategist and founder of Belem Leaders in Naples, FL. Dr. Whelan specializes in individual, team, and organizational assessment and leader development services. She is certified as a Gallup Strengths Coach and holds a European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) Team Coaching Practitioner Accreditation. Dr. Whelan is the author of *Leadership Excellence by Design Strategies for Sustainability and Strength*, hosts the *Conversations for Leaders & Teams* podcast, is an adjunct at Regent University where she earned her Doctor of Strategic Leadership in 2017), and is the president of Naples Leaders Inc., a nonprofit that delivers educational opportunities to include the Global Leadership Summit to Collier County, FL and beyond.

**Presentation Title: Coaching through Psychological Safety with Teams**

Psychological safety in teams is paramount to its success. When team members feel valued, wanted, accepted, and heard, psychological safety is established. When the collective body is psychologically safe, trust and powerful team learning is the outcome. As teams learn to operate in a state of psychological safety, they become more than high-performing teams, they become high-value creating teams for their stakeholders. This presentation outlines the difference between psychological safety and trust and offers practical tips for coaches and teams to generate psychological safety through agreements, processes, and systems.

**Dr. Diane M. Wiater**

The Professional Coaching Roundtable is chaired by Dr. Diane M. Wiater. She is a trusted strategic partner, profitable business manager, and effective leader developer. Diane is a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach and is also certified to administer the MBTI. Dr. Wiater is a coach's coach. She has been training and teaching coaches for more than 25 years. She served on the inaugural board of the Christian Coaches Network International (CCNI). Her passion is seeing leaders grow, thrive, and lead well! Diane earned her Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership from Regent University, an academic faith community in which she has served for nearly 30 years. She enjoys celebrating life with family and friends, boating, water skiing, hiking, traveling, and juggling.

**Presentation Title: Coaching is . . .**

Coaching is a leader development tool, a transformative process, a means of getting unstuck, a means of growing and achieving goals, a relationship, but what is it? In the recorded presentation, Dr. Wiater addresses the fullness of coaching and its value to individuals, teams, and organizations. This presentation centers on coaching as ministry. In the live panel discussion on Saturday, Sept 10, 2022, we will further explore coaching as ministry.





# An Exploration of Team Coaching: Coaching Through Psychological Safety and Trust with Teams

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Kelly M. G. Whelan

*Belem Leaders*

*Roundtable: Professional Coaching*

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With 80% of organizations operating in teams, team coaching is quickly being recognized as a way for teams to significantly impact those they serve. Psychological safety in teams is paramount to this success and is established when team members feel valued, wanted, accepted, and heard. When the collective body is psychologically safe, trust and powerful team learning is the outcome. As teams learn to operate in a state of psychological safety, they become more than high-performing teams, they become confident, high-value teams that create transformation and impact (CVTI) for their stakeholders. This paper outlines the difference between individual, group, and team coaching and psychological safety and trust. Further, this paper offers practical application for coaches and teams to generate psychological safety through agreements, processes, and systems.

Keywords: psychological safety, trust, team coaching, high-value teams, transformation, impact

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During the 2021 Regent University Professional Coaching Roundtable, *An Exploration of Team Coaching* presented differences between individual, group, and team coaching. When successful, each type of coaching assists in creating a client experience that is a transformative process. However, team coaching has a complexity not all coaches, including seasoned individual or group coaches, are trained to engage in. The European Mentoring Coaching Council (EMCC) is the first coaching body to endorse a team coach certification. Further, in 2020, EMCC was the first in the world to graduate team coaches at the Foundation Level (ITCA), followed by a team coach Practitioner Level certification (ITCA-Practitioner) in 2021 (Graduates, 2020). I was part of the first cohort to obtain the Foundation and Practitioner Level certifications under the tutelage of pioneers, professors, and practitioners in the team coaching industry, Professors David

Clutterbuck and Peter Hawkins. While EMCC offered “the first globally recognized standards for team coaching accreditation” (Graduates, 2020, para. 3), the International Coaching Federation (ICF) adopted team coaching competencies in 2021. The first ICF team coach certification was ascertained in 2022. As the coaching profession continues to grow, leaders, teams, and organizations will have a wider pool of coaches to consider and will likely contract with competent, well-trained, credible team coaches who provide a safe space to do meaningful, advanced coaching work.

## Individual Coaching

Table 1 notes individual coaching takes place with one client and one coach. The goal for the engagement is client-directed. If a sponsor (the payor of the contract) is involved, a specific goal is incorporated into the engagement. The purpose and values are based on the individual and what the client brings into the session. The length of the contract, sometimes called an agreement, is typically short-term and decided by the client. If a sponsor is involved, the sponsor may dictate the length of the contract. This may depend on what the coaching is for. In addition, the length of the contract may be dictated by the ability to fund the engagement. The objective for an individual coaching engagement is to help the client move the needle so they can experience transformation based on the goal that the client or sponsor set.

## Group Coaching

Group coaching builds upon individual coaching by adding more than one client to the engagement. While there are multiple clients in the session, each comes with an individualized goal, purpose, and set of values. While the group may establish accountability agreements, typically, individuals are responsible for their own progress or commitment to the process and may find an accountability partner outside of the group.

**Table 1:** Professional Coaching Differences

	<b>Individual Coaching</b>	<b>Group Coaching</b>	<b>Team Coaching</b>
<b>Who</b>	1 client to 1 coach	2+ clients to 1 coach	2+ clients to 2 coaches
<b>Goal</b>	Client and/or Sponsor directed	Individualized	Shared
<b>Purpose/Values</b>	Individualized	Individualized	Collective
<b>Accountable to</b>	Individual	Individual	Team/Sponsor/ Stakeholders

	Individual Coaching	Group Coaching	Team Coaching
<b>Length of Contract/Agreement</b>	1+ short term/individual/Sponsor	1+ short term	Multiple, long term, continuous (9 mo.-2+ years)
<b>Objective</b>	Move the needle-individual transformation, confidence	Move the needle-individual transformation, confidence	Move the needle-collective confidence, create value & stakeholder impact thru transformation, learning engine status
<b>Other Differences</b>			Develop the team leader to coach the team through individual coaching/peer-to-peer coaching/real-time in meeting team coaching/engagement may include other modalities/additional KSAs/supervision with a seasoned team coach.

*Note: "KSA" refers to knowledge, skills, and abilities. Reprinted from "Psychological safety & trust for teams" [Presentation] by K. M. G. Whelan, 2022, Regent University Annual Research Roundtables: Professional Coaching Roundtable.*

## Team Coaching

While it would make sense for team coaching to build upon group coaching, there are several differences at the onset. Researchers and trained team coaches view team coaching through a holistic lens. In team coaching, the sponsor, if there is a sponsor, and the team are the client rather than any one individual. According to the research of Clutterbuck (2020) and Hawkins (2017), team coaching has a systemic lens where there are interactions with team members and stakeholders. Team coaching is a collective performance where team members co-create for stakeholder impact.

### Defining a Team

There are many types of teams. If you were asked to define a team, what would you say? Like the elusive definition of leadership which was defined and strengthened by the work of Drs. Bruce Winston and Kathleen Patterson (2006), coaching has broadened and strengthened over time. With this, so has the development of team coaching definitions. My working definition of a *team* is a collection of individuals who rally around a collective purpose and common goal. They are guided by shared values,

embrace team learning and mutual accountability so together, they create confidence, high-value, and transformational impact for their stakeholders.

Knowing what a team is will help the team exist more fully, as the team purpose defines the team. Before a team can be effective, it must first define who its identity is as a collective body. While most team members understand they are part of a collective experience, they must also understand the depth to which a confident, high-value, transformational impact (CVTI) team is defined.

### **Coaching in Pairs**

A distinct difference in team coaching is that, many times, coaching takes place in pairs. This is referred to as co-coaching. While not always the case, utilizing co-coaches may depend upon the size of the team and the project's scope. There are benefits to having a second pair of hands, eyes, and ears for the engagement with teams greater than six. An example of the benefits of a co-coach is note taking. Not all teams allow the coaching session to be recorded. While a team coach would benefit from taking copious notes in a session to aid with recall, taking notes is not always possible, as the coach is functioning and focused on all voices in the room. Having a partner helps bring a more fruitful engagement to the team and to the organization being served.

### **Co-Coaching and Faith**

Individual team members have different performance attributes, personalities, and strengths. The same is true for those who work with teams. Coaches need to be in partnership with a co-coach. This begins with having the same or similar values, partnering for the right reasons, and having an established trusting relationship and connection. If the team coach walks in Christian faith, then seeking out a co-coach who is also faith-filled is worth exploring. I have found that partnering with a Christian coach has benefits which go beyond the notion of coaching for the sake of having another set of eyes, ears, and hands. However, essential aspects may differ and create strife between co-coaches when they do not share the same belief system and values nor agree on how to process through conflict or whether faith should be included in the engagement. Best practice and experience urge the creation of coaching agreements before a co-coaching engagement begins. These agreements include but are not all-encompassing: administrative, planning, team contact, expressions of faith, and confidentiality.

### **Collective Purpose**

High-value, high-impact teams know their collective purpose. Teams who know their purpose can articulate it to others. A purposeful team knows what they do better than anyone else and uses this to their competitive advantage. If the purpose defines the team, who does the team need to be for the organization they serve?

## **Shared Goals**

Teams have shared goals. While a team is comprised of individuals who come together with individualized goals for tasks, the collective goal aligns with the team purpose. The collective goal is the outcome of the shared approach to attainment, which includes a transformative experience and deliverables for those they serve.

## **Learning Engines**

Teams are learning engines. As noted in the 2021 We're Still Curious Discovery Survey (Belem Leaders, 2022), learning opportunities were the fourth highest need for teams. High-value, transformational impact teams have a thirst for learning and growth. Learning falls under individual development and collectively for team development. CVTI teams seek out learning opportunities so they can rise into excellence. As a collective body, psychological safety is encapsulated within this learning.

## **Mutual Accountability**

Teams hold themselves accountable to fulfill their purpose. Accountability does not lie solely with the team leader. The team holds themselves accountable at the individual and collective levels. All CVTI teams create agreements that dictate how accountability will be accomplished. Without accountability parameters in place, teams are, or become, dysfunctional.

## **Stakeholder Confidence, Value, and Transformational Impact**

CVTI teams identify their stakeholders. Teams spend time uncovering whom they serve and measure team effectiveness and impact through discovery and inquiry. Beyond identifying their stakeholders, teams understand their stakeholders. CVTI teams build relationships with their stakeholders to serve them well and create impact on their behalf. Serving stakeholders is a co-creating process where the team and the stakeholder use their relationship to understand what each needs to generate mutual fulfillment and transformation.

## **Length of Contract**

Contracts, also called agreements, vary in team coaching. However, the length of the contract is often long-term and continuous. If good work is to be accomplished, I have found, at the very least, a yearlong contract is needed. Why? Because a team coach, along with the team, is on a journey of transformation. Relationships, psychological safety, and trust take time. Without these components, the engagement will fail.

## **Coaching the Team Leader**

As a team coach, it is essential to understand one goal is to work your way out of a job and leave the team self-sufficient. Team coaching involves coaching the team leader to coach the team. The agreement of who coaches the team leader is dependent upon engagement variables. Remembering that the team is the client, some team coaches believe coaching the team leader can be accomplished by the team coach without a conflict of interest. Others believe that if there is a pair of coaches, one of the coaches can coach the leader. A third dynamic is also valuable, and that is having an external coach contracted to coach the leader. Exploring the comfort level of each is encouraged.

## **Individual Coaching and Peer-to-Peer Coaching**

Depending upon the contract, individual coaching may take place. As with team leader coaching, agreements are created within the engagement. In addition, peer-to-peer coaching within the team evolves as the team is coached in real time. Bringing all voices to the table and allowing each to be heard begins the process of team members helping team members through coaching.

## **Team Coach Supervision**

Team coach supervision is available to aid in the development of the coach. Supervision is a valued service to a team coach regardless of experience level. Supervision is either one-to-one or takes place in a group session. During the sessions, coaches bring forth their current team cases to discuss struggles and wins, gain encouragement, and learn from established team coaches.

## **Team Coach Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs)**

The umbrella for team development is more than team coaching. Different modalities aid in creating a team session that brings transformation. The ICF adopted team coaching competencies in 2021, stating, "Because team coaching is multi-faceted, team coaches must have a significantly broader knowledge base when working with teams than individuals" (p. 4). These modalities include team building, team training, team consulting, team mentoring, team facilitation, and team coaching. Not all coaches will rise into team coaching. If a coach is not able to effectively rise into a modality that is needed for a successful engagement, the coach must contract with others to fully serve the client well.

## **Trust vs. Psychological Safety**

The Belem Leaders 2021 We're Still Curious Discovery Survey (2022) suggests psychological safety is a top need for teams to be successful followed by

communication, collaboration, and learning opportunities. Successful teams provide confidence, value, and transformational impact for their internal and external stakeholders.

Team coaching utilizes a broader lens and may incorporate an umbrella of modalities listed above. Regardless of modality, team coaches must demonstrate and help build a high level of psychological safety and trust.

As teams come together to serve their stakeholders, they must develop trust. Psychological safety expert Amy Edmondson (2019) summarizes that trust is the expectation of giving someone the benefit of the doubt, where psychological safety is whether others will give you the benefit of the doubt as you share your thoughts and ask for help. The work of Tammy Turner (2019), as depicted in Table 2, demonstrates Edmondson's work that trust is an individual construct, whereas psychological safety is a group construct. Trust is the expectation that an individual can be counted on to do what they say they will do in a future moment. Trust happens in personal and professional relationships and is given to an individual but is also diminished or lost.

**Table 2:** Trust and Psychological Safety

<b>Trust in individuals</b>	<b>Trust in teams</b>	<b>Psychological safety</b>
<b>An individual construct</b>	Team construct	A group construct
<b>Measures if another can be counted on to do what they say they will do</b>	Measures if the team can be counted on to do what they say they will do	Measures if it is ok to openly share concepts and make mistakes
<b>Measured by the individual about another</b>	Measured by a stakeholder/s about the team	Measured by team members they know if the environment is safe
<b>Giving the other person the benefit of the doubt for getting things done</b>	The stakeholder gives the team the benefit of the doubt for getting things done	Gives the contributing team member the benefit of the doubt for getting things done

*Note. This table reflects further thinking on trust in teams. Adapted from "Teaming and Psychological Safety," by T. Turner, 2019, Australian Taxation Office. Copyright 2019 by the Commonwealth of Australia.*

In Turner's (2019) compilation of trust and psychological safety, a question arose. Does trust in a team look different? As trust in a team construct was considered, I looked at how team members view the team as well as how stakeholders view the team.

1. Can the team be counted on to do what they say they are going to do?
2. Is the team delivering high value and creating transformational impact for their stakeholders?
3. Can the team be counted on to serve stakeholder needs?

4. Do stakeholders give the team the benefit of the doubt for getting things done?
5. Individually, how is the team viewed by stakeholders as it pertains to trust?
6. What do stakeholder groups collectively say about the team and trust?

Knowing how trust is perceived at the team level and by stakeholders will help identify areas of strength so the team can continue to generate trust in their stakeholder relationships. Further, the evaluation will uncover areas of weakness and create a way forward to develop strength for the team. Trust is elevated when psychological safety is high. Trust is the outcome of an experience, and psychological safety is that experience. Edmondson (2019) suggests “psychological safety exists when people feel their workplace is an environment where they can speak up, offer ideas, and ask questions” (p. 723). When people experience psychological safety, they feel safe, valued, welcomed, encouraged, appreciated, and acknowledged. A team will not automatically trust a coach who enters the room. As a coach, it is imperative to provide the space for teams to feel safe so the coach can build trust. Within the juncture of trust and psychological safety, a coach can step in and do meaningful work.

## Psychological Safety

Psychological safety happens in an environment of openness. While not all-encompassing, psychological safety is measured by how safe a person feels to openly share their ideas, thoughts, and aspirations without fear of retaliation. Coaching is relational; we must create a space where we serve people well. Whether you are part of a team, are a coach, or a student, excellence should be the measure of everything you do, provide, and seek.

Dr. Timothy Clark (2020), another expert in the field of psychological safety, provides a progressive 4-stage guide to psychological safety in his book, *The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety: Defining the Path to Inclusion and Innovation*. These stages include:

1. Inclusion Safety: belonging and feeling valued by the team. Embracing each other as human beings.
2. Learner Safety: is intellectual as well as emotional. Learner safety is about being ok asking questions, being ok failing forward, experimenting, and offering feedback that feeds forward. This is not about condemnation, but rather, accepting feedback knowing feedback helps yourself and the collective team.
3. Contributor Safety: knowing what you do makes a difference. This stage is about the team, but also about how we are contributing to the wider view of the stakeholders in creating a difference. The more we contribute, the more confidence and competence we develop. When we help a team create contributor safety for others, we empower and provide autonomy. We give autonomy, we guide, encourage in exchange for efforts and results.



4. **Challenger Safety:** team members question the status quo free from retaliation. They can ask questions without being demeaned. This is where innovation happens. Failing forward, they can try and take risks even if the risk is a failed attempt. The failed attempt is still learning. Learning is part of team development and growth.

During the 2022 Regent University Professional Coaching Roundtable live panel discussion, *Coaching Globally and in Organizations*, Dr. Ulf Spears, a family coach, shared his perspective on psychological safety. He contends families can be healthy but can also be broken. He suggests there are ways to talk to people without harming them. One way is to use “I” statements. Dr. Spears teaches basic skills and coaches families toward ways not to harm or tear down one another. Ulf’s comments align with what is experienced in a team coaching dynamic. Learning to speak with care is an essential part of creating psychologically safe teams.

In the same live session, Dr. Sally Fry, a leader development specialist in the northeast district of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, added to the discussion. She sees psychological safety happening on a continuum with the pastors in her district. Having 76 churches in Upstate NY creates a geographical issue where not all pastors can physically meet. However, Fry notes she has witnessed collaboration beginning at the regional level, pastor to pastor, with some meeting monthly. During her training on coaching with these pastors, Fry often provides opportunities for peer-to-peer coaching. She found this type of coaching removes the hierarchy which may occur with a pastor coaching with someone from the district or national level. In closing, Fry reminds the audience that there is a high level of confidentiality that is valued in the clergy environment, which helps with psychological safety and trust. Peer-to-peer coaching and confidentiality are important pieces for teams. As team members explore and inquire in a safe environment, better decisions and outcomes will occur.

## **Modeling the Way**

As we move into all God is calling us to and through, team coaches should never discount the opportunity to help teams step into a confident, value-creating team that delivers transformational impact to their stakeholders. This charge is our responsibility as we open the door for others by advancing the team coaching profession and create inviting spaces for others to experience psychological safety and trust.

Team coaches model the way in establishing psychological safety. This is accomplished by calling team members by name and making each feel welcomed and valued. A team coach is trained in calling out patterns of interruptions. Doing so creates space for the quieter voices in the room who may shy away from bringing their voice forward. Teams must learn quieter voices are still valued, as they may be the thinkers in the room. Thinkers may only bring their thoughts to the table if they are invited or feel so strongly

about a topic that they must speak. Team coaches listen and summarize what is being heard for the team. Summarization is a way the team will hear and know the coach is listening to all voices. Team coaches empower the team to work with emotions – the softer side of leadership and teamship. There are times in the coaching dynamic when conflict may occur. A team coach remains non-judgmental and a neutral party while caring for the team. The team will follow when a coach outwardly demonstrates ways to create psychological safety.

### **Team Engagement Overview**

There are many aspects to a team coaching engagement. One area that may occur is processing psychological safety with a team. The team may be experiencing something within the team that may seem off or not right. While teams understand the word trust and may have heard the term psychological safety, most have never strategically positioned themselves to face them head-on.

The initial meetings to begin the process of going deeper with a team include discovery and inquiry with the team leader and the sponsor, if they are involved with the engagement. The discovery and inquiry with individual team members follow the initial meeting with the team leader. This could be one-to-one interview, an assessment, or both. If an assessment is warranted by the coach and agreed upon with the team, a trust and psychological safety assessment is distributed, followed by collection and data review. Once the team coach compiles, reviews, and understands the data, an overview meeting is scheduled with the team leader (and sponsor). The findings overview is not an in-depth review, but a time for the leader to have a high view of the findings before the team. The overview with the team becomes a team discovery session. The team will experience aha moments, and a wider lens of the team is found based on thinking and feeling. Initial team learning begins at this juncture.

Based on the results and following the team discovery session, the team formulates a way forward with the coach. The coach will then move the team toward their development goal of increasing psychological safety and trust to make way for more significant transformational impact. To harness the development effort, a follow-up assessment is distributed to aid in learning if the team has increased trust and psychological safety based on the coaching effort.

### **Concluding Remarks**

For teams to serve their stakeholders fully, they too must be well. Without psychological safety and trust, dysfunction occurs. When dysfunction occurs, the leader, team, organization, and those they are in service of will fall short. Team coaches should be open to teams who are not psychologically safe. Coaches should challenge themselves to seek out ways to proactively engage the team to help create confident,

high-value, transformational impact for those the team serves. To have well-functioning individuals and teams, experts in the field of psychological safety and trust acknowledge the necessity to assess and design a way forward. Assessing and leaving psychological safety and trust to chance is not enough. Team coaches have an incredible opportunity to offer their skills and application to teams regardless of size or their place on the hierarchy chart. When a team is open and ready to experience and engage with a well-trained, high-impact coach, they can expect their psychological safety, trust, and CVTI to increase exponentially.

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### About the Author

Dr. Kelly M. G. Whelan is a globally recognized executive and team development strategist and founder of Belem LLC (Belem Leaders). Dr. Whelan is a 2017 DSL graduate of Regent University and adjunct in the doctoral coaching concentration. She is certified as a Gallup® Strengths Coach and, with a passion for working with teams, holds a European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) Foundations (ITCA) and Practitioner (ITCA-Practitioner) Level team coaching accreditation. In keeping with bringing a Christian voice to the world, Dr. Whelan became editor-in-chief of *Christian Coaching Magazine* following a July 2022 acquisition by Belem LLC.

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# Virtual Coaching is Inevitable and Effective

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Dr. Jeffery S. Doolittle  
*Organizational Talent Consulting*  
*Roundtable: Professional Coaching*

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The world has changed and the hybrid workplace with work-from-home opportunities has shifted in-person meetings and events to virtual. Technology enables individuals and teams to work collaboratively remotely. As the world changes, professional coaching has changed and will need to continue to change. Both coaching professionals and their clients have adapted to the circumstances of the times, with more and more utilizing technology tools for coaching sessions. Virtual coaching is a technology-facilitated partnership between a coach and a client to maximize the client's personal and professional potential. Virtual coaching differs from traditional face-to-face coaching by offering added convenience, service, and support benefits, such as accessibility, rapid response to needs, affordability, access to resources, and evaluation.

Thoughtfully incorporating virtual coaching has many positive impacts, but that does not mean it is without challenges. It is best to assess the situation, coach/client, and context to determine its best use. Coaching does not have to be face-to-face to be personalized and effective. A skilled coach with virtual coaching competencies can effectively utilize virtual technology to achieve lasting results.

*Key Words:* virtual, coaching, competencies, leadership

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The world has change and the hybrid workplace with work-from-home opportunities has shifted in-person meetings and events to virtual. Going to work for many employees today has taken on a new meaning. Technology enables individuals and teams to work collaboratively remotely. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the number of days U.S. employees spend working from home has increased (Barrero et al., 2021). There is no need to ask if business owners and executives should use virtual coaching platforms. Instead, a better question is whether or not quality coaching relationships can be developed through technology. If so, what are the best approaches? A quick internet search on the effectiveness of virtual coaching makes it appear as if virtual coaching is just as effective as face-to-face coaching. However, most

of those articles are authored by virtual coaching organizations and lack validity. This article draws from peer-reviewed literature to understand what social science has to contribute to the discussion on the effectiveness of virtual coaching.

## Discussion

Coaching is one of those words that has different meanings to different people and is often used interchangeably with mentoring and counseling. Even various thought leaders in coaching have different definitions and perspectives on what coaching is and is not (Berry et al., 2011). According to the International Coaching Federation (ICF), coaching is "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential" (ICF, 2022).

Virtual coaching is often used interchangeably with e-coaching, distance, online, and remote coaching. Like in-person coaching, there is a general lack of consensus on its meaning. Virtual coaching can include asynchronous communications, such as email and text messaging through a virtual coaching app, and synchronous, such as phone and Zoom communications, that provide immediate feedback to a coach and client. For this discussion, the author defines virtual coaching as a technology-facilitated partnership between a coach and a client to maximize the client's personal and professional potential.

## Coaching and Virtual Collaboration Competencies

The foundation of the coach and client relationship is trust-based and development-oriented. A common belief held by coaching researchers is that strong, trusting coach-client relationships lead to more successful coaching engagements despite any physical distance (Blattner, 2005). The ICF identifies eight skilled coach competencies updated as of 2019 based on empirical data collected over two years and from job analyses of 1,300 coaches globally: (1) demonstrates ethical practice, (2) embodies a coaching mindset, (3) establishes and maintains agreements, (4) cultivates trust and safety, (5) maintains a presence, (6) listens actively, (7) evokes awareness, and (8) facilitates client growth (ICF, 2022).

A study by Bower (2011) suggested that four levels of competencies specific to synchronous collaboration environments directly contribute to development outcomes (see Table 1). These synchronous collaboration competencies were hierarchical, suggesting that development initiatives should begin with Level 1 (Bower, 2011).

**Table 1:** Synchronous Coaching Competency Levels

Level	Description
Level 1 Operational competencies	The ability to operate the tools and functions of collaborative technology. These are the most efficiently developed level of competencies.
Level 2 Interactional competencies	The ability to effectively interact to perform a task or solve a problem using technology. These include effective collaboration tactics.
Level 3 Managerial competencies	The ability to manage a team, providing support on how to use the technology and interact effectively.
Level 4 Design competencies	The ability to select and organize tools in a way that optimizes interaction and best supports activity management. These include the ability to dynamically design the environment based on emerging collaborative and cognitive requirements.

*Note. This table reflects the synchronous coaching competency adapted from Bower (2011).*

### **Is Virtual Coaching Here to Stay?**

Employers are increasing the number of remote days they offer out of concern for employee retention and productivity. A survey of 2,050 full-time remote workers indicated they were as productive or more productive working remotely than when in the office (Zielinski, 2022). PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) found that 43% of business leaders plan to keep hybrid work options for employees, and 30% plan on making remote work options permanent (PwC, 2021).

Video conferencing and team collaboration tools became must-have investments during the pandemic. Nearly 80% of workers are now using collaboration tools for work, up from just over half of workers in 2019, according to the Gartner Digital Worker Experience Survey (Rimol, 2021). This represented an increase of 44% since the pandemic began. Given the wide adoption of collaboration tools and the desire of employees to have some days of work from home, it is highly likely that virtual work is not going away.

As the world changes, professional coaching has changed and will need to continue to change. According to IBS World (2022), the business coaching industry in 2022 is listed at 14.2 billion dollars as measured by revenue. Also, between 2017–2022, the industry averaged a growth rate of 2.8% per year (IBISWorld, 2022). According to a recent survey

by the ICF, 83% of coaches increased their use of audio-video platforms for coaching. In comparison, 82% indicated a decrease in in-person sessions throughout the pandemic (ICF, 2021). A recent ICF global snapshot survey found that 87% of coaches believe virtual coaching will continue at a higher rate beyond the pandemic. Both coaching professionals and their clients have adapted to the circumstances of the times, with more and more utilizing technology tools for coaching sessions.

### **Is Virtual Coaching Effective?**

A quick Google search on the effectiveness of virtual coaching makes it appear as if virtual coaching is just as effective as face-to-face. However, a closer look reveals that virtual coaching organizations author most such articles. The research-based virtual coaching literature is relatively limited, and the research can be placed into three categories: studies focused on the change in outcomes as a result of coaching, those focused on the process of coaching, and those focused on the technology (virtual and face-to-face) and its impacts on the relationship and outcomes (Berry, 2005; Bowles & Picano, 2006; Wang, 2000; Charbonneau, 2002; Frazee, 2008).

There are numerous virtual coaching effectiveness and efficiency benefits. Empirical research concluded that virtual executive coaching leads to significantly higher transfer of training, improved goal definition, work-life balance, and clear priorities (Wang & Wentling, 2001; Cornelius et al., 2009). Additionally, virtual coaching offers added convenience, service, and support benefits over traditional face-to-face coaching (Passmore et al., 2013).

Accessibility is likely one of the most significant benefits associated with virtual coaching, especially during a pandemic. Technology enables the coach and client to connect in different places within the same building or worldwide. Availability improves, enabling the coach to be brought into just-in-time and rapid response needs or unique situations like cross-cultural needs. Virtual coaching allows the coach to increase the number of clients they can support at one time. Also, the coach and client benefit from the flexibility and administrative ease in scheduling. Affordability improves through reduced travel and associated time out of the office. Access to resources improves through digital access to tools supporting goal setting, coaching preparation, and progress tracking. The coaching relationship's evaluation improves through the ease of tracking commitments, satisfaction, strengths, opportunities, and trends both on an individual client level and at an aggregate organizational level.

Thoughtfully incorporating virtual coaching has many positive impacts, but that does not mean it is without challenges. Numerous research studies have shown that different communication mediums have varying degrees of effectiveness in supporting in-the-moment feedback, information sharing, communication cues, emotions, and message customization (see Table 2). Additional research, however, has identified that the



challenges with the lack of multiple cues and sharing emotions can be moderated by a skilled virtual coach (Charbonneau, 2002; Frazee, 2008).

**Table 2** Coaching Communication Medium Effectiveness

Coaching element	Low effectiveness	Medium effectiveness	High effectiveness
Feedback immediacy			Face to face Zoom Phone call
Information transfer			Face to face Zoom Phone call
Multiple cues	Phone call	Zoom	Face to face
Sharing emotions		Zoom Phone call	Face to face
Message tailoring		Zoom Phone call	Face to face

*Note. This table reflects essential coaching elements and the effectiveness of different coaching mediums adapted from Boyce and Clutterbuck (2010), Newberry (2001), Sitkin et al. (1992), and Trevino et al. (1987).*

Although the benefits of virtual coaching are advantageous for the coach and client, the research does not support replacing face-to-face coaching with virtual coaching. In reality, in-person and virtual coaching both have associated pros and cons. It is best to look at each client's situation and needs uniquely rather than using a one size fits all strategy.

## Conclusion

This author's premise is based on research: virtual coaching differs from traditional face-to-face coaching by offering added convenience, service, and support benefits, such as accessibility, rapid response to needs, affordability, access to resources, and evaluation. It is best to assess the situation, coach/client, and context to determine its best use. Coaching does not have to be face-to-face to be personalized and effective. A skilled coach with virtual coaching competencies can effectively utilize virtual technology to achieve lasting results. Future research should address the need for a comprehensive coaching competency model encompassing synchronous and asynchronous coaching mediums.

### About the Author

Dr. Jeff Doolittle received his Doctorate in Strategic Leadership from Regent University. He has helped business owners and executives of small businesses to global Fortune 50

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# Charles Spurgeon and Followership

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*Roundtable: Followership*

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The paper examines the exemplary followership of Charles Spurgeon while pastoring at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. It may appear odd at first to ascribe followership attributes to such a high-profile leader, but Spurgeon's correspondence between himself and the deacons displayed courageous followership behaviors. Followership is a mutual reciprocation of communication, compensation, and collaboration that concurrently forms and re-forms between both parties, furthering the organization's primary cause. Over the last few years, the Christian industrial complex has seen the downfall of many of its most prolific figures. Given the pitfalls of power many leaders face, the need to study exemplary followership is critical. The paper's methodology is a bounded case study in the field of pragmatic qualitative research utilizing primary (autobiographies), secondary (biographies), and tertiary sources (followership theory). Additionally, Spurgeon's sermons underwent syntactic concordancing to determine what the Prince of Preachers thought and taught about leadership. The paper's underlying theme is that Christian leadership is paradoxically followership, and Spurgeon's life exemplified it.

*Keywords:* Charles Spurgeon, followership, qualitative research, case study, biography

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The resignation or removal of Mark Driscoll, James MacDonald, and Steve Timmis came about because those pastors abused their authority within the church (Shellnutt, 2019, 2020; Shellnutt & Lee, 2014). In the salacious scandal involving Carl Lentz, there was widespread mistreatment of volunteers who catered to the hype-priest's lavish lifestyle at the expense of church donations (Lee, 2021). A recent investigation into Ravi Zacharias resulted in the entire organization's restructuring and an apology for the apologist's ignominious behavior (Sillman & Shellnutt, 2021). According to Trull and Carter (2004), any unethical behavior between a superior and subordinate is an abuse of power. Unfortunately, within the church, there is a "strong, 'pastor-centric ecclesiology,' where there is too much power in the hands of too few people. It is time we realized that 'spiritual abuse' in the church is rearing its ugly head, and it is devastating" (Diehl,

2020, para. 9). According to Bligh et al. (2007), scholars and practitioners need to examine the processual construct between leaders and followers to avoid abuses in power.

Social scientists identified power dynamics in numerous follower typologies, from those who want to control their leaders to those who want to be controlled by them (Zaleznik, 1965). Once scholars began questioning the overreliance and romanticism of leadership (Meindl et al., 1985), being a follower was no longer a pejorative term (Kelley, 1992). Healthy followership demonstrates self-abnegation as empowering surrender (not disempowering submission) to a trustworthy leader, especially those serving as one's spiritual guide (Caplan, 2011). However, given the power abuses and moral failures of many pastors within the Christian industrial complex, the need to reframe biblical leadership as followership is paramount.

History is also replete with examples of neo-charismatic figureheads using their hegemony to harm others (Conger, 1990). Leaders fail to consider the dark side of their influence, and followers are also susceptible to the shadow side in the transference of power (De Vries & Balazs, 2011). Increased pay and privileges bestowed upon leaders create a power imbalance making it more difficult for followers to challenge unethical behavior (Kaiser & Craig, 2014). While Kellerman (2012) declared the end of leadership because of countless corporate and government officials' moral failings, followership studies continue to be a prevalent topic in scholarly studies contributing to organizational development and positive prosocial interactions (Xu et al., 2019). Despite this growing field of study, a unified definition of followership is nonexistent and continues to focus on behavioral typologies (Crossman & Crossman, 2017) – the sine qua non being courageous, exemplary, or star followers who aid charismatic leaders (Chaleff, 2009; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Kellerman, 2007; Kelley, 2004).

However, the past decade saw an expansion of the traditional leadership definition whereby positional power dynamics morphed into a dyadic dynamism of reciprocal identity between the leader and the follower (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Leadership is co-created as a social process between the leader and the led, and that relationality reverses the lens and strengthens the threads of the interconnectivity of influence (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). The liminal space provides followers an active role in influencing their superiors' cognitive, emotive, and performance outcomes (Oc & Bashur, 2013). Ruben and Gigliotti (2019) averred, "Leadership, followership, and context intersect in a complex, fluid, and often unpredictable manner. [The roles] revolve and rotate so quickly [that they] are difficult to isolate" (p. 8). Followership is a courageous choice to commit to great leaders and challenge infective ones as they steward the organization's resources together (Chaleff, 2017).

The power abuses by many leaders have caused practitioners to examine diverse fields of study, including the field of theology, to find workable solutions to organizational issues (Hamel, 2009). After a meta-analysis of the current research, Oh and Wang (2020)

concluded, "We need more studies using different methodologies and methods. For example, researchers may consider using the case study approach to collect stories of exemplary spiritual leaders" (p. 18). Charles Spurgeon is one such exemplar of a courageous follower. According to Chaleff (2009), the original five followership behaviors are (a) the courage to share in a common purpose, (b) the courage to serve in new areas and assume more responsibility, (c) the courage to challenge the leader and speak out against lapses in integrity, (d) the courage to participate in transformation, and (e) the courage to take moral action. Even though Spurgeon was a highly charismatic leader, his reciprocity as a follower is truly commendable and worth examining.

This paper's methodology is a bounded case study focusing on one prominent figure from Christian history (Savin-Badin & Major, 2013). Pragmatic qualitative research is becoming more common because it allows a researcher to complete a study quickly by placing it into the hands of practitioners who need it the most (Caelli et al., 2003). Creswell (2014) posited that the pragmatic researcher asks *what* and *how* questions based on the intended consequences of a problem. Given the ousting of high-profile Christian leaders, how can exemplary followership behaviors sustain a leader's longevity by avoiding the pitfalls of power?

It is significant to examine Charles Spurgeon's life from a follower's perspective. Although Spurgeon was a high-profile leader, his autobiography, biographies, sermons, and books reveal the reciprocation of communication, compensation, and collaboration between himself and his directorate, creating an untarnished legacy worthy of emulation. Any hagiography will come with half-broken halos, but very few Christian figures stand out in history for their moral acuity postconversion. Saint Augustine and Billy Graham are other such luminaries (Shelley, 2008). Therefore, the article examines Charles Spurgeon's life, the exemplary followership behaviors he displayed, his sermons on leadership, and two applications for practitioners and one area of future research for scholars.

### **Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)**

Followership studies must address the context in which the story takes place (Benson et al., 2016). The context for this case study is New Park Street Baptist Church in Southwark, England (later renamed the Metropolitan Tabernacle), where Spurgeon became the pastor at 19 years of age (Spurgeon, 1898/2013). Spurgeon's leadership lasted for 38 years, and the church grew from 232 members to over 14,000 (Piper, 2018). During that time, Spurgeon would preach to 6,000 congregants in the morning and 6,000 in the evening (Lawson, 2012). Spurgeon's 3,800 sermons fill 63 volumes, and his commentaries equal 49 volumes, which stands as the most extensive bounded set in the history of Christian literature (Rippe, 2019). Spurgeon is known as the *Prince of Preachers*, and his persona grew to national and international notoriety (Breimaier, 2020).

The pinnacle of prominence does not come without criticism. Some biographers called Spurgeon a *potentate* (Kruppa, 1982). One observer noted that "every line of his face and figure of speech spoke power" (as cited in Bebbington, 2005, p. 41). If that assertion is assumed, then the argument of this paper is deadened. It is accurate that Spurgeon was referred to as *The Governor* by his congregants (Michael, 2003). Even Spurgeon's wife called him *Tirshatha*, the Hebrew variation of a *governor*, but it was a term of endearment (Wiersbe, 1993). Additionally, Spurgeon's amanuensis, Fullerton (1920), wrote, "It was not for nothing that he was known as 'The Governor,' but the title was more an indication of love than of authority" (p. 204). Recent biographies have rightly contextualized that Spurgeon was a loving leader willing to abdicate authority and generously sacrifice at great cost to himself (George, 2009; Murray, 2009; Nettles, 2013; Reeves, 2018; Rhodes, 2021).

A few examples corroborate this point and display the dependability, loyalty, and cooperation ranked highest among desirable followership behaviors (Agho, 2009). During the first year of his pastorate, Spurgeon (1898/2013) personally visited church members suffering and dying from cholera. The action displayed Spurgeon's dependability. Spurgeon wrote:

Family after family summoned me to the bedside of the smitten . . . I felt . . . like I was sickening like those around me . . . though I had many engagements in the country, I gave them up . . . to visit the sick and the dying. (The Cholera Year in London section).

Secondly, the longevity of Spurgeon's ministry at the Metropolitan Tabernacle is a testament to his loyalty. The diaconate never considered removing Spurgeon because of any abuses in power but shared a mutual love for one another (Fullerton, 1920). Spurgeon wrote:

The deacons] consists of loveable, active, energetic, warm-hearted, generous men, every one of whom seems specially adapted for his own particular department of service. I am very thankful that I have never been the pastor of a dead church controlled by dead deacons. I have seen such a thing as that with my own eyes, and the sight was truly awful. (Deacons and Elders; Pastors and Teachers section)

Lastly, Spurgeon instituted the office of presbyter after arriving at the church, displaying the lengths to submit to more authority even as the prime member of the prelacy (Wills, 1999). As the church grew, the elders worked together, meeting each member's spiritual and material needs through regular visitations (Chang, 2018). Spurgeon (1898/2013) wrote, "Each district, with its elder, should be a regiment with its officer; and then all the different bands, when called to united action, would be ready to achieve an easy victory" (Pastoral Epistles section). The subsequent section provides a



few examples of Spurgeon's reciprocity in communication, compensation, and collaboration as a follower and leader within the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

### **Reciprocation in Communication**

There would not be a Prince of Preachers if it were not for Thomas Olney, a longstanding deacon at the church who heard about Spurgeon and invited him to speak in London (Fullerton, 1920). Spurgeon's first sermon was a success, and the deacons tried to procure him to stay at the church for 6 months (Spurgeon, 1898/2013). Spurgeon (1898/2013) agreed to 3 months to ensure a proper candidacy period. In the corresponding letters between the deacons and Spurgeon, the young pastor would hold out for a unanimous vote among the congregation instead of rising to the pulpit prematurely. Spurgeon wrote, "Enthusiasm and popularity are often the crackling of thorns, and soon expire. I do not wish to be a hindrance if I cannot be a help" (Letters Concerning Settlement in London section). In the interim, the deacons wrote Spurgeon reassuring him that they would get the votes, even defending the accusations that he was too young and not very prayerful (Spurgeon, 1898/2013). In 1854, Spurgeon accepted the unanimous invitation asking the congregation to remember his youth and inexperience and to forgive any mistakes or unguarded words that he may utter (Spurgeon, 1898/2013).

One of the first gifts Spurgeon received from the deacons was a box of white handkerchiefs (Fullerton, 1920). The gesture was a subtle power display signaling to Spurgeon that his blue handkerchief with white polka dots had to be retired (Fullerton, 1920). Spurgeon (1898/2013) also voiced dissent to the diaconate when they wanted to ordain the young pastor. In this instance, the leaders of the church dropped the matter per Spurgeon's request. Exemplary followers make it a healthy habit to voice their concerns upwards while faithfully performing their duties within the organization (Carsten et al., 2018). Spurgeon worked tireless hours and preached over 600 sermons before his 20th birthday (Hayden, 1991).

Consequently, the boy-preacher who never went to seminary or was ordained became the most prominent theologian at the time (Thielicke, 1963). At the height of Spurgeon's popularity and pressing time constraints, he increased his communicate with people worldwide by reading and replying to their letters (Spurgeon, 1898/2013). Spurgeon exemplified reciprocation in communication with his overseers and onlookers and made himself available to people except during sermon preparation.

### **Reciprocation in Compensation**

One of the powerful pitfalls plaguing leaders today is their lucrative salaries (Riggio et al., 2008). For a recent example, it has been 6 years since Dan Price, the CEO of Gravity Payments, capped his executive compensation and raised every full-time employee's minimum salary to \$70,000 (Hegarty, 2020). While the business and, surprisingly, babies

are booming at Gravity Payments, the systemic societal changes Price sought at the beginning of the experiment have not come to fruition (Hegarty, 2020). Currently, executive compensation is 278 times higher than their average worker (Mishel & Wolfe, 2019). When Duin (2008) examined the salaries of pastors in America, many were six figures and higher than that community's median household income.

When The Spurgeon Center (TSC, 2016b) totaled the sales of Spurgeon's sermons, books, and speaking fees, they generated \$26 million. However, Spurgeon stopped taking a salary from the church after his first year and began divesting the royalties he earned into various ministry endeavors (TSC, 2016b). Fullerton (1920) wrote, "Literally he gave away a fortune" (p. 160). For instance, Spurgeon covered every student's tuition at the college he founded (Lawson, 2012). Spurgeon and his wife, Susannah, pooled their resources to send aid and books to pastors overseas (Rhodes, 2018). Spurgeon (1900/1972) viewed money as belonging to the Lord, declaring to his students, "You are not to make a fortune for yourself" (p. 274). Another example of exemplary followership is the reciprocity of generosity Spurgeon shared between his deacons. Spurgeon (1898/2013) journaled:

During a very serious illness, I had an uncontrollable fit of anxiety about money matters. One of the [deacons] came to me . . . bringing all the stocks and shares and deeds and available funds that he had. [He said,] "take whatever you need, and do not have another moment's anxiety." Of course, as soon as I got better, I returned to my dear friend, all that he had brought to me. (Deacons and Elders; Pastors and Teachers section)

The communicative and remunerative reciprocity of Spurgeon made him a beloved pastor. During Spurgeon's (1989/2013) 50th birthday, the church commemorated the jubilee ceremony with a sizable love offering. However, Spurgeon donated the money to the many charities he founded (Fullerton, 1920).

### **Reciprocation in Collaboration**

Finally, Spurgeon's impact as a leader and follower comes from reciprocation in collaboration with others. Spurgeon was not a domineering leader but divested power in people even if they did not share his doctrinal convictions. Spurgeon was a Calvinist but would allow Arminians from the Baptist Convention to preach at the Metropolitan Tabernacle (Bebbington, 2005). Spurgeon appointed George Rogers as principal of the Pastors' College even though Rogers was a paedobaptist (Morden, 2014). Spurgeon founded the Stockwell Orphanage with an investment from a widow from the Church of England (Gatewood, 2019). The principal of that orphanage was another paedobaptist (Morden, 2014). The Metropolitan Tabernacle was eponymously named because donations poured in from millions of people worldwide who were not even church members (Fullerton, 1920).

Organizations must understand how leadership and followership are intertwined to create social change (Wyper, 2014). One can follow their convictions without restricting another from prolific positions because both can share the same primary cause (Hamlin, 2016). Spurgeon was doctrinal, but he was not dogmatic and left many matters to personal conscience (Bebbington, 2005). Spurgeon's ecumenical empowerment expanded social services in London and throughout the world. Spurgeon created 66 parachurch organizations serving orphans; women in abusive situations; and others needing shelter, care, and education (Gatewood, 2019). Nicholls (1992) counted 53 of the 62 Baptist churches in London planted by graduates of Spurgeon's college, which trained over 700 seminarians (Thielicke, 1963). Numerous college graduates went on to plant churches in Australia, New Zealand, North America, and the West Indies, receiving translated sermons, outlines, and ongoing financial support from Spurgeon's estate (Rhodes, 2018).

During the jubilee ceremony, Spurgeon (1989/2013) deferred any credit to his prowess and gave all the glory to God. Spurgeon was committed to the primary cause of Christ and willing to partner with anyone who shared the same conviction. Fullerton (1920) wrote that Christianity "was always the prevailing and mastering idea of his life. . . . This spirituality is so rare in men of great powers that it is invariably the way to influence. It inspires a kind of awe" (p. 204). Spurgeon's influence as a follower and leader should inspire readers to imbue that same reciprocation of communication, compensation, and collaboration into their organizations. The subsequent section describes the methodology for examining Spurgeon's sermons and comparing them with the extant literature on followership.

## Methodology

Technology has increased the digitalization of texts that allows researchers unlimited lexical exploration (Sretan & Wehrli, 2013). A keyword search is necessary to search Spurgeon's voluminous sermon archive, ensuring the most relevant information appears (Barnbrook, 1996). Utilizing the framework of co-occurrence and collocation, the researcher studies syntactic word combinations found in the text (Evert, 2005). This methodology gives the researcher a better understanding of a word by the company it keeps (Firth, 1957). Therefore, the text's analysis and interpretation oscillate outward from a hermeneutic circle towards heuristic interpretation (Scott, 1990). The content becomes agentive as the reader gains more understanding (Prior, 2003).

The database of Spurgeon's sermons came from The Kingdom Collective (<https://www.thekingdomcollective.com/spurgeon/list/>). The researcher searched all of the database titles with the keyword *lead* and its derivatives (leader, leading, leadership) while excluding words such as *pleading*. The initial search resulted in 13 sermons that match the inquiry. Upon closer inspection, two sermons were duplicates and combined, forming a sample size of 12. The sermons chosen for this study follow:

1. #74 A willing people and an immutable leader (Spurgeon, 1856)
2. #509/1402 Lead us not into temptation (Spurgeon, 1863)
3. #1220 The leading of the Spirit, the secret token of the sons of God (Spurgeon, 1875b)
4. #1248 The choice of a leader (Spurgeon, 1875a)
5. #1735 The doctrines of grace do not lead to sin (Spurgeon, 1883)
6. #2348 The Lord leading – David following (Spurgeon, 1894)
7. #2456 The Lamb our leader (Spurgeon, 1896c)
8. #2465 Our omnipotent leader (Spurgeon, 1896a)
9. #2491 Shame leading to salvation (Spurgeon, 1896b)
10. #2857 God's goodness leading to repentance (Spurgeon, 1903)
11. #3370 Our leader through the darkness (Spurgeon, 1913)
12. #3545 Our glorious leader (Spurgeon, 1917)

After opening each sermon, the researcher conducted another keyword-in-context search with the words *lead* (and its derivatives), *follow*, and its derivatives (follower, following, followed). The researcher copied and pasted each paragraph containing the keywords into a separate document to create the initial dataset. The document contained 32,898 words and was ready for the first round of coding.

Friese (2012) suggested that a large dataset is reducible to 120-300 codes. Moreover, the code list should contract with each successive coding cycle (Saldaña, 2016). During the first cycle of coding, the researcher counted the paragraphs with *lead* or *follow* (and its derivatives), placing the tabulations into a spreadsheet arranged by the sermon number. The initial codes totaled 201, and while frequency does not necessarily mean primacy (Saldaña, 2016), the list was organized and ready for the second cycle of coding.

The second cycle of coding grouped the list into two categories devised by the researcher (Patton, 2015). The categories were hermeneutic and heuristic. The hermeneutic category contained duplicate paragraphs with both *lead* and *follow* (and its derivatives) to provide the optimal context and syntax to understand Spurgeon's meaning of the concept (Sretan & Wehrli, 2013). The heuristic category allowed the researcher to choose additional quotations containing *lead* or *follow* (and its derivatives), aligning with Chaleff's (2009) followership framework. A heuristic inquiry is highly recommended as a research methodology, especially when examining spiritual leaders' text (Moustakas, 1990). The final dataset contained two categories with 30 hermeneutic codes and 22 heuristic codes used for data analysis. The researchers eliminated paragraphs that did not make it into a category, and the remaining text was read and re-read, allowing saturation to occur (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The results reveal what Spurgeon thought and taught about leadership and how followership theory can be applied to high-profile leaders today.

## Results

The seminal sermons are #1248 and #2456, with the salient theme being that Christian leadership is paradoxically followership. Spurgeon (1896c) preached:

First, then, we are to follow the Lamb. Some men spurn the idea of following anybody . . . They are followers of nobody. . . . But of the true people of God, it is written, "These are they which follow the Lamb." These are not they who follow their own leading, striking out a path of their own. These are not the great eccentrics or the wonderful originals, but these are they which follow—they are content to be merely followers—they do not aspire to be anything more than followers. But they are glad, however, to add that they are followers of the Lamb! "These are they which follow the Lamb." (p. 7)

According to Spurgeon, following the Lamb means leaders gently draw people while not harshly driving them towards something. Spurgeon (1875b) preached:

The Spirit of God is gentle! He does not drive but leads. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God; they are the sons of God." The Spirit treats us honorably in this working. He does not deal with us as with dumb, driven cattle or soulless waves of the sea. He treats us as intelligent beings, made for thought and reflection. He leads us as a man guides his child, or as one leads his fellow—and we are honored by subjecting our minds and wills to so Divine a Spirit. Whatever it is, the will is truly free until the Holy Spirit sweetly subdues it to willing obedience. (p. 3)

Blom and Lundgren (2019) devised a scale between full voluntary followership on one end and other forms of subordination that are not genuine followership on the other. Due to either dominant elements of compulsion or minimal coercion elements, a follower assumes a particular identity with a certain kind of leader (Blom & Lundgren, 2019). Given the research into destructive charismatic leaders and their effects on follower dependency (Howell & Shamir, 2005), Spurgeon exemplified courageous followership behavior while avoiding charismatic leaders' negative characteristics (Conger, 2015). Spurgeon (1896c) preached, "If you follow the Lamb, you must grow more and more lamb-like—and that means being more gentle, more meek, more self-sacrificing, more ready to submit to the Divine will" (p. 7). The imagery of shepherd and sheep is prevalent throughout all of the sermons.

Interestingly, in the analysis of Spurgeon's sermons, he never referred to himself as *your leader* but was content to view his role as a follower of Christ. "The blood-spattered footprints of my Master shall receive mine! Not with equal strides, but still with gladsome footsteps, I will follow in His track, let that track lead where it may" (Spurgeon, 1896c, p. 7). Moreover, in Spurgeon's autobiography, when referencing the church's leadership, it is mentioned as a shared construct, a very humbling omission for someone with world-renown fame. Spurgeon (1898/2013) wrote, "Rally round your leaders. Pray with double earnestness. . . . May the Lord uphold the Co-pastor, deacons, elders, and every one of you, for Jesus' sake (Unabated Affection Between Pastor and

People section)! The loving Governor viewed Christ as the ultimate leader in a plurality of faithful followers. Wilder and Jones (2018) concurred that "Godly leadership is followership . . . for the good and guidance of a community for which God has given us responsibility. Any power we possess has been divinely delegated to guide the flock towards his purposes and peace" (p. 122). Therefore, the subsequent section examines Chaleff's (2009) exemplary followership behaviors and how Spurgeon enacted them.

### **The Courage to Share in a Common Purpose**

Part of what made Spurgeon a courageous follower was the shared purpose he had with his superiors (Rolle, 2020). Spurgeon (1889/2010) once told his students, "When a laborious, ox-like minister comes to be yoked to a deacon who is not another ox, it becomes hard work to plow" (p. 311). Both Spurgeon and the trustees were equally yoked and committed to furthering God's kingdom together. During Spurgeon's candidacy, the Superintendent of the Sunday School wrote the young phenom and said:

I hope and pray that you will be a blessing to thousands, that God will give you a great number of souls for your crown of rejoicing. [Furthermore,] if it shall please God . . . for you to come among us [I will] do all that I can so far as my influence is concerned, for your temporal and spiritual happiness. (Spurgeon, 1898/2013, Letters Concerning Settlement in London section)

Spurgeon's ministry did reach thousands, and the organization grew exponentially. Rather than falling into destructive leadership patterns that plague prolific leaders when they experience success (Einarsen et al., 2007), Spurgeon continually fought the battle of pride in himself (TSC, 2016a) while advancing organizational objectives together. Spurgeon (1875a) preached:

I may say, never, for when the one who is led goes beyond his leader, he is not, in truth, led any longer—rarely enough does it ever come to that. Men, if they outstrip their leaders, generally do so in the wrong direction. (p. 4)

### **The Courage to Serve in New Areas and Assume More Responsibility**

Chaleff (2009) asserted developing as a follower requires assuming personal responsibility in learning. Riggio et al. (2008) observed that discipline shares the same root as disciple, and the most dependable follower learns to learn continuously. The discipline required to stretch the limits of one's ability is how personal growth occurs (Suda, 2013). A proper growth mindset understands that learning, unlearning, and relearning is challenging work and one applies oneself accordingly (Dweck, 2006). That is why researchers have focused on autotelic activities because participants guided by their agentive resourcefulness can persist amidst various adversities (Ponton & Rhea, 2006).

Spurgeon developed competency as a follower by assuming responsibility in autonomous learning. Even though Spurgeon did not have a formal education, he was "obliged to remain an autodidactic [a] self-taught man" (Thielicke, 1963, p. 5). Through his initiative, Spurgeon read numerous books a week (Harmon, 1997). Spurgeon's library contained over 12,000 volumes (Reeves, 2018), and even in the dark, Spurgeon could select any book from the shelf (Lawson, 2012). For fun, Spurgeon would quote lines of Homer verbatim and journaled witticisms and axioms from everyday observations (Bebbington, 2005). Spurgeon's erudite ability only aided in his ministry's output for someone who preached twice on Sunday while lecturing at numerous events throughout the week (Thielicke, 1963).

An exemplary follower in today's information economy should make autonomous learning the very flow of their workload (Bersin & Zao-Sanders, 2019). Driven by a natural curiosity and the inherent challenge to grow, exemplary followers assume responsibility for their learning without relying on corporate training programs (Pink, 2009). Spurgeon (1875a) preached:

I am glad to be a seeing man following a seeing Leader and I endeavor to be an intelligent scholar learning of a wise and sympathetic Teacher. . . . Come, dear Brothers and Sisters, you that are scholars of Christ, let us sit at His feet! Let us follow in His ways more closely than ever! And you, dear Friends, who as yet are not in His school, He says to you, "Who is simple let him turn in here." (p. 4)

### **The Courage to Challenge Leaders and Speak Out**

Spurgeon was not afraid to challenge hierarchies and heresies based upon his convictions (Drummond, 1992). As Murray (2009) noted, three significant controversies marked Spurgeon's ministry: (a) Spurgeon challenging his fellow parishioners in London for preaching a diluted gospel; (b) condemning the Church of England for proliferating baptismal regeneration; and (c) the Down Grade Controversy, resulting in Spurgeon's resignation from his denomination (Murray, 2009). An amusing little anecdote during all this was when Spurgeon placed an Anglican baptismal in his garden as a birdbath, which he lovingly referred to as his "spoils of war" (Drummond, 1992, p. 486).

Speaking truth to power is often difficult, and the balance of supporting good leaders and challenging the bad ones will inevitably come at a cost (Bryman et al., 2011). However, upward feedback is necessary to keep high-profile leaders from becoming toxic and destructive (Chaleff, 2009). Carsten and Uhl-Bien (2013) discovered that followers who romanticized their superiors were more complicit in the leader's unethical requests. Spurgeon confronted the power structures of his day and refused to follow bad leaders. Spurgeon (1875a) preached:

The most solemn truth remains to be noted. When a man chooses a bad leader for his soul, at the end of all bad leadership, there is a ditch. . . . You do not see it yet, but there it is, and into it, you will fall if you continue to follow your leader. At the end of error, there is often a moral ditch, and men go down, down, down—they scarcely know why—till presently, having imbibed doctrinal error, their moral principles are poisoned, and like drunken men, they find themselves rolling in the mire of sin. (p. 4)

### **The Courage to Participate in Transformation**

Followership styles adapt and accrue based on the interactions with particular leaders (Bastardo & Vugt, 2019). Leaders engender follower buy-in to meet personal and organizational challenges by moving through a continuum of five zones (Hayes et al., 2013): (a) zone of indifference where followers accept directives unquestioningly, (b) zone of acceptance, (c) zone of trust contingent upon the trustworthiness of the leader, (d) zone of commitment, and (e) zone of stewardship where followers are willing to make personal self-sacrifices for the organization's primary cause.

However, willful and volitional self-surrender is risky, especially when spiritual leaders abuse their authority. Johnson and VanVonderan (2005) observed that spiritual abuse occurs when congregants cannot question the clergy's authority and when noncompliance to directives becomes an underlying sin issue within the congregant. Nevertheless, even modern psychologists have shown that active acceptance to follow a spiritual leader can be a transformative experience (Freimann & Mayseless, 2021). Spurgeon understood the spiritual journey involves following a trustworthy leader through challenging circumstances while that leader remains committed to each individual's care. Likewise, "the Christian teacher is destined not only to be an imitator of Christ himself but also to take the position of the imitable" (Sloterdijk, 2012, p. 286). Spurgeon (1875a) preached:

Without considering whether the guide is a seeing man or blind, or the teacher an instructed and qualified instructor, the credulous yield themselves up to priests or leaders and are sorely misled. . . . Such self-sufficient boasters will not, therefore, condescend to sit at the feet of a master or follow the track of a guide—and, consequently, they frequently become erratic, singular, lawless, and unreasonable in their modes of thought and action. . . . Happy is that man who, in the pride of intellect, determines not to be a guide to himself—and so to be guide to a fool! [Oh Lord,] You take the blind in the hand and lead them by a way that they know not and by paths which they have not seen. . . . Having chosen his tutor, the student gradually becomes more and more like his master or, having taken his guide, the tendency is to tread more closely in his footsteps and obey his rules more fully every day. We must be all conscious that we imitate those whom we admire. Love has a strange influence over our nature, to mold it into the form of our beloved. (p. 4)



Sacrificial love was the transforming power of Spurgeon's ministry. The reciprocity to share power and money directly fulfills the biblical qualifications for ministers (English Standard Version, 2001, 1 Peter 5:1-4). Spurgeon's rhetoric from the pulpit matched the reality of his life. There was congruency in reciprocity between word (communication) and deeds (compensation and collaboration). Spurgeon (1883) preached:

Love has a great constraining power towards the highest form of virtue. Deeds to which a man could not be compelled on the ground of law, men have cheerfully done because of love. . . . Look how men have thrown away their lives for great leaders. That was an immortal saying of the wounded French soldier. When searching for the bullet, the surgeon cut deeply, and the patient cried out, "A little lower, and you will touch the Emperor," meaning that the Emperor's name was written on his heart! (p. 5)

### **The Courage to Take Moral Action**

Moral action is one of the teleological characteristics of followership (Van Vugt et al., 2008). During the zenith of Spurgeon's ministry, a pamphlet began circulating asking why Spurgeon was so famous (Fullerton, 1920). Directly addressed to Spurgeon, the author of the pamphlet penned, "Your ministry has attained the dignity of a moral phenomenon. . . . You have raised up a church from obscurity to eminence, perhaps I might add . . . from spiritual indigence to affluence" (as cited in Fullerton, 1920, p. 89). In analyzing Spurgeon's sermons, he displayed exemplary followership behaviors because he followed the moral exemplar of Jesus Christ. Spurgeon (1917) preached:

Let us be up and doing, for Jesus goes ahead of us in the matter of Providence. May He help us to keep always near Him. What He would have us do, oh, may we do it! Word for word, what He would have us speak thought for thought what He would have us think, act for act what He would have us do! Let us never have a glorious Leader and be a laggard people. Oh, for the grace that is in Him to bedew us plenteously, that as He goes ahead of us, we may follow Him in the path of service! (p. 12)

Christian leadership, at its core, is followership. Tenth Avenue North's worship song summed it up best, "So many leaders, you ask for followers" (Donehey et al., 2016). Additionally, Wilder and Jones (2018) wrote, "Christ-following leaders must never pretend that they possess sovereignty above or separation from the people they serve. . . . For the Christian leader, followership means that everyone, even the leader, is always being led" (p. 21). It is evident from the life of Charles Spurgeon that the renowned Prince of Preachers cast down his crown before the King of Kings to exalt Christ alone. Spurgeon and his co-laborers created an equally and equitably yoked partnership that advanced the Kingdom of God together in one accord (English Standard Version, 2001, 2 Corinthians 6:14-15).

## Application and Future Research

The closing section discusses two applications for practitioners and one area for future research.

### Application 1: Implement Followership Training

The first application for practitioners to consider is implementing followership training instead of leadership development programs. In many leadership articles, books, conferences, and training resources, followership is often entirely nonexistent (Akhilele et al., 2021). Research has shown that followership training increases multiple performance metrics by 17% to 43% (Hurwitz & Hurwitz, 2015). The researchers also discovered that teaching followership fundamentally altered the way students engage with leadership theory and praxis (Hurwitz & Hurwitz, 2020). Increasing the interplay between followership and leadership studies will hopefully create more ethical exchanges in reciprocal relations. Spurgeon (1913) preached:

We all desire to rule, and we all feel that we could do it far better than the present leaders are doing! He who has the least wisdom and has failed in business half a dozen times is the very person who believes himself to be the most fitted to be Prime Minister! We do not love obedience, but we have to learn it. (p. 11)

### Application 2: Refuse to Follow Greedy Leaders

The second application for practitioners is refusing to follow any leader who is unwilling to reciprocate equal and equitable compensation. While Spurgeon lived in London simultaneously as Karl Marx, another keyword search of his sermons reveals Spurgeon did not share many of the same sentiments as the socialists. However, the Metropolitan Tabernacle demonstrated sacrificial generosity and financial subsistence for its members at home and overseas. The lavish lifestyle of pastors today is supported in part by parishioner donations. For systemic and societal changes to occur, church practitioners need to explore new economic structures. When Jesus Christ detailed the parable of the workers who were all paid equally, the employees hired first objected (English Standard Version, 2001, Matthew 20:1-16). When Dan Price, the CEO of Gravity Payments, tried the same thing, many of his employees quit (Hegarty, 2020). Spurgeon (1898/2013) journaled:

Under the impression that I am a very rich man, many hunt me perpetually; but I wish these borrowers and beggars to know that I am not rich. They argue that a man is rich if he gives away large sums, but in my case, that is the reason why I am not rich. (Marvelous Increase Facts and Figures section)

## Area of Future Research: Study Shared Leadership Models

The past few years saw critical leadership studies emerge, questioning neo-charismatic leaders' modality and morality (Gagnon & Collinson, 2014). The current nexus in theoretical studies examines meta-paradoxical leadership between hierarchical and shared structures (Pearce et al., 2019). Future researchers need to examine the processual and reciprocal hybridity of leader-follower relationships integral to organizational success (Schweiger et al., 2020). Spurgeon was a *primus inter pares* (Greenleaf, 1977) among the deacons, elders, and congregants of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Hopefully, scholars and practitioners can gain valuable insights by further studying case studies from the past.

## Conclusion

After the removal of pastor Steve Timmis from his church in London, an independent investigation concluded:

The imbalance of power now was such that no one ever questioned the charismatic preacher who had rescued their church from extinction. [Trustees said,] that in practice they had no oversight of safeguarding and did not receive regular financial reviews . . . Participants consistently reported that [Steve Timmis emphasized a] very strong teaching on submission to the authority of leaders. People . . . felt there was a misapplication of this teaching and that, biblically, submission should be a two-way process. . . . [The Report recommended] that leaders themselves should be accountable, and the leadership model should be one of distributed leadership instead of allowing so much power to be invested in one person. (Thirty-one: Eight, 2020, pp. 32, 42, 57, 84)

Charles Spurgeon managed to avoid the pitfalls and perils of power by enacting exemplary followership behaviors. Scholars and practitioners today can benefit from Spurgeon's reciprocity in his communication, compensation, and collaboration, ensuring leaders and followers hold each other accountable to a higher moral standard. Spurgeon elevated the responsibility of Christian to follow the example of Christ, the leader par excellence. Imagine Spurgeon's (1875a) sonorous voice declaring these words at the Metropolitan Tabernacle as he preached:

If you do not wish to be led into errors of heart and practice, beware of men, and follow none but Jesus! Follow no footprints but the footprints of that flock which follows at His heel. You will do best not even to follow the sheep, but to follow the Shepherd, only, and to do that even if you walk alone! (p. 4)

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# Followers Ready for Leadership as Demonstrated by St. Mary and St. Josephine

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This presentation explores the link between Chaleff's (2009) courageous followership model and Kellerman's (2007) diehard and Kelley's (1988, 2008) star performer models as demonstrated through the lives of Mary, mother of Jesus, and Josephine Bakhita, canonized in the year 2000. As shown through a sacred texture analysis, these female followers exemplify characteristics that lead to preparation for higher levels of organizational responsibilities (Hersey et al., 1979; Robbins, 2004, 2010; Schermerhorn, 1997). The study is a contribution to research on females as followers.

Keywords: star performer, diehard, follower, sacred texture, courageous follower, Chaleff, Kellerman, Kelley, St. Mary, Bakhita, St. Josephine

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Jesus said, "for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great" (Luke 9:48). A sacred texture review of the discipleship of St. Mary, also known as the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Josephine Bakhita, the first contemporary African female, canonized by the Catholic Church, shows that they exemplify the Lord's message as well as followership theories. The research question asked, How do the followership models help leaders identify and develop new leaders? The current study examines how the theories of Kelley (1988, 2008) and Kellerman (2007) feed into Chaleff's (2009) courageous followership model as demonstrated by the lives of St. Josephine and St. Mary. I conclude that a progression of leader-member exchanges helps prepare these followers for leadership. This study is a contribution to the research on female followers.

## Literary Review

The power of followers is the basis for democracy, though it was not until the revolutions of the 1960s that the study of followers drew the attention of leadership and management theorists (Kelley, 1988; Kellerman, 2007; Parker, 1984). Traditional management theories focused on controlling subordinates rather than coordinating

with them to accomplish goals. Kelley (1988, 2008) recognized that followers had something to contribute to the mission other than obedient subservience. He categorized subordinates according to the level of demonstrated organizational contributions, ranging from those who did their work as instructed to those whose high energy and positivity pushed their organizations forward. Followers labeled as sheep described passive personnel content with their work, *yes* people described dependent staff happy to defer to leadership, and survivors described pragmatic staff who shifted in the direction of the wind. Alienated staff were independent thinkers who tended to be cynical, while effective followers were self-managed, energetic performers committed to organizational goals and missions.

Kellerman (2007) similarly separated workers into five categories, but with a view of how they could best be managed. She classified detached and uninterested personnel as isolate; passive observers as bystanders; ambitious invested staff as participants; engaged and invested staff as activists; and dedicated, motivated, and committed staff as diehard. Chaleff (2009) identified the top-level workers of both categories – dedicated, energetic, committed, and motivated – as courageous followers.

Chaleff's (2009) followership model defines the traits most beneficial to organizational progress. Chaleff opined, "Followers and leaders both orbit around the purpose" (p. 13); therefore, leaders should consider not only the contributions of their subordinates but the traits that are most useful to the organization. The five traits presented are not categorized, so one is not favored above the other. Courageous followers assume responsibility when they help to improve organizational processes and activities. They maximize their value by creating growth opportunities. They serve the organizational mission and use their skills and abilities to ensure positive outcomes. Courageous followers value organizational harmony and thus are not afraid to alert leaders of issues that may cause conflict or do not align with organizational goals. However, they champion changes for the better and will take moral actions when necessary. Courageous followers embody the adage "do not harm." Courageous followers fit the type of follower that leaders most often target for development (Hersey et al., 1979). Such personnel can function independently and require little leader-member exchange. They are skilled, self-motivated, demonstrate a high-performance level, and handle delegation with decorum. They are at the top of a growth progression that begins with receiving instruction (telling), moves to a higher level of supervision (selling), and then to a level of engagement (participating). The need for supervision lessens as the follower grows in responsibility. Table 1 depicts the followership models; the first two categories of Kelley (1988, 2008) and the first three categories of Kellerman (2008) align with Chaleff's (2009) model.

**Table 1:** Followership Models

Kelley (1988, 2008)	Kellerman (2008)	Chaleff (2009)
<p>Effective follower/Star follower</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent thinker</li> <li>• Energetic</li> <li>• Assertive</li> <li>• Self-starter</li> <li>• Risk-taker</li> </ul>	<p>Diehard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devoted</li> <li>• Motivated</li> <li>• Committed</li> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Dedicated</li> </ul>	<p>Assumes responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committed</li> <li>• Creates opportunities for growth</li> <li>• Maximizes their value</li> <li>• Improves organizational processes/activities</li> <li>• Takes ownership</li> </ul>
<p>Alienated follower</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical</li> <li>• Independent</li> <li>• Energetic</li> <li>• Have a vision</li> <li>• Courageous</li> </ul>	<p>Activist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaged</li> <li>• Invested</li> <li>• Courageous</li> <li>• Critical thinkers</li> <li>• Competent</li> </ul>	<p>Serves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes additional responsibilities</li> <li>• Assert themselves where their strengths complement the leader</li> </ul>
	<p>Participant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambitious</li> <li>• Invested</li> </ul>	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value organizational harmony</li> <li>• Speaks up when they see or sense conflict with organizational goals/policies</li> <li>• Willing to examine the leader's action</li> </ul>
		<p>Helps transform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change champion</li> <li>• Supports the leader in the change</li> </ul>
		<p>Takes moral action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will take a stand for higher values</li> <li>• May refuse or appeal an order</li> <li>• May become a whistleblower</li> </ul>
<p>Survivor/Pragmatist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk-averse</li> </ul>	<p>Bystander</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observer</li> </ul>	

Kelley (1988, 2008)	Kellerman (2008)	Chaleff (2009)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonparticipant</li> <li>• Passive</li> </ul>	
Yes People		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependent</li> <li>• Deferent</li> <li>• Dependent</li> </ul>		
Sheep	Isolate	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passive</li> <li>• Uncritical</li> <li>• Lack motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detached</li> <li>• Uninterested</li> <li>• Support the status quo</li> </ul>	

Together, the theories shown in Table 1 indicate that people enter the workforce with a variety of social and psychological perspectives that influence their level of organizational contributions. However, followers do not have to be left at their entry point but can be developed through guidance and training to advance. St. Mary, the Holy Mother, and St. Josephine Bakhita, the first contemporary African saint, demonstrate the maturation of followers.

## Method

Sociorhetorical interpretation is a tool that integrates several methods of analysis to illuminate the meaning of a text. The name can be traced to a 1984 “integration of rhetorical, anthropological, and social-psychological insights in a study of the Gospel of Mark” (Robbins, 2010, p. 192; see also Robbins, 2004). However, by the 1990s, the framework presented five ways of considering a text through the interrelationship of its elements (Robbins, 1996). These were identified as social-cultural texture, intertexture, inner texture, ideological texture, and sacred texture. In addition, sociorhetorical interpretation found new audiences as researchers applied its features to the study of texts in addition to the Bible (Robbins, 2004, 2010). The method supports “programmatically analysis and interpretation” of a range of literature from a variety of origins (Robbins, 2010, p. 195).

Sacred texture explores the relationship between God and humans (Henson et al., 2020; Robbins, 2010). Intertwined with the other four textures, it provides a foundation for understanding the human response to the calling of God. Its subtextures include a deity, human redemption, religious community, ethics, and – most important to this



work – holy person and human commitment. A holy person is described as one who exemplifies the call and will of God, and human commitment examines the level of their response.

Sacred texture is a tool for understanding followership, as represented by St. Mary and St. Bakhita, as it can be applied against the biblical text for the former and the life story as described in the literature for the latter (Robbins, 2004, 2010). Both Mary and Bakhita fit the priestly rhetorolect as viewed through the prism of early Christianity (Robbins, n.d., 2010; Watson & Robbins, 1998). This discourse explores the lives and characters of people selected by God for specific purposes in line with his desire for human redemption.

### **St. Mary, Mother of the Church**

God never authorized or approved behavior that depersonalized women, who are called to be disciples first and above all other roles (Borland, 1991; Witherington, 1987). They are parallel with men under God's grace and participate equally in the community of believers. The Lord speaks to people through their filters, so truth must be separated from the culture and historicity of the period. Borland (1991) advised that the settings of God's revelations "should not be confused with the revelations" (p. 105). In the Lord's camp, men and women worked side by side – praying, providing finances and meals, and discussing theology. Note that it was a woman who Jesus sent with the message of his resurrection to the apostles, for which Mary Magdelene has been called the "Apostle to the Apostles" (Atteberry, 2018; Paweski, 2020).

Jesus never treated women differently than men, despite the culture of his time (Bessey, 2013). His value of females was demonstrated in his interactions with them. He viewed them as human above their gender and dealt with them as equals, treating them with dignity and respect (Bessey, 2013). He spoke to them in public (John 4:7-26; Luke 7:12-13); though it was against the mores of the time, he addressed them directly, instead of their fathers or husbands. He did not condescend to them or patronize them. They were not too sweet or delicate, and they were not more manipulative or less insecure.

Jesus' tendency to include women in his parables as both positive and negative examples indicated his acceptance of their humanity and inclusion in God's plan (Witherington, 1987). They did not get a pass because of their gender but were held accountable for their sins and failures in the same way as men (Luke 7:47-48). What the Lord required of men, he required of women. He welcomed Mary, sister of Martha, to learn at his feet with the disciples, noting that her choice was more important than serving with her sister. Martha, however, was identified as a minister or servant (*diakeno*), along with Mary, the mother of Jesus; Mary Magdelene; Salome; Joanna; and Susanna (Bessey, 2013; Borland, 1991).

Mentioned 47 times in scripture, Mary, the mother of Jesus, presents an outstanding model as a follower of Christ (Borland, 1991; Trigilio & Brighenti, 2022). The daughter of Joachim and Anne, she is remembered by various titles, including Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Grace, and Blessed Virgin Mary, all representing devotion to her as the mother of Christ. As a young woman living in Nazareth, she received the annunciation that she would be the mother of the anointed flesh of God, whom she would call Jesus. Thus, Mary began a role that would define her life and purpose, as she announced in the Magnificat: “all generations shall call me blessed” (Luke 1:48). Grisez (1997) noted that acknowledgment was an act of faith, making Mary the first Christian as she was the first to believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

Mary gave birth to the Savior and presented the opportunity for the Messiah’s first miracle at the wedding of Cana (Borland, 1991). With the host running out of wine, the Lord filled the need by converting water to wine at his mother’s request. She had watched her son with wonder, pondering the prophecies she and Joseph, her husband, had received (Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 2:15-18, 29-32, 38) and Jesus’s own words (Luke 2:48). Seeing the anointing and power on his life, she knew he could help (Luke 2:19, 51). Jesus’s compliance demonstrated his level of trust in her counsel (Trigilio & Brighenti, 2022). She witnessed his sacrifice, remaining at the cross despite her heart breaking at seeing his pain (Borland, 1991; Grisez, 1997; Hauer, 2010). She was there at his ascension and one of those who received the Holy Spirit in the upper room (Acts 1:12).

Mary’s devotion was not overlooked by the Catholic Church, who have revered her with several titles, though the reverence is an honor, not worship (Trigilio & Brighenti, 2022). Mariology, or the study of Mary, describes her various titles – Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Peace, etc. – each associated with some perception of the saint. Trigilio and Brighenti (2022) opined that Mary was elevated to mother of the church when Jesus commended her as the mother of the Apostle John (John 19:26-27). Trigilio and Brighenti said, “The bestowal of Mary to John is symbolic insofar as John represents all disciples and all men and women” (p. 306). And so, sometime in the sixth century, August 15 was set as the festival of her assumption and is followed by many others recognizing traits and events (“Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, Mother of the Church,” 2022; Edwards, 1997). In addition, many Catholics in many nations claim St. Mary as their patron saint.

### **St. Josephine Bakhita, Patron of Sudan**

On Saturday, February 8, 1947, the day of the month committed to observing St. Mary, Josephine Margaret Bakhita spoke her last words: “I am so happy. Our Lady. Our Lady” (“Saints and Angels: St. Josephine Bakhita,” n.d., para. 37; Trigilio & Brighenti, 2022). Her biography varies among authors as each bends her story to suit their purpose

(Kofes, 2015). She is represented as a victim, a freedom fighter, a martyr, a political activist, and a submitted servant of God. Affectionately called “brown sister” and “black mother,” Josephine Bakhita was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1992 and canonized as a saint in 2000 (David, 2013; Maynard, 2002; “Saints and Angels: St. Josephine Bakhita,” n.d.; Zanini, 2013).

Bakhita began life as the beloved daughter of a Sudanese farmer of means but was kidnapped and enslaved when she was about 9 years old (Maynard, 2002; Zanini, 2013). Josephine, who was called “Bakhita” or “Lucky” by her captors, could not remember her given name (Maynard, 2002; “Saints and Angels: St. Josephine Bakhita,” n.d.; Zanini, 2013). She escaped once, was captured by another enslaver, and traded several times, each owner seemingly more abusive. She survived 12 years as an enslaved person and bore 114 scars on her body, marking her as one owner’s property. Her situation changed when she was purchased by an Italian consul, who gifted her to his friends. She was responsible for caring for their daughter, where she was introduced to religious instruction. When the child’s mother decided to visit her husband, who had left her to sell their home as he set up an establishment in Africa, she left her daughter and Bakhita, who was about 20, with the Canossian Sisters at the Catechumenate in Venice so that they could receive schooling. Here, Bakhita was introduced to the love of Christ. She recalled, “Those holy mothers instructed me with heroic patience and brought me into a relationship with that God, whom ever since I was a child, I had felt in my heart without knowing who He was” (Maynard, 2002, Location No. 517). The young woman embraced faith in Jesus Christ.

Bakhita developed her prayer life while watching over her young charge, but when the child’s mother returned to take them to her home in Africa, Bakhita refused to because she wanted to be baptized and pursue her faith (Maynard, 2002; Zanini, 2013). The young, enslaved woman took a stand for her destiny for the first time. The woman, Maria Turina, was enraged, but Bakhita was unmoved, noting that God strengthened her so that she could follow him. The Rector of the Catechumenate supported Bakhita’s decision and sought direction from his Patriarch, who consulted the Royal Procurator, who declared the illegality of slavery in Italy. At a meeting at the Catechumenate, Mrs. Turina was told the same by government officials. Bakhita was free to remain at the facility. She was baptized about 2 months later, in January 1890, as Guiseppina Margherita Fortunata (Josephine Margaret Bakhita) and received her first communion. Three years later, she became a novitiate to the House of Catechumens, where she had accepted Christ. She took her vows in 1896.

In 1902, Mother Bakhita was transferred to Schio, Italy, to serve in the Canossian House, where she became head cook (Maynard, 2002; Zanini, 2013). In 1916, as World War I erupted in Europe, she directed enlisted orderlies in the kitchen and helped to nurse wounded soldiers. She was a comfort to them, and many found her empathetic and a

source of courage and inspiration. Her life story was so inspiring that the diocese recorded her story for publication, and she soon found herself on tour. Because of her shyness in crowds, she was teamed with an experienced missionary, Mother Leopoldina Benetti, who would tell Bakhita's "Marvelous Story." Mother Bakhita would follow by expressing appreciation to the crowd and pointing them to Jesus.

Her only objection to this experience was being called poor when God had given her such an extraordinary destiny. She understood that her suffering was for God's plan (Maynard, 2002). She said, "I'm not a poor thing because I belong to the Master, and I'm in his house. People who don't know our Lord – they're the ones who are poor" (Maynard, 2002, Location No. 715). Further, she appreciated her captors because their actions ensured that she would have such an ending. Instead, she prayed that they would know the Lord.

Mother Bakhita's passion was helping to prepare young women for missionary work through which many in Africa would know Jesus (Maynard, 2002; Zanini, 2013). For this purpose, she had endured the celebrity tours and subjected herself to the crush of the crowds and the insensitivities of people to her skin color. Maynard (2002) said, "She knew very well that helping the missions wasn't confined to fundraising or going to Africa as a missionary; she was making the most effective contribution possible just by doing what she was asked to do" (Location No. 728). During World War II, she predicted that the homes in Schio would be spared during the time of the bombing, and though a factory was bombed, the houses were secure. Once 19 bombs were dropped near a residential area but did not explode, so her prophecy held.

## Discussion

Though centuries apart, St. Mary and St. Josephine demonstrate the path from followership to leadership. From the followership perspective, Mary demonstrated assertiveness from the beginning (Strathearn, 2019). Though a child by contemporary standards, she challenged the messenger: "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34). She accepted her call, choosing service (Luke 2:42) even when Simeon warned that her experience would bring pain (Luke 2:35). Because her faith never wavered in the divinity of her son, she encouraged Jesus to use his gifts to meet the needs of their hosts. Jesus received her wisdom and performed his first miracle. She proved a diehard follower, as she followed Jesus to the cross, and a star follower, receiving the Holy Spirit with the 120 disciples in the upper room. Her followership path earned her the elevation of Mother of the Church in the Catholic tradition.

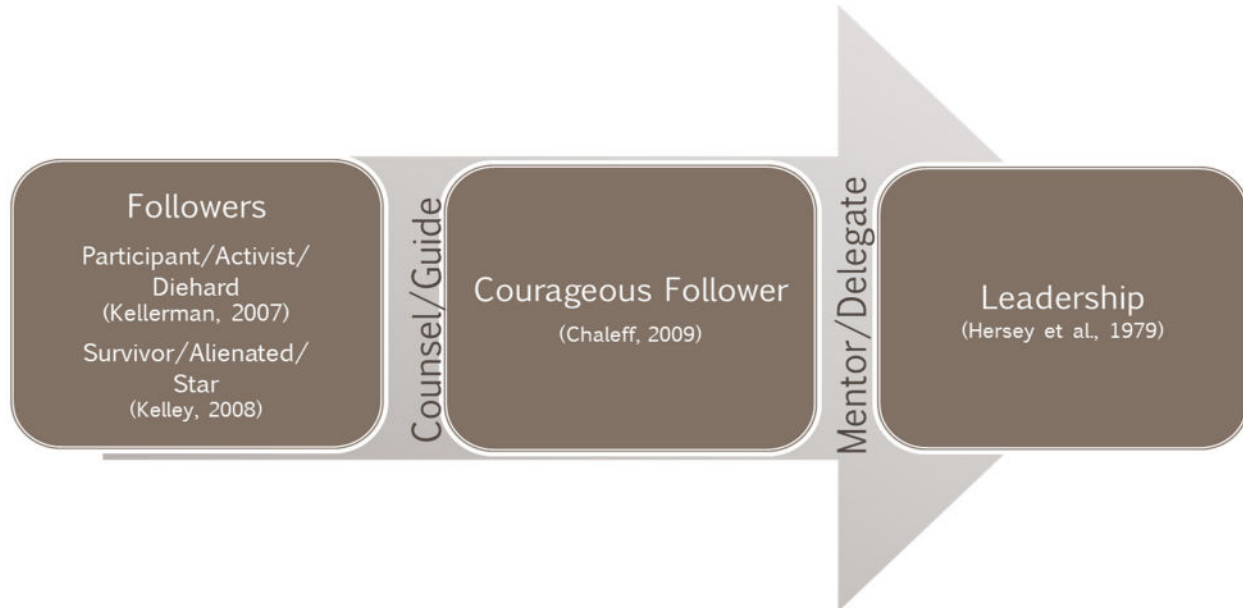
As a follower of Christ, St. Josephine modeled several characteristics of the followership paradigm. She is Kelley's (2008) model of a star follower as she asserted her dependence in the face of her faith and commitment to her mission. She proved competent in the tasks assigned, whether managing the kitchen or nursing the wounded. She proved to

be a person of integrity in her service and dedication to the gospel. She modeled Kellerman's (2008) characteristics of a diehard follower as she was motivated, passionate, creative, and helpful. She exemplified the courageous follower as she assumed responsibility, served with gusto, challenged injustice, and participated in transforming the world through training and encouraging others (Chaleff, 2009). Schermerhorn (1997) explained,

As the follower begins to move to an above-average level of readiness, it becomes appropriate for the leader to decrease not only task behavior but relationship behavior as well. Now the follower is not only ready in terms of the performance of the task but also is confident and committed. People at this level of readiness see a reduction of close supervision and an increase in delegation by the leader as a positive indication of trust and confidence. (p. 6)

St. Josephine began her journey in the most uncomfortable situation but completed it as a recognized Christian leader.

St. Mary and St. Josephine model the followers' progression to leadership. Their energy, devotion, commitment, and other high-performance traits positioned them to receive guidance, counsel, mentorship, and delegation, which earned them leadership positions (see Figure 1; Hersey et al., 1979). Mary was guided in her assignment by the angel and counseled by her cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-45). Then as a disciple of Jesus, Mary was mentored and delegated leadership responsibilities in John 19:26-27 (Trigilio & Brighenti, 2022). Josephine was guided to Christ by the Canossian Sisters and received counsel and mentorship from the Rector. The Canossian Sisters also mentored and delegated her leadership roles in managing the convent kitchen during World War I, publishing her story, and sending her on tour to represent Christ.

**Figure 1***Progression from Followership to Leadership*

From observing the followership path of these women, leaders may be encouraged to identify talent for development through the tools of charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration – the basics of transformational leadership (Yukl, 2006). According to Kellerman (2008), “Leadership does not simply happen, it can be learned and taught” (p. 13). In application, leaders should consider the traits of followers who demonstrate competence, responsibility, and energetic commitment to counsel and guide them into positions of responsibility. The followers may then be mentored and delegated duties according to their level of service, participation, intellectual engagement (ability to challenge), and ethics. Such actions will enable courageous followers to dawn the leadership mantle.

**About the Author**

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# Followers' Independent Critical Thinking and Active Engagement for Collocated vs. Virtual Work Teams

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*Roundtable: Followership*

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There is a gap in the research on followership in the virtual space. As such, this study explored the levels of active engagement (AE) and independent critical thinking (ICT) between collocated followers who work in a traditional office setting alongside coworkers and followers who work entirely virtual and rely on technology to connect, make decisions, and accomplish tasks. Current research has indicated that there are both strengths and limitations to virtual teams. However, it is often found to be more challenging to be as engaged and display ICT as a member of a virtual team. This study employed Kelley's (1992) Followership Scale to determine the difference between followers' AE and ICT to determine how most followers are classified in these different contexts and explored whether there are differences by gender. Followers who work in either virtual or collocated teams were recruited through online social media platforms. The survey results indicated no significant difference between collocated and virtual followers for AE or ICT; both types indicated they were exemplary followers. There was also no significant difference for gender, although that was expected for ICT, even though COVID-19 and childcare responsibilities have impacted more women. This study can contribute to this body of research, or lack thereof, by helping people better understand exemplary followership within different types of work arrangements to find out where the differences are and offer tools for organizations to develop followers who work in these spaces (Finlayson, 2021).

*Keywords:* followership, independent critical thinking, active engagement, collocated teams, virtual teams

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"Virtual teams are here, and they are here to stay" (B. S. Bell & Kozlowski, 2002, p. 45). With advancing technology, globalization, and the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations are moving towards more virtual teams (VT), which rely heavily on technology to communicate and accomplish tasks (Malhotra et al., 2007). As a result, scholars have been examining leadership in VTs, or *e-leadership*, for the last few

decades because effective leadership has been found to play a crucial role in the success of these teams (B. S. Bell & Kozlowski, 2002; Morgeson et al., 2010), but no scholarship has focused exclusively on the followers in VTs or *e-followers*. Moreover, people typically serve in the followership role 80% of the time and as leader only 20% of the time (Kelley, 1988, 1992).

The current study helps to fill this gap by exploring levels of active engagement (AE) and independent critical thinking (ICT) between collocated followers who work in a traditional office setting alongside coworkers and followers who work entirely virtual and rely on technology to connect, make decisions, and accomplish tasks. Specifically, this study employed Kelley's (1992) Followership Scale to determine the difference between followers' AE and ICT as well as determine how most followers are classified in these different contexts. In addition, gender differences were explored between these variables. Followers who met the criteria were recruited through online social media platforms. The findings and implications are also addressed.

### **Collocated Work Teams**

Collocated work teams have been around since the beginning of organized labor. Collocated team members are situated together, can communicate face to face, and have opportunities for chance encounters, such as water cooler talk, that is impossible for VTs (Powell et al., 2006). Because employees experience socialization and communication face to face, they often display a stronger commitment to the organization and their work team (Powell et al., 2006). While much of the research has focused exclusively on traditional work settings, with the continued growth in technology, the changing organizational landscape, and the shutdowns associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, VTs are now getting more attention.

### **Virtual Work Teams**

VTs can be defined as "work arrangements where team members are geographically dispersed, have limited face-to-face contact, and work interdependently through the use of electronic communication media to achieve common goals" (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017, p. 569). Organizations have experienced "explosive growth" of VTs over the last few decades that leadership research has struggled to keep pace with (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017, p. 569). The growth of VTs has been attributable to factors such as "globalization, distributed expertise, organizations' need for rapid product development and innovation, and improved networking and collaboration technologies that support e-collaboration" (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017, p. 569). In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic forced millions of people worldwide into being remote workers (Kniffin et al., 2021). Therefore, VTs can either be a temporary arrangement, such as those forced to work remotely because of COVID-19, or have ongoing responsibilities (Yukl, 2013). Most scholars have agreed that VTs can use face-to-face communication on rare occasions if most of the time they use technology to communicate (Mihhailova et al.,

2011). Therefore, virtual work teams rely heavily on computer-mediated communication such as email, video conferencing, groupware, and phones to carry out their work responsibilities (Yukl, 2013).

Virtual work teams also have unique advantages and challenges because of the lack of physical presence (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017; Purvanova & Bono, 2009). Some of the advantages of VTs include the following:

the ability to assemble teams that maximize functional expertise by including professional who are geographically dispersed, enabling continuous 24/7 productivity by using different time zones to their advantage, lowering costs by reducing travel, relocation and overhead, and sharing knowledge across geographic boundaries and organizational units and sites. (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017, p. 569)

In addition, membership in a VT can be more fluid, where people can participate in different ways only when needed (Yukl, 2013). On the other hand, there are several challenges VTs can present.

Some of these challenges of VTs include “establishing and maintaining trust through technology, understanding, appreciating and leveraging the diversity of the members, managing meetings, projects and progress through technology, having external visibility, and making sure all members participate and benefit from the group” (Malhotra et al., 2007, p. 62). In general, factors such as coordinating within teams, forming shared mental models, and managing conflict among team members often require more time and effort in a virtual context than in a traditional team setting (Liao, 2017).

Additionally, Powell et al. (2006) claimed that since VTs must rely on technology to communicate, they have a more difficult time establishing a personal link with other team members, which can impact organizational loyalty and commitment and create an overall climate of “out of sight, out of mind” (p. 313). A recent study also found that remote workers cited home interferences, ineffective communication, procrastination, and loneliness as additional challenges they faced (Wang et al., 2021). It may also be challenging to gain commitment from dispersed and diverse team members who have other responsibilities outside the team, such as family (Yukl, 2013).

A crucial element to all teams is leadership. The concept of e-leadership is essential to examine to bring clarity to the ambiguous set of responsibilities that challenge leaders of VTs (Walvoord et al., 2008). Avolio et al. (2000) are credited for coining the term *e-leadership* in the early 2000s when they sought to explain how communication technologies influence leaders and followers to create “new team structures and cultures” (Purvanova & Bono, 2009, p. 343). According to Avolio et al., “e-leadership is defined as a social influence process mediated by advanced information technology to

produce a change in attitudes, feelings, thinking, behavior, and performance with individuals, groups, and/or organizations” (p. 617). Avolio et al. believed that VTs could adapt technology to meet their needs and leaders are essential in the process. Moreover, “e-Leaders must coordinate and maintain knowledge, trust and accountability, while upholding influence and communicating vision to e-Followers” (Walvoord et al., 2008, p. 1886). While it is important to acknowledge the importance of leadership in VTs, it is also essential to extend our understanding of VTs to include followers to better understand how followers differ in these two modalities.

## Followership

While research has focused primarily on leaders in both collocated and remote teams, followers also play a key role. Kelley (1988), is credited with first developing a theory of followership, identifying the crucial role followers play in organizations and society. Adair (2008) defined followership as someone who “shares in an influential relationship among leaders and other followers with the intent to support leaders who reflect their mutual purpose” (p. 139). Additionally, Kelley (1992) argued that “since most of us spend the majority of our time in the followership role, it stands to reason that how we perform as followers determines, for the most part, how satisfied we are with our day-to-day work existence” (p. 88). With followers playing such a dominant role in organizations, it is important to understand how followership is influenced by the environment, especially with the rapid growth of VTs.

Successful and effective followers are often described as possessing certain characteristics such as “belief in the organization’s mission, vision, or purpose, willingness to subjugate personal interest for the greater good, loyalty, and unity of focus” (Schindler, 2014, p. 12). Moreover, effective followers have also been categorized as enthusiastic, intelligent, and self-reliant in the pursuit of organizational goals (Kelley, 1988). They should also be given freedom in their actions, given pertinent information, and be trusted to act to achieve a particular objective or goal (Schindler, 2014). To better distinguish what makes a follower effective or ineffective, Kelley (1992) conducted several studies exploring the various ways followers are categorized. Kelley identified five dimensions of followers: passive, pragmatists, conformist, alienated, and exemplary. The two dimensions of followership Kelley identified as crucial to determining which type of follower someone is and areas for improvement are (a) AE and (b) ICT.

## Active Engagement

Kelley (1992) described the best followers as those who take the initiative and actively participate, while the worst ones are passive and lazy. In general, followers who are actively engaged in their workplace are better equipped to handle the imbalance between resources and work demands (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010). In addition, the resources that have been shown to positively contribute to workplace engagement for

collocated teams and organizations include job autonomy, feedback, job control, and social support (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker et al., 2004; Fairlie, 2011; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008). Engagement is also higher for followers who perceive their work as meaningful (Steger et al., 2012; Tummers & Knies, 2013). Furthermore, meaningful work makes it easier for followers to be cognitively present and available, keeps them involved and helps them experience efficacy; they are also often more dedicated and absorbed (Kahn, 1990; Olivier & Rothmann, 2007; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Fairlie (2011) also observed that engaged followers experience less disengagement, exhaustion, and turnover.

Only a few studies have explored whether working remotely can provide the same level of engagement as working in person for followers. For instance, Panteli et al. (2019) explored which factors foster work engagement in VT projects. They found that leaders must promote follower engagement through resources and effective practices. In another study, Shaik et al. (2021) employed an ethnographic inquiry to understand the nature of the relationship between cultural intelligence and employee engagement in global VTs. They found a relationship between cultural intelligence and employee engagement that was mediated by trust among team members in global VTs. However, they acknowledged that more research needs to be done in this area. Overall, Shaik and Makhecha (2019) argued that recent consulting research has also found levels of employee engagement to be considerably less in VTs compared to collocated teams. Therefore, the following hypothesis is posed:

H<sub>1</sub>: Followers who work in collocated teams will report higher levels of AE than those who work in VTs.

## **Independent Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is also a desirable characteristic of employees. Kelley (1992) presented research from the perspective of leaders that described the best followers are those who think for themselves and provide constructive feedback. Additionally, these followers are their own person, innovative, and creative (Banutu-Gomez, 2004). On the other hand, the worst followers must be told what to do and need constant direction (Kelley, 1992). There are also many positive outcomes of critical thinking, such as improving employees' health in stressful situations (Dowd & Bolus, 1998) and improving performance through continuous learning (Yeo, 2007). While there have been mixed results related to followers' ICT on organizational outcomes (Blanchard et al., 2009; Gatti et al., 2014), Gatti et al. (2017) put forward that ICT should be viewed as a proactive behavior like organizational citizenship behaviors or voice that the relationship with the leader can greatly influence.

ICT may be especially important for VTs. Dundis and Benson (2003) wanted to better understand problem-solving and decision-making groups in the online space. After a review of the literature, the authors created a task typology with six key areas that

impact the critical thinking of virtual groups: (a) degree of interdependence, (b) goal complexity, (c) data gathering/distribution demands, (d) information-processing demands, (e) evaluation demands, and (f) situational demands. In addition, Kurubacak (2007) examined how project-based learning promoted critical thinking skills through reusable learning objects such as applets, graphics, templates, backgrounds, texts, animations, streaming videos, and other such data and elements from global online resources. The author found that learners' critical thinking patterns were related to their concerns about their learning styles and needs and that communication also played an important role. In general, Morley et al. (2015) acknowledged that critical thinking and decision making may be more challenging in VTs due to the disparity in culture, systems, and processes and incidents of misinterpretation, isolation, and dissatisfaction that are more common than face-to-face teams.

While these studies provide a starting point, it is evident that there is still much to learn about followers' ICT within VTs to see if they can overcome the additional challenges. Therefore, the following hypothesis is posed:

H<sub>2</sub>: Followers who work collocated will report higher levels of ICT than those who work remotely.

### **Exemplary Followers**

According to Kelley (1992), followers who score highly for both AE and ICT are considered to be exemplary followers. Moreover, "exemplary followers possess a repertoire of skills and values that are both learnable and doable" (Kelley, 1992, p. 129). These skills include focusing on the goal; working well on activities that contribute to the goal; increasing their value in the organization by taking initiative; and adding value by being who they are and sharing their experiences, ideals, and dreams (Kelley, 1992).

Kelley (2008) later relabeled this category *star follower*. According to Kelley, a star follower is positive, thinks for themselves, and "does not accept the leader's decision without their own independent evaluation of its soundness" (p. 8). Star followers are often known as the "leader in disguise" because they share several of the same qualities as those they follow (Kelley, 2008, p. 8). Most importantly, exemplary follower traits and behaviors are correlated to higher job performance (Ntiamoah, 2018). Therefore, if the first two hypotheses prove true, then the following hypothesis will also be true:

H<sub>3</sub>: Collocated team members will be classified as exemplary followers.

### **Other Follower Classifications**

While exemplary or star followers are obviously the ideal, Kelley (1992) also classified followers as alienated, conformist, pragmatist, and passive. Alienated followers are

capable but cynical, often hold back effort, and display high levels of ICT but low levels of AE. Conformist followers are eager to take orders, defer to the leader, and do not question their place or role. As such, conformists score low on ICT and high on AE. Pragmatist followers score in the middle for ICT and AE since they want to do a good job but do not like taking risks or failing. Sometimes the followers take on a pragmatist style to cope with an unstable situation within the organization or external environment. Lastly, passive followers are the opposite of exemplary followers as they score low on both ICT and AE. They lack initiative, enthusiasm for their work, and look to the leader for all decisions. Based on the current research, the following hypothesis is posed:

H<sub>4</sub>: VT members will be classified as pragmatist followers.

## Gender

Research on leadership and followership is often biased related to gender. Braun et al. (2017) argued that the attributes desired of women and the requirements of leadership are often perceived as incongruent. Moreover, "when describing the typical woman, people use communal traits, such as being affectionate, helpful, or gentle. In contrast, individuals use agentic characteristics to describe the average leader" (Braun, 2017, p. 378). Therefore, Braun et al. found that women experience a push effect that keeps them away from leadership positions and a pull toward the follower role. This research showed an incongruence bias, and the backlash effect women may face that taken together can also explain why women occupy fewer leadership roles and receive more negative evaluations when they are leaders (Rudman et al., 2012).

In addition to the aforementioned issues, the COVID-19 pandemic created a disproportionate burden for many women who took on the majority of caregiving responsibilities for their families. While the pandemic has been referenced as a "shecession" and a disaster for women (Lewis, 2020), men have not been affected as negatively. On the contrary, men have actually seen some benefits such as being more likely to stay in their jobs and three times more likely to receive promotions during this time (Fox, 2020). In addition, a recent study found that the stress of balancing work and family among dual-earning couples with adolescent children found lower perceived stress for fathers and greater conflict and less satisfaction in balancing work and family among mothers (Afifi et al., 2020). These additional challenges will likely impact women's ability to actively engage at work at the same level as their male counterparts.

Only a few studies have examined the influence of a follower's gender on their levels of follower AE and ICT. Johnson (2003) found no difference between genders concerning levels of AE and ICT. However, Petersen and Beekley (1997) reported a significant difference between genders related to AE but no significant difference related to ICT. Regardless, it is evident that COVID-19 may have created more challenges for women

to stay actively engaged in their VTs than their male counterparts. Therefore, the following hypotheses are posed:

H<sub>5</sub>: Male followers who work in remote teams will report higher levels of AE than female followers who work remotely.

H<sub>6</sub>: Males and females in collocated teams will not show a significant difference in ICT.

H<sub>7</sub>: Males and females in VTs will not show a significant difference in ICT.

## Method

### Population and Sample

To address the hypotheses, an online survey was distributed to willing participants recruited through convenience and snowball sampling methods, specifically through social media. The requirements for participation were being 18 years of age and older and currently employed in an organization where they are a member of a virtual work group (whether temporary or ongoing) or work collocated in a traditional office setting. Moreover, it was made clear that participants must primarily be in a followership role, not a leadership role.

During the survey window, 101 participants ( $n = 101$ ) completed the survey. Participants' ages ranged over 48 years, with the average age of participants being 39 years old. The youngest person was 21 years old, and the oldest was 69 years old. There was a balanced representation of followers who worked on VTs (46.5%) and those who worked collocated (53.5%). A large majority ( $n = 71$ , 70.3%) of participants identified as White, 15.8% selected Hispanic or Latino, 7.9% identified as Black or African American, 4% selected Asian/Pacific Islander, and the remaining 2% selected Other. A majority of the sample was female ( $n = 69$ , 68.3%), but there was a good distribution of how many years participants have worked in their current environment: less than 1 year ( $n = 18$ , 17.8%), 1-5 years ( $n = 46$ , 45.5%), 6-10 years ( $n = 19$ , 18.8%), and 11 or more years ( $n = 18$ , 17.8%). Participants also came from a variety of industries, including law enforcement, business/finance, healthcare, technology, sales, banking, engineering, legal/law, and so on. The most common industry was education ( $n = 28$ , 27.7%).

Data also showed that women ( $n = 54$ , 78%) responded that their work environment changed because of COVID-19, more so than male participants ( $n = 21$ , 65%). In addition, women disproportionately cited they took on additional caregiver responsibilities while working from home (women 47%, men 28%).



## Instrumentation

To measure the variables, an established scale was used in addition to collecting demographic information related to age, industry, gender, and details about the type of work team the follower is part of.

This study used the 20-item Followership Scale developed by Kelley (1992; see Appendix). The Followership Scale measures the two factors of followership, ICT and AE, with each factor having 10 items (Kelley, 1992). The Followership Scale utilizes a 7-point Likert-type scale from 0 (*rarely*) to 6 (*almost always*). Previous researchers have used this scale on various populations, including full- and part-time employees, faculty members, leaders, secondary school teachers, nurses, and university employees (Blanchard et al., 2009; Ellie, 2017; Gatti et al., 2017; Hinic et al., 2016; Jin et al., 2016; Rolle, 2020; Spicer, 2018).

The scale has also proven to be reliable and valid in some recent studies. Hinic et al. (2016) found the scale to be reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of .83. R. M. Bell (2017) reported Cronbach's alpha scores for AE as .86 and for .76 for ICT; however, the author removed some items from each dimension to increase reliability. Lastly, Rolle (2020) found both subscales to have a high level of internal consistency with the ICT subscale having a Cronbach's alpha of .76, and the AE subscale having a Cronbach's alpha of .87. This study employed the original 20-item scale and after removing one item for ICT (Question 17), the Cronbach's alpha score was .79 for ICT and .88 for all 10 items measuring AE. Therefore, the scales were shown to be reliable.

## Data Collection Procedures

After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval, an online survey hosted by Google Forms was posted on social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) with a brief introduction to the study and identifying the criteria for participation. The survey included basic demographic information such as age and gender and questions about which industry participants worked in, how long they have worked in a VT or collocated, and how many members were on the team. In addition, they were asked if their work environment changed due to COVID-19 and whether they took on additional caregiving responsibilities during the lockdown period. They responded yes or no to these questions and were given the opportunity to add more explanation to their responses.

The social media post stated the reasons for the study and included the link to the survey, which contained the informed consent waiver and the contact information of the researcher. Participants were given about 3 weeks to complete the survey and were also encouraged to share the survey link with others who met the study criteria. Once the data collection was closed, the information was downloaded directly into SPSS software for further analysis.

## Results

Using SPSS, an independent-samples *t* test was run to “calculate the probability of whether a particular difference between sample means would be expected under the terms of the null hypothesis, that is, attributed to sampling error” (Williams & Monge, 2001, p. 79). In this case, the two populations are collocated followers who work in person in traditional settings and those who work completely virtual and gender differences for AE and ICT. The *t* test indicated there was not a significant difference between followers who work in collocated teams and VTs for AE,  $t(99) = -1.81, p = .07 > 0.05$ . Thus,  $H_1$  was not supported. Another *t* test indicated there was not a significant difference between followers who work in collocated teams and VTs for ICT,  $t(99) = -1.42, p = .16 > 0.05$ . Thus,  $H_2$  was not supported.

For Hypotheses 3 and 4, a *t* test was run to compare the average scores for collocated and VTs for both AE and ICT and plotted using Kelley's (1992) followership styles chart. Collocated teams scored an average of 43 for ICT and 47 for AE, classifying them as exemplary followers and supporting  $H_3$ . However, VTs were also classified as exemplary followers, reporting an average score of 41 for ICT and 44 for AE. To test the significance between these two variables, a chi-squared test was also run. Chi-square is often the most popular nonparametric test and can be thought of as a “discrepancy statistic” (Williams & Monge, 2001, p. 113). Moreover, chi-square can be applied to a variety of situations and can be used to identify differences among categories within a sample and differences within the samples themselves (Williams & Monge, 2001). Chi-square also identifies a “goodness of fit between distributions” with a significant value indicating a lack of fit (Williams & Monge, 2001, p. 116). Therefore, while there is support for  $H_3$ , a Pearson chi-square for AE =  $\chi^2(30, N = 101) = 35.95, p = .21 > .05$  and ICT =  $\chi^2(31, N = 101) = 31.28, p = .45 > .05$ , revealed there was no significant relationship between collocated and VTs and type of follower.

To test Hypotheses 5-7, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test was run. MANOVA is a statistical test to see what consequences there are for “manipulating two or more independent variables in a single research design” (Williams & Monge, 2001, p. 111). The MANOVA test looks for main effects and interaction effects (Williams & Monge, 2001). The test is like analysis of variance in that it looks at independent variables that have two or more levels, but instead of one dependent variable, the MANOVA includes multiple dependent variables (Green & Salkind, 2014). For this study, one MANOVA could be run to answer all three hypotheses. For the gender, the Wilks' Lambda of .99 is not significant,  $F(2, 96) = .32, p > .05$ . For collocated followers, the Wilks' Lambda of .97 is not significant,  $F(2, 96) = 1.51, p > .05$ . For the interaction, the Wilks' Lambda of 1.0 is not significant,  $F(2, 96) = .14, p > .05$ . Therefore, there is not a significant difference for both independent variables and no significant interaction between them. Thus,  $H_5$  is not supported since there was not a significant difference for

gender on VTs for AE, but Hypotheses 6 and 7 are supported as they predicted there would not be a significant difference in ICT for collocated followers based on gender.

## Discussion

This study revealed no differences between followers who worked on collocated and VTs for both AE and ICT, although it was close at .07 for AE. With a larger sample size, there may have been a significant difference between these two groups for AE. In addition, while collocated followers self-reported to be exemplary followers, VT members also reported scores that were classified as exemplary instead of pragmatists as predicted. Although there was no significant difference between these groups, collocated followers did report higher scores, and virtual followers were only a few points away from being pragmatists. One explanation for the higher scores could be that respondents self-reported their followership and may have inflated their scores as a result, which is a common bias in this type of research (Burton-Jones, 2009). Going forward, it may be beneficial to collect data from followers and their leaders to have two points of data. Regardless, with a larger sample size, there may have been more distinct and significant findings between collocated and VT members on the type of followers they are.

The next set of hypotheses examined AE and ICT with the added variable of gender. While there was no support that female followers reported lower levels of AE than male followers, most women participants did cite their workplaces changed more, and they took on more caregiving roles than male participants. Therefore, this is still an area of research that needs further investigation to see how else women are being impacted in the workplace or even how they are handling these additional challenges. Hypotheses 6 and 7 were supported, showing no significant difference between men and women in their reporting of ICT skills, which was predicted.

## Conclusion

While not all the findings were significant, this study offers several contributions to an understudied area of followership. First, while extensive scholarly work on employee engagement in a collocated team has been done, there is minimal literature on understanding employee engagement in VTs (Gilson et al., 2015). Moreover, while e-leadership has been given much attention in recent years, there are no studies that look exclusively at e-followership, and those that do only mention it in relation to leadership (Walvoord et al., 2008). Since virtual work teams continue to see “explosive growth” (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2017, p. 569), especially since the COVID pandemic, it is increasingly important to better understand exemplary followership within different types of work arrangements to find out where the differences are and offer tools for organizations to better develop followers who work in these spaces (Finlayson, 2021). That being said, it is promising to see such high scores for virtual followers on AE and ICT, especially those who were forced to move online abruptly due to COVID.

Regardless, future research should continue to explore how followership research plays out in multiple contexts and work arrangements as the world continues to connect through new technologies.

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Kellie Playter currently teaches and serves as the internship director for the School of Business and Economics at Concordia University in Irvine, California. Kellie has worked in higher education for over 14 years and enjoys helping prepare students for their future vocations. Kellie's research interests are in challenges facing women leaders, virtual teams, communication in the workplace, and intergenerational workplaces. Kellie is a fourth-year PhD student in the Organizational Leadership program at Regent University. She lives in California with her husband and two children.

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## Appendix

Followership Scale from: Kelley, R. E. (1992). The power of followership: How to create leaders people want to follow and followers who lead themselves. Doubleday.

For each statement, please use the scale below to indicate the extent to which the statement describes you. Think of a specific but typical followership situation and how you acted.

0. Never
1. Almost Never
2. Not Often
3. Occasionally
4. Often
5. Almost Always
6. Always

## Followership Style Survey

1. Does your work help you fulfill some societal goal or personal dream that is important to you?
2. Are your personal work goals aligned with your organization's priority goals?
3. Are you highly committed to and energized by our work and organization, giving them your best ideas and performance?
4. Does your enthusiasm also spread to and energize your coworkers?
5. Instead of waiting for or merely accepting what your organizational leader tells you, do you personally identify which activities are most critical for achieving the organization's most important goals?
6. Do you actively develop a distinctive competence in those critical activities so that you become more valuable to your leader and your organization?
7. When starting a new task, do you promptly build a record of successes in tasks that are important to your organizational leader?
8. Can your organizational leader give you a difficult assignment without the benefit of much supervision, knowing that you will meet your deadline with highest-quality work and that you will "fill in the cracks" if need be?
9. Do you take the initiative to seek out and successfully complete assignments that go above and beyond your job?
10. When you are not the leader of a group project, do you still contribute at a high level, often doing more than your share?
11. Do you independently think up and champion new ideas that will contribute significantly to the leader's or the organization's goals?
12. Do you try to solve tough problems (technical or organizational) rather than look to the leader to do it for you?
13. Do you help out other co-workers, making them look good, even when you don't get any credit?
14. Do you help the leader or group see both the upside potential and the downside risks of ideas or plan, planning the devil's advocate if need be?
15. Do you understand the leader's needs, goals, and constraints and then work hard to help meet the leader's needs and goals and work within the leader's constraints?
16. Do you actively and honestly admit to your strengths and weaknesses rather than delay evaluation?
17. Do you make a habit of internally questioning the wisdom of the leader's decisions rather than just doing what you are told?
18. When the leader asks you to do something that runs contrary to your professional or personal preferences, do you say "no" rather than "yes"?
19. Do you act on your own ethical standards rather than the leaders or the group's standards?
20. Do you assert your views on important issues, even though it might conflict with your group or reprisals from your leader?

Items 1, 5, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 reflect the respondent's level of critical thinking. Items 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 15 reflect the study participant's level of engagement.

**Exemplary.** The exemplary variable represents a followership style that is high in both critical thinking and active engagement dimensions.

**Conformist.** The conformist variable epitomizes a follower style that is low in critical thinking and high in active engagement dimensions.

**Passive.** The passive variable characterizes a follower style that is low in both critical thinking and active engagement dimensions.

**Alienated.** The alienated variable represents a follower style that is high in critical thinking and low in active engagement dimensions.

**Pragmatist.** The pragmatist variable characterizes a follower style that is moderate in both critical thinking and active engagement dimensions.

### Demographic Information

What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your Race/Ethnicity?

- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American or American Indian
- White
- Other

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

What industry do you work in? \_\_\_\_\_

Which environment do you work in? (must select only one)

- Virtual (team members are geographically dispersed, have limited face-to-face contact, and work interdependently through the use of electronic communication media to achieve common goals)
- Collocated (work in a traditional office environment, can meet face-to-face with colleagues)

How long have you been in your current work environment (virtual or collocated)?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- 11 or more years

How many members are in your work group? \_\_\_\_\_

Did your work environment change because of COVID?

- Yes (please explain)
- No

Did you have to take care of children or other family members while working during the COVID lockdowns?

- Yes (please explain)
- No



# Servant Leadership Through Selfless Sacrifice: An Examination of John 10:7-18, 13:1-20, and 21:15-19

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Johann Acuña and Derrick Bledsoe  
*Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*  
*Roundtable: Followership*

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Leadership is essential in the church of Jesus Christ, however the term itself is ambiguous. This paper will argue that leadership should be understood through the agency of a vice-regent to the Lord Jesus, and thus subject to His power, truth, and authority, such that the leader is merely subject to what Christ has commanded. A careful examination of John 10:7-18, 13:1-20, and 21:15-19 demonstrates that leaders should adopt a slave mentality and submit to Christ's commands, love their Lord, and express their love to Christ through shepherding His sheep as they themselves follow Him.

Keywords: Vice-regency; leadership; followership; Christian leadership; John; shepherd; slave; servant leadership; feet-washing; sacrifice; sacrificial leadership

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Leadership is essential. The church of Jesus Christ has been given a distinct identity (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 1:2) and a clear mission (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). But to effectively execute her calling depends upon both "the renewing power of God's Spirit and the development of godly and well-equipped leaders." (Dockery, 2011, p. 1). Christian leadership in the church, then, is dependent upon God's empowering leadership in the church (Pratt, 2020, pp. 186-214).

Still, greater clarity would be useful for determining a more precise definition of Christian leadership. The *concept* of leadership is not lacking in Christianity; the same cannot be said of the *quality* of leadership found in many churches today. Christian leadership is often synthesized through the lens of the secular domain, and its "horizon of leadership is often no more distant than the next quarterly report or board meeting" (Wilder and Jones, 2018). In other words, leadership in the church often looks no different than leadership in the world. A secular leader does not capture the posture nor

the nuance of leading within a framework of the biblical metanarrative. Leaders should account for efficiency in the execution of tasks, but also be “more deeply shaped by the comforts and calls of the gospel of Jesus Christ” (Tripp, 2020). Simply put, the Christian leader is not merely a professional (Piper, 2002, p. 1).

This paper will argue that leadership should be understood through the agency of a vice-regent to the Lord Jesus, and thus subject to His power, truth, and authority (Tsumura, 2007, p. 249).<sup>1</sup> Wilder and Jones note, “The power that a leader exercises is not the leader’s but Christ’s; the truth that the leader is called to proclaim is not the leader’s vision but God’s revelation; and the position to which the leader is called is not sovereignty over the community but stewardship within the community, submitted to the leadership of Christ” (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 3). The leader is merely subject to what Christ has commanded.

The positional significance of vice-regency is derived from a robust understanding of and submission to the Scriptures. Wilder and Jones continue, “Unless our foundational vision for leadership is grounded in the metanarrative of Scripture that culminates in the kingdom inaugurated through Jesus Christ, we will not be able to separate the wisdom of the world from the wisdom of Christ” (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 8). This means that Scripture not only lays out the role of vice-regency, but also provides helpful instruction for the posture of its positional significance. It is the foundation for a Christocentric view of leadership laden with humility, sacrifice, and servitude.

Though there are a myriad of examples in both the Old and New Testaments that demonstrate a leadership model through the role of vice-regency, this paper will be limited to examples from the gospel according to John. John’s gospel differs from the synoptic gospels in that John does not seem as interested in the general miracles and teachings of Jesus, but instead focuses on proclaiming Jesus as the divine Logos (Carson, 1991, p. 119). Because of this, many of the passages in John’s Gospel are not adequate examples for Christians to live by since there is only one divine Logos. There are, however, three passages that advance compatible examples of Christian leadership that are helpful for the ordinary leader in the church.

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<sup>1</sup> A vice-regent acts in the place of a ruler, and thus in the strictly Christian leadership sense, a vice-regent acts on behalf of God. This was true even of kings in the Old Testament. Tsumura points out that “Regardless of the terms, however, the human king in the biblical conception was simply a (vice-) regent or deputy of the heavenly King; see “Introduction” (Section IX, A).” Vice-regency is an implication of the doctrine of the Imago Dei. As image bearers charged “to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it” (Gen. 1:28), humanity can be seen as vice-regents for God. The role of vice-regency provides a foundation for the leader to exhibit authority through humility, a disposition of power limited by subjugation.

First, a shepherding motif arises out of John 10:7-18 which demonstrates the responsibilities of a leader.<sup>2</sup> Leaders act as under-shepherds to the Good Shepherd and tend to the flock according to His standards, not their own. Second, a slave motif is formed in John 13:1-20 and explains the nature of a leader. Leaders are to imitate Christ and take on the form of a slave as they carry out their work as under-shepherds. In other words, the slave motif informs how the shepherding is performed. Finally, a synthesis of these two motifs is present in Jesus' interaction with Peter in John 21:15-19. Peter is to become a slave to Christ by means of shepherding and feeding His sheep. Considering these three passages, Christian leaders should act as vice-regents who embody the sacrificial and selfless nature of Christ by imitating His example of a slave and operating as a shepherd to His people.

### **Leaders as Shepherds**

John chapter 10 introduces the importance of sacrificial leadership by means of a shepherding motif. The role of the shepherd was well-known to the ancient Near Eastern audience. Laniak writes that "pastoralism was a widely visible and significant sector of all Near Eastern societies from the very beginning of human civilization" (Laniak, 2006, p. 42). Given the prevalence of the shepherding practice, it is not difficult to understand why it would soon come to be used metaphorically for positions of leadership. Stephen Dempster employs the shepherding metaphor for leadership to King David: "Later, this 'David' who will come to power is remembered for his humble origins as a shepherd (Ez. 34:23); he will provide true leadership, as opposed to past leaders, who are symbolized as corrupt and destructive shepherds" (Dempster, 2003, p. 170). Given the significance of pastoralism, it makes sense that Jesus would also utilize the role of shepherd as a metaphor for how He leads His sheep. Throughout this passage elements of protection, sacrifice, and provision stand out that provide clarity for the role of a Christian leader as a shepherd.

### **The Shepherd as Protector**

In verse 7, Jesus first identifies Himself as "the door of the sheep."<sup>3</sup> This indicates something about the nature of what a shepherd does for the safety and security of the sheep. Borchert writes, "Jesus assumes the role of protector. He likens himself to a

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<sup>2</sup> It is worthy of note that John the Baptist introduces the shepherding motif in the Johannine account by declaring Jesus to be "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29).

<sup>3</sup> This is the third of seven "I am" statements that Jesus makes in the Gospel According to John which assigns a special amount of significance to Jesus' role as the Shepherd. This is not merely a Divine directive but a Divine duty as the incarnate God-Son. The door of the sheep was a marked and secured entrance into where the sheep were kept and protected. This singular entrance made it easier to monitor who came in and who went out, apart from someone jumping the fence.

guardian (gate) that provides salvation or safe haven to sheep who pass through it (10:9)” (Borchert, 1996, p. 333). The security of the sheep is needed given what Jesus has already said in verse 1 regarding “the thief and the robber” (Jn. 10:1). The lives and livelihood of the sheep are threatened by outside, nefarious forces and thus, they require a passage into safety; Jesus provides the way (Carson, 1991, p. 385).<sup>4</sup> Klink adds one additional layer of complexity to the ‘shepherd as protector’ role: “Jesus declares himself to be ‘the door’ of the sheep, that is, not only the primary or only point of access but also the one who mediates all access to the sheep” (Klink, 2016, p. 462). This means the role of Jesus as ‘the door’ is both a passage towards protection against outside threats, but also a mediator for anyone who approaches the sheep (Klink, 2016, p. 459).<sup>5</sup>

There are two implications for Christian leadership. First, Christian leaders must be familiar with “the door of the sheep” because they themselves should have also entered it. Leadership through followership entails that leaders will have traversed the rough plains of life and come into pasture through the door of Jesus before they lead anyone else to Him. Second, Christian leaders, acting both as imitators of the Good Shepherd and as vice-regents, will be inherently protective over those they have been entrusted with because Jesus is protective over His sheep (Jn. 17:12). Christian leaders will thus be cognizant of the real danger posed by thieves and robbers, metaphorically speaking. As vice-regents seeking to imitate the Lord as a shepherd, leaders should recognize the need for safety for those they lead and act to protect them from both outside harm and actions that would bring harm to themselves.

### **The Shepherd as an Abundant Provider**

In verse 10, Jesus draws yet another contrast between Himself and the threat of the robbers and thieves: “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” Thus, the shepherd motif entails both a

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<sup>4</sup> Carson wonders if this ‘Door’ analogy is one that could be likened to John 14:6. He interprets ‘the door’ and the ‘the only way’ similarly in that both illustrations lead to the same conclusion that there are no alternative routes to Jesus and the salvation He promises. He alone is the door and the path.

<sup>5</sup> The verbiage of sheepfold (αυλή) suggests a private place of pasture, not a public one. That, in conjunction with the gate (θύρα) imagines a place for sheep that is well-protected. Klink surmises, “The private and personal nature of this sheep pen helps explain the stated concern regarding who enters and the nature of their access. There is only one access point—the door” (Klink). Jesus stands a protector of the sheep in an intimate manner. This means that leaders acting as vice regents will lead as both protectors from those who mean harm to the body, and will also be discerningly skeptical of any unknown individuals who could bring potential harm.



responsibility to protect the sheep from outside threats<sup>6</sup> and to provide for the sheep as well. This responsibility supplies the sheep with the means necessary for survival and abundant provision. The usage of περισσοῦς indicates something that is extraordinary in amount or not ordinarily encountered (BDAG, p. 805.). The idea here is that what Jesus provides His sheep is far more than necessary. It eclipses the minimal requirement.

This abundance is juxtaposed with what the thief does: “steal, kill, and destroy” (Jn. 10:10). While one of these terms attributed to the thief is not surprising, the other two are a bit out of place unless they are being understood metaphorically. J. Ramsey Michaels (2010) adds:

That a thief ‘steals’ is a truism, but ‘slaughter’ and ‘destroy’ are more surprising. These words are part of the metaphor, because “slaughter” has to do with the killing of animals (in this instance, sheep). The supposition is that sheep are stolen not in order to be added to someone else’s flock, but to be slaughtered for food, and thus “destroyed” (pp. 586-587).

It is also possible that John chooses to highlight the usage of the word destroy (Gk., ἀπόλλυμι) to draw out both the love of God and the sacrificial nature of Jesus as the Shepherd who will bring salvation to those who believe in Him, and in return “shall not perish (ἀπόλλυμι), but have eternal life” (Jn. 3:16).<sup>7</sup> Jesus will continue to draw out this sacrificial tone in verses 17 and 18 in His discourse on “laying down” and “taking up” His life. Rainbow notes that the language used by Jesus “requires not only that the sheep benefit from the shepherd’s protective action, but also that the shepherd interpose himself between them and the threat, so that the shepherd takes the brunt of it on their behalf, in their stead” (Rainbow, 2014, p. 204).

There are two implications for Christian leaders acting as vice-regents in the role of shepherd as abundant provider. For one, Christian leaders are to care for the flock in a way that does not just meet the minimum requirements but leaves the sheep fully satisfied and not wanting. The abundant life imagined here is one that is plentiful: “‘Life’ corresponds to ‘pasture’ within the metaphor, except that the ‘life’ Jesus gives is ‘in abundance,’ that is, more than mere survival or safety (v. 9), more than ‘pasture’ (v. 9) in the sense of basic sustenance for a sheep or a human” (Michaels, 2010, p. 587). The point is that Christian leaders provide for the sheep maximally, not minimally.

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<sup>6</sup> In the traditional sense of the term shepherd, the outside threats might include thieves that come to unlawfully take someone else’s livestock. To make the spiritual connection that Jesus is making, this would entail anyone of the world that seeks to lead Christian astray as well as false teachers who mean to take advantage of the sheep for their own personal gain.

<sup>7</sup> John 3:16 and John 10:10 both envision the same destruction for those who do not believe in Jesus and those who would be victimized by the thief.

Secondly, this means that there likely will be a point at which the Christian leader must sacrifice his or her own desires or needs for the sake of radically providing for the sheep. Vice-regency demands the same commitment to sacrifice to which the Son is committed.

### **The Ezekiel Connection**

This sacrificial posture is further solidified in Jesus' words in verses 14 and 15: "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." The element of self-sacrifice is foundational to the shepherding motif in the Johannine account. Jesus is, by way of prophetic allusion, connecting Himself to the shepherd of Ezekiel 34. Brown notes, "In particular, Ezekiel 34 is important background for John 10. There God denounces the shepherds or rulers who have not cared for the flock (His people) and have plundered it, neglecting the weak, the sick, and the straying" (Brown, 1974, p. 397). Accordingly, not only is Jesus the good shepherd who brings fulfillment to Ezekiel 34, but the other religious leaders of Jesus' day represent the shepherds of Israel whom God spoke harshly against because of their lack of sacrificial love and abundant provision for God's sheep.

Ezekiel 34:2 reveals at least two harsh realities regarding these wicked shepherds of Israel: "First, they did not seek to meet the needs of the people but only used the people for their own selfish ends (vv. 2-3). Second, they did not take special care of those in need, the helpless members of society. Rather, they met weakness and injury with callous cruelty (v. 4)" (Cooper, 1994, p. 300). In other words, they not only failed in their primary objective to care for those entrusted to them, but even worse, they met the hurting and the lost with a kind of selfish harshness that ultimately made them "a prey to idolatry and immorality" (Cooper, 1994, p. 300). The wicked shepherds provided a specific kind of leadership, but in the wrong direction. Jesus' connection to the good shepherd of Ezekiel 34 in contrast to the wicked shepherds of Israel (represented by the Pharisees in the Johannine account) presents a powerful juxtaposition between individuals who imitate the Chief Shepherd through sacrificial service, and those who imitate the wicked shepherds of Israel through selfish negligence.

Beyond the obvious allusion to Ezekiel 34 with the "good shepherd" language, Ezekiel 34:23-24 serves as a clear Messianic promise fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ. That God will "set up over them one shepherd," and that this shepherd will be God's "servant David," is predictive of a shepherd ruler who will descend from the Davidic line, which is precisely the emphasis of both the Gospel according to Matthew (Matt. 1:1) and the Gospel according to Luke (Lk. 1:27; 32) (Greenberg, 1974, pp. 758-

760)<sup>8</sup>. Jesus, as the Davidic heir has become the shepherd who stands in contrast to the prior shepherds of Israel who only served themselves: “He shall feed them: He shall feed them and be their shepherd” (Ez. 34:23). He is not only a good shepherd in general terms, but the fulfillment of the Good Shepherd promised by God through the prophet Ezekiel.

### **Imitation of the Chief Shepherd**

As vice-regents, Christian leaders act in the place of their ruler, or in this specific case, in the place of the Shepherd. To rule in the stead of Jesus with shepherding motif in mind, then, means to rule with a protective disposition and a sacrificial love towards His flock. This sacrificial posture is to be imitated by the Christian leader. This will require a deep commitment to protect against those who mean to take advantage of or destroy the sheep. This could be physically (Ja. 1:27; Prv. 19:17; Acts 20:35; Gal. 2:10), but more than likely spiritually (1 Tim. 1:19-20; Col. 2:8; Matt. 7:15; 2 Tim. 3:5). Imitation demands a kind of provision that goes well above the minimal standards, requiring a sacrificial disposition that moves the leader to place his or her needs and, quite possibly, even his or her life on the altar for the sake of those they have been entrusted to lead (Phil. 2:3; Gal. 5:26; Prov. 15:33).

### **Leaders as Slaves**

As vice-regents, Christian leaders often express their service to God through their service to God’s people. The Johannine account highlights the selfless nature of Christian leadership, most vividly demonstrated in the washing of the disciples’ feet. The importance of this act cannot be overstated, for it reveals a great deal regarding Jesus’ character, His leadership, and His expectations for His followers. John 13:1-20 presents Jesus as both κύριος and δούλος, Lord and slave, exercising His authority through selfless and humiliating service to those He loved. The gospel writer reveals this act to be an “act of service, yet also an act of love...an act of self-abasement, yet also an act of glorification...the act of a slave, yet performed by a master upon his disciples” (Clarke, 2013, p. 872). While modern audiences rightly recoil at the thought of slavery, the truth is that the historical, fictional, and metaphorical examples of slavery are present throughout all of the New Testament (Clarke, 2013, p. 871). It is important to note that the scriptures do not promote or embrace slavery, particularly the institution

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<sup>8</sup> Greenberg does not make the explicit connection between Jesus and the Davidic shepherd and gets lost in the minutiae of Old Testament dynastic history, but both Cooper and Delitzsch acknowledge the Messianic connection clearly.

of Chattel Slavery.<sup>9</sup> Instead, since slavery was a part of first-century A.D. Roman culture,<sup>10</sup> the New Testament writers treat it as a normal and accepted part of society (Clarke, 2013, p. 871). Yet it is this common practice that provides a powerful metaphor that serves to illustrate some important doctrinal truths. Harris (1999) explains:

The New Testament does not hesitate to use slavery imagery in a positive sense to depict the Christian life as a whole or in some specific aspect. Thus Christians are called the slaves of God (e.g., 1 Pet. 2:16) or Christ (1 Cor. 7:22; Eph. 6:6) or of one another (2 Cor. 4:5; cf. Gal. 5:13). Referring, in general, to their total availability and devotion to a person (Harris, p. 51).

In John 13, Jesus takes on the role of slave to vividly demonstrate the selfless nature of His leadership. This humble act of service offers a powerful example for Christian leaders to imitate.

### Authority for Service

Jesus did not use His authority for His own personal gain, nor did He use His status or influence to coerce others to accomplish His purposes. Instead, Jesus served those that He led. While this is obviously demonstrated in the physical act of foot washing, it is also apparent in Jesus' timing: John 13 describes some of Jesus' final moments before his betrayal and crucifixion. Jesus could have spent this time performing miracles, healing the sick, or preaching to the multitudes. Jesus could have leveraged His divine power to enact lasting social change or expel the Roman occupation. However, Jesus does

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<sup>9</sup> There are several key differences between Chattel Slavery and the slavery seen in scripture. First, Chattel Slavery involved the kidnapping and relocation of persons in order to sell them into permanent slavery. On the other hand, Ex. 21:16 forbids the stealing of a person with the intent of selling them into slavery (a similar command is seen in Deut. 24:7). Secondly, Chattel Slavery was largely defined by race and ethnicity. Slaves were viewed purely as property, thus justifying their unethical, demeaning, and often violent treatment. While the Mosaic Law does list stipulations for slave ownership (Ex. 21:2-11, 20-21; Deut. 15:12-18; Lev. 25:39-55), Hebrew slaves were understood to be "brothers," fellow members of the Israelite community worthy of dignity and respect. The Israelites would have also respected their brethren, even slaves, as fellow image bearers. Further, Chattel Slavery was a life-long condition. In contrast, Hebrew slaves had to be released after six years of service. Moreover, their former master was instructed to bless them financially upon their release (Deut. 15:13-14). It is noteworthy that 1 Tim. 1:10 condemns enslavers as unlawful and sinful.

<sup>10</sup> Slavery in first-century Rome was largely a consequence of war and Roman occupation. While there were those who sold themselves into slavery out of necessity, the vast majority of slaves in the Roman Empire were prisoners of war or people from conquered lands. The condition and occupation of slaves varied greatly and was largely dependent on the status and wealth of their master. In *Slaves of Christ*, Harris explains that although slaves in the Roman Empire were "objects devoid of rights, in practice their personhood was not denied" (37). Slaves could hold property, skilled and/or educated slaves were allowed to earn their own money, and slaves could ultimately buy their freedom.

something rather unusual – He spends the final moments of His earthy ministry privately performing a humiliating act of service for His disciples.<sup>11</sup> This fact is incredibly important, for it demonstrates the prioritization that God places on service. Jesus, both fully God and fully man, understood that authority and leadership are to be used in the service of others. This is revealed in John 13:3: “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God...” This verse reveals that Jesus was able to serve His disciples because He properly understood his identity, His purpose, and His future. In other words, He did not serve in spite of His leadership – He served *because* of it. Yet this reality should not be unique to Jesus. John 13:13-17 makes it clear that Jesus expected His followers to imitate His example. Jesus offers a similar command in Matt 20:25-28,

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.

It is worthy of note that Jesus served everyone under His care and not just those that were completely devoted to Him. This is seen in the fact that Jesus was aware of Judas’ impending betrayal (John 13:10-11). Nevertheless, Jesus did not refuse to wash Judas’ feet, nor did He display a condescending or negative attitude towards Judas. Instead, Jesus extended Judas the same humble and loving service that He extended to the other disciples.

Like Jesus, Christian leaders must be servants who lovingly and willingly humble themselves by serving those that they lead. While certain burdens and decisions rest squarely on the shoulders of the leader, these executive qualities do not exempt the leader from the responsibility of service. Servanthood, at its very core, is “part of the identity that we share as the people of God, and leaders are not exempt from this calling” (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 146). Moreover, Christian leaders must be steadfast in their service to everyone in their teams. While it would be simple or convenient to favor those that are the most faithful, Christian leaders must follow Christ’s example by shepherding and serving the entire flock equally. They must understand that their humble service to others flows out of their followership and their biblical responsibility

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<sup>11</sup> It is important to understand that the washing of the disciples’ feet was rooted in the covenantal love Jesus had for His disciples (Jn. 13:1). Love is a defining characteristic of Jesus’ earthly ministry, particularly in the Johannine account: God’s love for humanity is the reason for the incarnation (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:9-10), Jesus shepherds His own with loving care and selfless devotion (Jn. 10:1-16), Jesus commands His disciples to be known for their love toward one another (Jn. 13:34-35; 15:12; 1 Jn. 3:11), and Jesus lays down His life because of His sacrificial love (Jn. 10:11, 15, 17; 15:13; 1 Jn. 3:16). Jesus’ sacrificial love stands in stark contrast to Judas, how was mere moments away from betraying Jesus.

as leaders. Ultimately, Christian leaders are vice-regents that use their God-given authority in the service of others. Wilder summarizes the matter, “No matter how high Christian leaders may rise in an organization, we never cease to be servants. Any power we possess is delegated to us by someone, and all power ultimately derives from God” (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 29).

### **A Disposition of Humility**

John 13 reveals that Jesus possessed a genuinely humble disposition. His humility and His service to His disciples were not a façade or a temporary subordination for future gain. While Jesus could have used His divine status and power to lead in an authoritarian manner, the Johannine account presents Jesus as a loving shepherd and humble servant. Not only did Jesus humble Himself by submitting Himself to the will of His Father (John 6:38), but He also showed great humility in the physical act of foot washing. This act, though common and necessary in the first century A.D., was “considered so degrading that a Hebrew slave could not be compelled to perform it...washing feet and untying sandals were jointly considered the exclusive domain of a Gentile slave because the task was so humiliating” (Cochrell, 2015, p. 135). Yet Jesus embraced this task in service to His disciples.

Wilder and Jones explain, “By performing this task, Jesus willingly chose for himself the role of the lowest and least-honored slave. The theme of servanthood that is present throughout John’s Gospel comes through powerfully in this passage” (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 144). Jesus’ actions are so surprising and counter-cultural that Peter initially refuses his Master (John 13:6-8). Indeed, Jesus’ humble leadership is truly astounding: the Son of God and Lord of all voluntarily took on the role of a slave in order to demonstrate the importance of humility and service in Christian leadership. “Through this act of self-sacrificial service, Jesus modeled leadership that was grounded in an unprecedented expression of service. In this way, he corrected his disciples’ desire to exalt themselves” (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 145).

The New Testament clearly expects all Christian leaders to embody this same humility. The apostle Paul points to Jesus’ example when commanding the Philippian church to live in humble unity with one another (Phil. 2:1-8). Likewise, Peter exhorts church leaders to lovingly and willingly shepherd the flock of God (1 Pet. 5:1-3), while Titus 1:7 and 1 Tim. 3:3 highlight the importance of humility and gentleness in church leaders. Perhaps this expectation is best summed up in Paul’s words to the Corinthian church, “This is how one should regard us, as slaves of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful” (1 Cor. 4:1-2). Followers of Christ do not seek their own glory nor do they pridefully assert themselves over others. Neither do they advance their own agendas or promote their own ideologies. Rather, they belong wholly to Christ and therefore devote themselves to fulfilling His purposes. Christian leaders should be defined by humility for they

understand that, as vice-regents, they are servants of God called to submit to His divine authority, take on the characteristics of their Master, and lovingly shepherd His flock.

Before moving on, we must make an important distinction: While Jesus took on the form of a slave (Phil. 2:7) and humbled Himself by performing acts of service reserved for slaves (John 13:1-11), Jesus never ceased being Lord. Beeley (2012) notes:

This is a paradox that lies at the very heart of the gospel and one that we see embodied in Christ Himself. Only the all-powerful Son of God, the co-creator of the universe, could save us from sin and death by humbling himself and dying on the Cross; and only the one who willing to love his friends to the point of death could make available the saving power that he possessed by nature from eternity. In the kingdom of God authority and service, power and humility are two sides of the same coin (Beeley, p. 13).

To state the matter differently, Jesus acted as a slave in order to obey the Father and model Christian leadership. His followers, on the other hand, should properly understand their identity as slaves of Christ. It is true that “whoever the Son sets free is free indeed” (John 8:36) and “it is for freedom that Christ has set us free” (Gal. 5:1). Yet we were set free from the bondage of sin to become slaves of Christ (1 Pet. 2:16). Harris (2001) summarizes the matter:

In every sense believers are his special possession, a people of his very own, because he purchased them as his slaves (1 Cor. 6:19-20; 7:22-23) along with their freedom from all iniquity (Titus 2:14). As a result of that purchase they belong to him totally, and only to him, a comprehensive ownership that his slaves voluntarily embrace. He is their absolute and exclusive Master (Harris, p. 125).

This truth lies at the heart of vice-regency. Christian leaders are slaves of Christ who humbly exercise His authority in order to devote themselves to His purposes.

### **An Example to Imitate**

Not only does Jesus explain His actions (John 13:12), but He clearly expresses His expectation that His followers imitate His example (John 13:13-17). As previously stated, Jesus explains that true greatness is demonstrated in genuine service to others (Matt. 20:25-28). In contrast to Jesus’ prideful contemporaries, Jesus powerfully models servant leadership and commands His followers to do the same, “You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you” (John 13:13-15). John presents Jesus as a loving Lord and Teacher who

delicately interweaves teaching and modeling...Here is the Master Teacher posing a question that starts the disciples on a journey of learning, "Do you understand what I have done?" Explanations give meaning, invite appreciation, and ultimately bid love towards action. As their Teacher and Lord, he has given them an example. Now, they, as His disciples, should do likewise (Sosler, 2017, p. 15).

This is not unique to John 13, for Jesus' expresses His desire to be imitated several times in the Johannine account (John 13:14-17; 34; 15:10, 14; 17:11, 18, 21-22; 21:15-19). Thus, Jesus reveals that it is not enough for His followers to understand Christian principles - they must be transformed by them and embody them in their relationship with others.

Ultimately, imitating Christ fulfills the responsibility of vice-regency. As vice-regents, followers of Christ die to themselves and submit themselves to God's plan for all believers - to become conformed to the image of Christ.<sup>12</sup> Being conformed to His image involves being inwardly transformed and filled with the Holy Spirit, in order that His followers become empowered to imitate Christ and live their lives by the Spirit (Gal. 2:20, 5:24-25; Col. 3:5-10). In other words, followers of Christ submit to their Lord by forsaking themselves and taking on the image of their Lord through the imitation of their Lord - all through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Further, the command to imitate God is seen throughout all of scripture. God's people are to reflect God's holiness (Lev. 19:2; 20:7; 20:26; 1 Pet. 1:16), love as He loves (John 13:34), forgive as He forgives (Luke 6:37; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13), show mercy (Prov. 14:31; Micah 6:8; Luke 6:36), and live in unity (John 17:21-23; Rom. 15:5-6; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:8). Imitating God is accomplished in imitating Jesus, for "He is the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15). He is God made flesh (John 1:14), and "in Him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" (Col. 1:19). Paul sums up this command in Ephesians 5:1-2, "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

John 13 reveals this love to be selfless and sacrificial - the Teacher and Lord who lovingly humbles Himself in service to those He leads. Followers of Christ must embody the same sacrificial and humble posture that Jesus demonstrated in the washing of the disciples' feet. As His followers and His slaves, Christian leaders acting as vice-regents must take on the identity of Jesus: their lives revolve around His will and their "individuality is subsumed in the personality of the master" (Harris, 2001, p. 96).

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<sup>12</sup> This call is clearly articulated in Rom. 8:29 and is also echoed in other New Testament passages (e.g., 1 Cor. 15:48-49 and Eph. 4:12-13, 22-24). While all humanity is created in the Image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), all have become tainted by the effects of sin. Thus, God's redemptive plan not only involves the forgiveness of sin, but also the regeneration, sanctification, and transformation of His followers.



## A Synthesis of Motifs

As stated previously, Jesus' interaction with Peter in John 21 synthesizes the shepherding and slave motifs and provides a powerful example of vice-regency. While two main themes emerge throughout the entire chapter,<sup>13</sup> the words of Jesus in 21:15-19 articulate a simple yet profound message: submission to Christ and devotion to Christ are demonstrated in shepherding the flock of Christ. Peter is therefore to demonstrate his subservience to Christ through shepherding and feeding His sheep. Not only does this slave mentality impact Peter's life and ministry, but it will impact even His death (Jn. 21:18-19). Jesus makes no apologies to Peter for the high price of vice-regency and followership, nor does He express any condolences. Instead, He offers a simple command, "Follow me" (Jn. 21:19).

Followers of Christ must follow Peter's example: they must adopt a slave mentality and submit to Christ's commands, they must love their Lord, and they must express their love to Christ through shepherding His sheep. As previously mentioned, shepherding is to be done in a selfless, sacrificial, and caring manner. Christian leaders, as vice-regents and undershepherds, must submit themselves to Christ's calling and lovingly devote themselves to the shepherding of the flock - even when it is humiliating and uncomfortable. And like Peter, followers of Christ must be prepared to suffer, and even die, in service to Christ. "For Christ-following leaders, suffering is not to be avoided; it is to be recognized as a participation in the same patterns that characterized the life of Jesus Christ" (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 158).

## Conclusion

The shepherding motif (Jn. 10:7-18), the slave motif (Jn. 13:3-20), and Jesus' dialogue with Peter (Jn. 21:15-19) provide a helpful example of the function and disposition of a Christian leader seeking to honor Christ. Christian leaders should act as vice-regents who embody the sacrificial and selfless nature of Christ by imitating His example of a

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<sup>13</sup> First, there is a general refocusing and restoration of the disciples. While their intentions are not clear, the disciples returned to their home region of Galilee and were fishing again (21:3). Jesus' appearance to His disciples is strikingly similar to the fishing episode that led to their ministry calling (Lk. 5:1-11) and the result is the same: they recognized Jesus as Lord (Lk. 5:8-11; Jn. 21:12). Secondly, there is the specific restoration of Peter. One can speculate that Peter was ashamed, demoralized, disappointed, and struggling with feelings of inadequacy after his denial of Jesus (Jn. 18:25-27). Yet Jesus lovingly restores Peter to followership and prepares him for future leadership. It is worthy of note that the breakfast scene in John 21 mirrors aspects of Peter's denial of Jesus: there is a charcoal fire, Peter denies Jesus publicly and is restored publicly, and there is a threefold repetition in each dialogue (Lk. 22:54-62; Jn. 21:15-19). Finally, the shepherding motif is present in Jesus' responses to Peter ("feed me lambs," "tend my sheep," and "feed my sheep"). In *The God Who Goes Before You*, Wilder and Jones point out that this shepherding motif provides a framework for the entire Johannine account: Jn. 1:29; John 10:1-30; and John 21:15-17 (156).

slave and operating as a shepherd to His people. Leadership requires a means of protection over the sheep and provision for the sheep that far exceeds the minimal standard. This selfless shepherding will necessitate a sacrificial posture as exemplified in Jesus' life and ultimately in His death, burial, and resurrection (Jn. 10:17-18). And a leader cannot embody such a posture unless they adopt the disposition of a slave and are conformed to the image of Christ through the transformational work of the Holy Spirit, as exemplified in the apostle Peter. To sum up the matter, "Jesus, the model Shepherd, knew His sheep, led His sheep, and suffered for His sheep. Shepherd leaders who follow the example of Jesus are commissioned to follow, feed, and die as they nourish the sheep, guard the sheep, and follow the model shepherd (Wilder and Jones, 2018, p. 155).

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# Leadership and Culture: What Difference Does it Make?

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Michelle G. Segundo  
Regent University  
Roundtable: Global Consulting

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Culture is a complex, multilevel, and multidimensional phenomenon consisting of visible and invisible traits that directly and indirectly influence people and behavior (Aymin & Korabik, 2010). As culture is embedded into the way people think and live, it also significantly influences leaders who in turn influence employees and organizations as a whole. Leaders attempting to conduct business on a global level and lead teams cross-culturally, must not only have an understanding of diverse cultures but must also appreciate core cultural values to lead effectively. Hofstede's (1980b) four dimensions of cross-cultural leadership: (a) power distance; (b) masculinity; (c) individualism; and (d) uncertainty avoidance contributed to House's (1993) twenty-year, cross-cultural GLOBE research project asserting that certain leadership styles such as transformational, servant, and autocratic were optimal leadership methods in certain cultures. The purpose of this paper is to explain how culture affects leadership and how certain leadership theories (transformational, servant, and autocratic) are applicable to certain cultures (Latin American, Confucian Asian, and Anglo) based on their dimensional scores.

Keywords: transformational leadership, servant leadership, autocratic leadership, cross-cultural leadership

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Culture is a set of beliefs, norms, values, traditions, and behavior patterns that a group shares or holds in common and has a significant effect on leadership because it is a programming of the mind that determines the identity of a group in the same manner personality determines the identity of an individual (Schein, 1985; Hofstede, 1980a; 1992). Culture shapes the values and attitudes that affect people's perceptions and is intertwined with leadership processes within organizations (Ayman, Mead, Bassari, & Huang, 2012; Dorfman, 1996). As organizational leaders attempt to conduct business cross-culturally, they are faced with the dilemma of trying to adapt to the local culture or try to change it (Hofstede, 1980b); however, Konopaske (2018) has asserted that "the era of domestically bound approaches to managing what occurs in organizations is ending" (p. 34) because the workplace is becoming more culturally diverse while

organizations attempt to do business globally, and no leader is free of ethnocentric tendencies considering culture's powerful influence. Organizations and global leaders expecting to survive the current globalization phenomena must learn to interact with people of other cultures if they expect to positively affect others around the world (Dorfman, 1996; Moodian, 2008). The focus of this research is on cultural behaviors as noted by Hofstede's (1980b) cross-cultural dimensions that coincide with the transformational, servant, and autocratic leadership theories that have proven to be effective or ineffective when compared and contrasted to Latin American, Confucian Asian, and Anglo cultures.

### **Cross-Cultural Leadership Dimensions**

Hofstede (1984) posited that "people build organizations according to their values, and societies are composed of institutions and organizations that reflect the dominant values within their culture" (p. 81); furthermore, leadership "within a society is very much constrained by its cultural context, because it is impossible to coordinate the actions of people without a deep understanding of their values, beliefs, and expressions" (p. 82).

To understand how cultures differ empirically, Hofstede (1980b) characterized four dimensions that serve as a framework for diverse cultural behavior and values: (a) power distance; (b) uncertainty avoidance; (c) individualism; and (d) masculinity. Each dimension is interdependent and complex and cannot always be generalized across cultures; rather, "a leader in a specific national culture may need to apply various attitudes and behaviors to exercise the right blend of influence to accomplish relevant goal achievement" (Konopaske, 2018, p. 426).

#### **Power Distance**

The first cultural dimension of power distance refers to the power gap that exists between less powerful, societal members and those who exhibit higher levels of power or influence such as those in positions of leadership in institutions, organizations, and government. Lesser powerful societal members acknowledge the gap and are comfortable with the power inequality.

**Low power distance.** Low power distance societies exhibit minimal inequality, the way to change is to redistribute power, superiors are accessible, all should have equal rights, the system is to blame, and harmony exists between the powerful and powerless.

**High power distance.** High power distance societies exhibit distrust among others as they are seen to be a threat to personal power, superiors are inaccessible, power-holders are entitled to privileges, inequality has an order and everyone has a high or low place, the way to change is to dethrone those in power, conflict exists between the powerful and powerless, and the underdog is to blame (Hofstede, 1980b).

## Uncertainty Avoidance

The second cultural dimension of uncertainty avoidance refers to society members being intolerant of uncertainty or ambiguity and attempt to control unstable situations by establishing formal laws and rules, frowning upon deviant behaviors, providing stable career options, belief in absolute truths, and the attainment of expertise (Hofstede, 1980b).

**Strong uncertainty avoidance.** Strong uncertainty avoidance societies have higher levels of anxiety and aggressive behaviors that create an inner need in societal members to work hard, avoid risk, and adhere to rigid laws, rules, and procedures, heightened nationalism and emotion, strong need for consensus, and ordinary citizens are incompetent compared to authorities.

**Weak uncertainty avoidance.** Weak uncertainty avoidance societies have less formal laws and rules, less emotion is shown, less stress, high tolerance for deviation, aggressive behavior is unacceptable, minimized nationalism, risk taking behaviors, hard work is not a virtue, and authorities serve the citizens.

## Individualism

The third cultural dimension of individualism refers to the notion that people are expected to take care of themselves and immediate families only and have a loose social network where the concern is only for the individual's goals, needs, and initiative, everyone has the right to a private life, and value standards should apply to all.

**Collectivism.** Collective societies in direct contrast to individualistic societies refer to groups that are tightly knit where individuals act in the best interest of the group as a whole expecting the group to look after them and commit their loyalty to the group, clan, or organization in return. Collective societies emphasize belonging to a group, individuals depend on the organization or clan for stability and emotionally, value standards are contingent from group to group, and one's private life is invaded by the clan where opinions are predetermined by leadership.

## Masculinity

The fourth dimension of masculinity in societies is characterized by assertiveness, the acquisition of money and material items, uncaring of others and the quality of life, sex roles are clearly different, live to work, performance and ambition are key, ostentatious manliness or machismo are valued where men are expected to be assertive and women nurturing.

## **Femininity**

Feminine societies in direct contrast to masculine societies are characterized by fluid sex roles, sex equality, service to others and quality of life are key, sympathizes with the less fortunate, interdependence is ideal, and men are not expected to be assertive but can also assume nurturing qualities.

Hofstede's (1980b) cultural dimensions lay the framework for understanding how countries respond to various leadership styles based on their cultural conditioning. While a particular leadership method may be effective in one culture, it may be ineffective in another, which is the reason for a thorough explanation of each cultural dimension and how the transformational, servant, and autocratic leadership theories correlate with Latin American, Confucian Asian, and Anglo cultures.

## **Transformational Leadership Theory**

Burns (1978) introduced the transformational leadership theory in direct contrast to transactional leadership calling for leaders to progress from an extrinsic reward for performance exchange to satisfy followers intrinsically while sharing an inspired vision to accomplish shared goals. Avolio and Bass (1995) contributed to Burns' (1978) transformational leadership theory by noting four characteristics known as the four I's of transformational leadership:

1. **Idealistic:** the leadership acts with high ideals causing followers to want to identify with their leaders and emulate them;
2. **Inspirational:** the leadership inspires the followers to work toward a shared goal and vision providing followers with meaning and purpose;
3. **Intellectually Stimulating:** the leadership is intellectually stimulates followers challenging them to be creative, submit new ideas, and helps followers solve problems unconventionally; and
4. **Individually Concerned:** the leadership considers each individual of a group focusing on personally supporting, mentoring, and coaching followers (Avolio & Bass, 2002).

Bass (1995) has suggested that transformational leaders exhibiting high levels of the four I's of leadership can "move followers to exceed expectations - to generate extra effort, creativity, and productivity" (p. 468). Transformational leaders build relationships through intentional and inspirational communication and can shift an organization's culture that will motivate, inspire, and cast a community-oriented vision addressing "each follower's sense of self-worth in order to engage the follower in true commitment and involvement in the effort at hand, broadening and enlarging...the interests of those whom they lead" and motivating their followers to go above expected performance overlooking their own self-interests for the benefit of the group, society, or organization as a whole (Avolio & Bass, 2002). Based on a country's dimensional scores,



the transformational leadership style may be ideal whereas leaders attempting to incorporate transformational leadership methods will prove ineffective in cultures who do not value collaboration, inspiration, individual consideration, or intellectual stimulation.

### **Latin American Culture**

The Latin American cluster in the GLOBE research project consist of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Venezuela. With Latin Americans' high value of collectivism over individualism, Latin Americans are likely to be more accepting of the transformational leadership style only if they know their families and community will benefit because "collectivism in Latin America is associated with family rather than work groups" (Romero, 2004, p. 27) because transformational leadership encompasses the notion of a group working together toward a shared goal for the benefit of the group or organization rather than the individual. Although Latin Americans are unlikely to take risks due to their high uncertainty avoidance, Latin Americans are encouraged to initiate family and group businesses where ambiguity is lessened ensuring familiar and trustworthy people are partnered with the business reinforcing Latin Americans' collective loyalties (Romero, 2004).

Mexican leaders' satisfaction positively correlates with group and individual performance exhibiting a sense of value in workplace relationships (Chemers & Ayman, 1985) where low conflict exists among Latin leaders and subordinates; however, Latin leaders attempting to incorporate transformational leadership qualities such as soliciting input from subordinates may be viewed as a weak and a poor manager because of the high power distance culture; therefore, communication is more of a top-down, hierarchical method keeping the distance between leadership and subordinates directly contrasting with transformational leadership qualities of collaboration (Romero, 2004) considering the transformational leader treats each follower as an individual, provides coaching, mentoring and growth opportunities to develop their followers into leaders (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

### **Confucian Asia Culture**

The Confucian Asia cluster in the GLOBE research project include the countries of China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan. With Confucian Asian values of high collectivism and midrange dimensional scores of power distance, gender egalitarianism, and uncertainty avoidance, Confucian Asians are a charismatic, value-based, team-oriented culture placing great value on participative leadership where delegation and empowerment are qualities that bridge the power distance and hierarchical behavior approaches to leadership" (Fu, Wu, & Yang, 2007; Yukl, 2013); therefore, the transformational leadership style would be mostly effective considering the high sense of structured relationships and inner compass of mutual respect. Fu et al.

(2007) has noted that a survey of Chinese citizens showed 92% place great value on guanxi or relationships and 72% prefer guanxi connections over bureaucratic relationships to accomplish personal goals (Yeung & Tung, 1996). The Chinese showed high scores of team orientation and team integration placing a high value on collaboration and collectivism in the workplace (Fu & Tsui, 2003).

Despite Communist rule and influence, the most valued leadership qualities in the Confucian Asian culture are (a) hard working, (b) visionary, (c) aggressive, (d) knowledgeable, (e) eager to learn, (f) problem solving, and (g) change-oriented (Fu & Tsui, 2003) that sets a high standard for vision, confidence and emulation coincide with transformational leadership qualities where a leader works alongside his followers providing a shared vision inspiring subordinates to work for the best interest of the group or organization as a whole bringing organizational and cultural change through ideal behavioral traits that inspire, motivate, and cast group/ community-oriented vision (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Transformational leadership seems to be an ideal leadership method for the Confucian Asian culture as Confucian-rooted leaders are expected to

be modest and prudent, restrain themselves from any presumption and any precipitation, be capable of practicing self-criticism and have the courage to correct inadequacies and errors in their work. In any case, they should not hide their errors, take all the credit for themselves and lay all the blame on others. (Bouc, 1977).

Fu et al. (2007) conducted focus group interviews in Shanghai in 1997 to explore the desired leadership traits and behaviors that leaders value, and it appears the most desired traits despite Communist rule reflect transformational leadership values as noted below:

1. A good leader knows how to balance between being conservative and aggressive;
2. A good leader must have a vision and must be able to look far ahead;
3. A good leader must be open to new ideas and constantly try to improve himself;
4. A good leader must initiate change and be determined to carry out the change;
5. A good leader must be humane;
6. A good leader knows what works for the Chinese while learning from the West.

## Anglo Culture

The Anglo cluster in the GLOBE research project include the countries of Australia, Canada (English speaking), England, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa (White sample), and the United States were former british colonies. Countries in the Anglo cluster generally scored low to medium in the power distance index, low to medium on the uncertainty avoidance dimension, and scored higher in individualism and

masculinity dimensions. Of all the clusters in Hofstede's (1980) GLOBE project countries, the Anglo countries scored highest in charismatic value-based leadership qualities endorsing team orientation and participative leadership showing how leaders are expected to achieve success by means of teamwork; however, the methods in which a leader is to achieve success through a group varies throughout the individual Anglo countries (Chhokar, 2007). The English prefer leadership that is informed but also consultative who receive input from followers as opposed to the autocratic type leader who does not involve subordinates in decision making. The Irish prefer an idealistic leader who displays integrity, loyalty, and makes decisions conceptually yet is careful to maintain a low power distance and remain humble (Chhokar, 2007) consistent with transformational leadership attributes where the leader maintains his status but does not flaunt his power or position. Stewart (2006) asserted that transformational leadership encompasses virtues that benefit not only the leader but subordinates as well that coincides with Americans' preference of an ideal leader revered as a hero who promotes team spirit and expresses care and concern for subordinates (Chhokar, 2007). While Australian leaders are expected to achieve success, uphold moral ideals, and consider their followers, they are expected to remain humble when compared to their American counterparts who are highly ambitious and charismatic flaunting their achievements and individualism (Ashkanasy, 2007). English culture has evolved from high power distance, autocratic rule to a democracy where the liberal culture promotes individual power rather than state power and exhibit self reliance where the younger, more educated generation embraces liberalism, questions leadership assumptions and are encouraged to generate creative solutions to problems as opposed to the less educated, elderly English population who prefer the autocratic form of leadership with strict laws and out of reach leadership (Booth, 2007; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

The United States consistently measures with the Anglo cluster exhibiting high levels of individualism, masculinity, and lower to moderate levels of power distance and uncertainty avoidance. With Americans being highly individualistic, self-sufficient, individually goal-oriented, and expecting to be fully informed with leadership's decisions and actions, the transformational leadership style is ideal for Americans allowing subordinates to collaborate with leadership in decision making, attain personal achievement, and work together toward a common goal although Americans expect a reward in return for their efforts. As charismatic attributes are often correlated with transformational leadership, House (2004) described the following desired American leadership attributes: (a) career, (b) performance, (c) results, (d) challenge, (e) competition, (f) execution, (g) "going the extra mile," (h) decisiveness, and (i) efficiency. Solid relationships are also encouraged; however, those relationships are a mere means to an end for personal achievement rather than an initial collective benefit despite a true transformational leader being committed to treating people as ends not as mere means (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). The final leadership traits desired by Americans in the Anglo cluster fully encompass the charismatic, transformational leadership style consisting of the following characteristics because transformational leaders challenge the process

giving the impression that they are dynamic and competent providing subordinates with meaning and challenging them to undertake the tasks needed to accomplish shared goals (Kouzes and Posner, 2002):

1. Have a vision and stick with it;
  2. Be charismatic, inspirational, optimistic, and hope for success, appeal to the good in people, care about them and serve the greater good;
  3. Be a catalyst, turn things around, and create something new;
  4. Implement, be efficient, overcome all odds, and persevere;
  5. Be true to self and own conviction, have integrity and honesty, be straightforward, lead by example;
  6. Be exceptional, unconventional, have a good track record, and be a winner.
- (Hoppe & Bhagat, 2007)

### **Servant Leadership Theory**

The servant leadership theory developed by Greenleaf (1977) focuses its leadership style on leaders being driven by a desire to serve followers and helping followers maximize their potential without expecting anything in return. Servant leaders place followers' needs above their own, nurture, defend, listen, learn their followers' aspirations, share in their pain, and empower followers rather than use their own power to dominate over their followers (Yukl, 2013). Servant leaders stand for social justice and equality respecting weak and marginalized members, stand for what is right even when it is not in the best financial interest of the organization, and ensure fairness and equality among subordinates influencing others to also become servant leaders creating an employee-oriented culture that attracts and retains talented, committed employees (Yukl, 2013).

### **Latin American Culture**

It is unlikely that servant leadership would be very effective in Latin American culture due to its high levels of power distance and uncertainty avoidance. The servant leader places followers' needs above his own and empowers followers instead of using power to dominate his followers. Latin Americans are comfortable with the power distance between themselves and their leadership and take comfort in praising their leadership as well as blaming their leadership which would not be possible under servant leadership constructs. Servant leadership is also likely to be ineffective in Latin cultures because rather than leadership collaborating with subordinates in a participative style, Latin American subordinates depend on higher levels of leadership in an organization for guidance in decision making where punishment is used more often than rewards (Romero, 2004). With the Latin leader being directive and independently decisive, participative leadership is ineffective as well as practices such as employee involvement, open communication, employee ownership, and egalitarianism are not only ineffective but are undesirable in Latin countries which is in direct contrast to servant leadership constructs (Schuler, Jackson, & Jackofsky, 1996).

## Confucian Asian Culture

Confucius advocated for self control urging Asians to control their emotions and desires that could lead them astray from strictly obeying superiors. Obedience is at the root of paternalistic leadership rooted in Asian culture making servant leadership an ineffective leadership method for this cluster (Chhokar, 2007). One of the Confucian virtues placing a high value on kindness, benevolence, and respecting others' feelings allows for servant leadership to be an effective leadership style as servant leaders take into consideration their followers' needs and places their followers above themselves. Although a hierarchical structure exists, a mutual respect and internal moral compass serves as a guide to avoid shame and honoring others, making good, moral choices, and upholding a sense of kindness and righteousness (Fu et al., 2007). With the paternalistic culture, Confucian Asian employees feel as if their place of employment is a large family and their leader provides security as a father does as the head of the family. Because Communist party members and leadership are expected to be introspective, make personal adjustments in personal character flaws, serve as role models to subordinates, and serve their subordinates whole-heartedly, servant leadership as a construct would be effective to an extent as servant leaders are encouraged to produce other leaders as servants, place their followers' needs above their own, and serve their followers while participating in their joy and pain.

## Anglo Culture

United States displayed maximum scores in individualism calling for every act to be explained in terms of self-interest because Americans are more willing to take risks, are less trusting of superiors, and expect to obtain satisfaction in return for their actions contradicting the very foundation of servant leadership where leaders place their followers needs above their own, are self-sacrificing, and have strong relationships with subordinates (Hofstede, 1980b). Unlike the Confucian Asian culture who instruct their children of filial loyalty where the pursuit of individual interests is discouraged, Anglo culture embraces individualism where members act in their own best interest moving away from home and family as soon as they are able in pursuit of their own goals. Australian leaders are expected to be equal to subordinates as well as egalitarian (Chhokar, 2007).

Considering the Anglo culture's midrange dimensional scores of power distance and uncertainty avoidance, Anglo cultures most effective leadership style is transformational leadership where leaders receive input from followers, collaborate, inspire, and cast a shared vision to work toward as a whole while pursuing individualistic goals and fulfilling individualistic needs for success. In Australia for example, leaders are to reach for success but not stand out too far above subordinates yet are expected not to be too self-sacrificing that does not completely encapsulate servant leadership.

## Autocratic Leadership Theory

Autocratic leadership as initially presented by Lewin and Lippitt (1938) focuses on power and authority belonging exclusively to the leader where the leader does not rely on input from followers and is the sole decision maker, is impersonal and maintains distance from followers, gives short term goals to keep overall vision ambiguous to maintain control over subordinates and tasks, rewards and punishes, is not concerned with employee development or empowerment, and establish formal rules and policies.

### Latin American Culture

Due to Latin American countries' high uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity, Latin Americans are traditionally more likely to respond positively to the autocratic, paternalistic leadership style because they are more comfortable with a clear distinction between leaders and subordinates where power is distributed unequally (Konopaske, Ivancevich, & Matteson, 2018). Latin America's high power distance and masculinity allows for a concentration of power and elitism where leaders are direct and authoritative, unapproachable, do not communicate with subordinates, delegate rather than collaborate, and are less likely to use teams in the workplace calling for the autocratic leadership style as its ideal form of leadership (Romero, 2004). Romero (2004) noted the following six characteristics that describe the traditional Latin American leader prototype that coincide with autocratic leadership traits that Latin Americans seek in their leaders:

1. Autocratic and directive;
2. Seldom delegates work;
3. Seldom uses teams;
4. Formal top-down communication;
5. Avoids conflict and relationship oriented;
6. Assertive and aggressive.

Latin Americans are likely to search for the above type qualities when deeming who qualifies as a leader and who does not. Latin Americans not only expect their leaders to exhibit the above autocratic-type traits, but they also naturally gravitate toward people exhibiting these traits as the high power distance between leader and follower provides subordinates with a sense of security in the elite leader (Romero, 2004).

### Confucian Asian Culture

With Confucian ideology emphasizing learning through a hierarchical and family-modeled institution and principles such as diligence, self-sacrifice, and delayed gratification, the autocratic leadership style would not be optimal considering autocratic leaders are distant, informal, and mission-driven rather than people-driven. Doctrine of the mean avoiding extremes that create social disorder. Wisdom comes with

old age, Confucian Asian elders are revered, given absolute authority, and are established at the top of the societal, hierarchical structure requiring strict obedience from family members. Chinese culture acknowledges males as being born into leadership positions referred to as a headship to connect them to the collective, familial role where the born leader is expected to be righteous and display virtuous qualities as opposed to western or Anglo culture where a person exhibits leadership type qualities before being recognized as an individualistic leader (Chhokar, 2007). Ancient Chinese culture viewed the country as a large family where the eldest male held the greatest authority and countrymen were considered as children who were expected to submit and obey the leader of the family or emperor allowing for autocratic leadership traits of high power distance and high uncertainty avoidance as ideal characteristics of effective leadership in this cluster (Chhokar, 2007).

Although this cluster operates collectively within families and organizations, holding males as natural born, paternalistic leaders who are expected to uphold Confucian virtues and ideals with extreme high power distance scores displays an autocratic leadership style but not fully an effective form of leadership as Western culture has begun to influence culture where Asians now have employment options rather than government-assigned jobs striving for equalized power and self-gain. Considering the Chinese Communist Party adopted a state socialist form of conducting business in 1949 where collective ownership and identity are emphasized representing the interest of the working class as a collective, there is no room for questioning of authority or doing tasks creatively or innovatively since the government regulates the quotas setting up the leadership as autocrats in theory but transformative partners practically.

## Anglo Culture

New Zealand is the only country represented in the Anglo culture that prefers strong, autocratic type leaders as opposed to a sensitive leader although the white population of South Africans prefer strong, direct, firm leadership that is fair. Traditional English leadership methods expected leaders to act authoritatively, displaying a high power distance and in-egalitarianism that was predominantly masculine, individualistic, high achieving and stiff upper-lipped proper etiquette clearly dividing the upper and middle class from lower class citizens (Booth, 2007). Under traditional culture, England thrived under an autocratic style of leadership, but English culture has evolved into a democratic country yet citizens maintain high respect for the monarchy and its strict sense of hierarchical structure. American culture being one of collaboration, empowerment, achievement, flexibility, and creativity would not thrive under autocratic rule as Americans feel their leadership works on their behalf where subordinates are entitled to give their input or opinion in law making and leadership decisions.

## Discussion

As organizations are faced with the pressure of globalization, cross-cultural dynamics can no longer be ignored or viewed as a liability (Moodian, 2008). Organizations must form conscious strategies based on the insight of a culture and embrace acculturated locals for their input and making necessary adjustments to current strategies to lead effectively (Hofstede, 1980a). Moodian (2008) has suggested that “the optimal management of a diverse workforce is achieved through an intercultural approach” (p. 4).

Confucian Asian leaders are no longer considered as heads of the family; however, leaders are still expected to take care of subordinates as if children in modern organizational settings due to the continuing paternalistic culture (Fu et al., 2007). Confucian Asian culture exhibits high collectivism treating others as they would like to be treated expecting leaders to exhibit self control while helping others in need to save *mianzi*, or face, in the community. Preserving one’s own reputation is a matter of preserving another’s reputation as well. A culture with high collective values would ideally thrive under the servant leadership model as leaders place others’ needs above their own and act as a servant to subordinates although Western culture is threatening collective values with its individualistic, egalitarian values. Traditional values are still highly respected in the Confucian Asian culture, but leaders find themselves struggling with tradition as they feel the pull to conform to challenge the norms and move toward competitiveness and modern Western ideologies despite Confucianist influence (Fu et al., 2007). Despite strong power distance, hierarchical, Communist, autocratic structure in the Confucian, Asian cluster, the servant leadership style seems most effective as a result of Confucian influence.

While Latin Americans are highly collective and value the group over individual achievement, the power distance and uncertainty avoidance dictate the leadership structure calling for the autocratic leadership style to be most effective. The GLOBE research project showed the Latin country clusters all exhibited high masculine qualities where toughness, assertiveness, and direct, confrontational leadership style is preferred; otherwise, feminine qualities of empathy, intuition, compassion, and humility are seen as weak and ineffective (Yukl, 2013). In some instances in more modern organizations with younger employees, transformational leadership has had an influence where subordinates are inspired to be creative and collaborative; however, the overall leadership qualities most desired in Latin America coincide with autocratic leadership.

The Anglo cluster overall prefer a transformational leadership style where subordinates are empowered, inspired, challenged, and exhibit high masculine traits of aggressiveness and assertiveness. The spread of strong individualistic achievement traits within the Anglo cluster can be attributed to immigration and colonization (Ronen, 1985).



## Conclusion

Culture is learned in a society and is ingrained into every facet of a person's life including leaders and their values (Kim & Kim, 2010). In today's global environment, leaders must recognize their own cultural biases and adapt their styles to fit the culture and motivational needs of subordinates possibly utilizing more than one leadership style at the same time if needed to be effective (Northouse, 2018). Fry (2003) has asserted that "effective leaders are those individuals who are able to understand and tap into the needs and motives of followers to simultaneously reach leader and follower goals" (p. 701) just as the apostle Paul did as he admits he made himself a servant of all declaring "I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22 English Standard Version). Global leaders are open and flexible, confident in approaching others, can cope with people from diverse backgrounds, and are willing to examine his or her own biases and perceptions to be interculturally competent in their skills, behavior, and values recognizing that today's global climate is a blend of cultures, religions, ethnicities, and lifestyles (Harris, Moran, and Moran, 2004).

GLOBE's twenty-year cross-cultural research project affirmed the five most desired leadership traits include: (a) integrity, (b) performance-oriented, (c) visionary, (d) inspirational, and (e) team-integrator (Dorfman, 2012, p. 507). Yukl (2013) has asserted that the evidence supports the conclusion that some form of transformational leadership is relevant in most if not all situations in any culture, but warns that "universal relevance does not mean that transformational leadership is equally effective in all situations" (p. 324) causing global leaders to consider each culture and its specific needs and motivations because organizations will only be able to operate when employees share the same values and are working toward the same goals (Konopaske, 2017). Although it is unnecessary to treat all subordinates the same, each person should be valued and respected as a team member rather than a second class citizen due to cultural differences (Yukl, 2013).

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### About the Author

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# Managing Today's Employees for Business Success

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*Roundtable: Global Consulting*

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It is common knowledge that our social, economic, wellness, cultural, and especially sense of security are in an unprecedented era. Fear thrives in the environment as people suffer losses from COVID, mass shootings, housing, inflation, and a pending war. Thus, people changed; they have merged from working at a brick and mortar location or they are new members of "The Great Resignation". The purpose of this article is to explore the current situation, meet the emerging values, and provide recommendations from a consulting perspective for success. To recruit and retain employees, mid-level and senior managers must offer more for a successful enterprise. Motivating employees, whether in the workplace or remotely, increase productivity for success. To assure the latest information for the paper, research only derives from December 2021 (revised in 2022) and 2022. The paper concludes with recommendations to leaders on how to encourage productivity by adapting to employees. A goal is a positive organizational culture fulfilling employees' current needs, thus creating more success for business today.

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Our turbulent environment has changed our society and values. Many people do not want to take jobs on-site but insist on working remotely. This atmosphere is across the board, from lower to higher ranks and income levels, including employees at all kinds of positions in organizations. Managers learning about the environment surrounding employees, gaining understanding and recognizing living in this particular time can help identify what is missing or gain empathy for them. Acknowledging new priorities leads managers to help workers and make them become the best productive employees. When the crew is happy and can become motivated, they can become more effective.

This paper intends to communicate more than that and include God's values. It starts with doing unto others as you would have done to yourself and your family, too. Good managers not only want their employees to work well and produce to their maximum ability, but they also desire workers to be happy and feel fulfilled in their work. People spend a great majority of their hours each week working. A person's job can give them a sense of identity, a feeling of belonging and satisfaction. This writing discovers the environment in which workers live and contemplates the changes that workers

encounter. The findings about jobs today in research can help management identify necessary adaptations to meet human needs for a happy workplace. To discover the best recommendations, look at the current situation and ask what you, as a manager, have done to lead them to commit to you.

### **60 Minutes: "The Great Resignation"**

Through research and interviews, the huge hiring system of LinkedIn reveals what the U.S. workforce will look like in the near future (Whitaker, O'Donnell & Wertheim. p. 2, Transcript. 2022). LinkedIn's chief economist, Karen Kimbrough, offers answers with experience and knowledge. Kimbrough believes that organizations have recognized a crucial fact; in order to attract potential employees, employers need to adapt and move to the candidate's requirements. Kimbrough advises leaders to "... meet them where they are now." (Whitaker et al. Transcript, p. 5, 2022).

Employers had the power; nevertheless, employees are writing their own script today (Whitaker, B., O'Donnell, N., & Wertheim, 2022). In the past, remote job openings were one in sixty-seven; now they are one in seven. The Big Quit shows that people stopped working or sought out other careers that fit their lifestyle. Interviews discovered people who are much happier working from home. Forcing work at home even more are families moving to affordable housing, which is not in the cities but in other states. Interviews with managers found that flexibility with employees is crucial, from the hours they work to offering educational tuition. Employers must meet the necessary script of the best workforce to operate the most successful business.

Evolving to work at home has increased success for new entrepreneurs (Whitaker, B., O'Donnell, N., & Wertheim, 2022). Worxbee has met the demand for leaders; it provides remote assistants for busy executives. Innovative entrepreneurs such as the owner of Worxbee succeeded in connecting potential employees with the high demand for companies that will allow remote work. Examples include personnel who quit the office job and now work a few part-time positions. These people working remotely are happy and productive; the organization is more productive and successful. New businesses responding and recruiting the remote workers are thriving and their future looks bright.

Thus, managers must find out exactly where to "bridge" over to potential workers. As the research discovery shows, this includes working remotely.

### **Where They Are Now**

Today, lockdown is history and the government intervention and protest rallies became more rampant our lives changed overnight. Everything in our day-to-day life is different. We had to adjust to staying indoors, without being able to see friends or family in person. Nobody was prepared for this, and we all had to alter our lives

drastically. People hoped this place would become like it used to be. Instead, more problems emerged. Now variants of Covid or Monkey Pox barricades happiness and a sense of well-being for some people. This situation answers where they are now. Managers must plan a pathway to connect to these people. It may not apply to you or yours today, but it applies to someone.

An article, *Covid crushed company culture – but something better will take its place* explains where workers are now (Todd, 2022). The article acknowledges that employees moving to work remotely decreases the likelihood of developing relationships and employees lack a feeling of connection. Culture and relationships at work promote people to commit, work longer, and avoid letting down their team. Todd promotes that these are signals for company managers to reassess their perceptions and views of what makes company culture. These conventional models are outdated and old-fashioned (2022). This leads business managers to look at culture through another lens.

*Covid crushed company culture* poses a critical question focusing on coworkers creating connections, and relationships that are more than company acquaintances (Todd, 2022). Why is this important? Employees' motivation has evolved, and the next paragraphs explain more.

### **The Office as We know it is Over**

After reviewing some studies, management experts conclude workers have a different sense of detachment now, contributing to the Great Resignation (Todd, 2022). Executive leaders worry that culture is lost and want people back at the office. The research leads Todd to advise revisiting the concept of company culture and see if it is outdated. Todd includes information from Amir Goldberg, an associate professor at Stanford University.

The article, *What is Company Culture if you don't have an Office?*, proves and explains that worker performance at home instead of the office increases production (Greenfield, 2021). One example is a CEO who was shocked at the productivity, resulting in success as their firm grew. The article also expands upon the findings of Goldberg's research on organizational behavior at Stanford Graduate School University (2021). Goldberg reports that culture controls and patrols organizational members. It is a way that organizations monitor and limit behavior.

The traditional relationships at the workplace do not work for everyone (Greenfield, 2021). For example, leaders should consider:

- Those who cannot stay after hours for drinks have to be at home
- “older workers at companies” where most of the employees are in their 20's (p. 2, 2022)

- “People of color who work with a majority-white company” (p. 2, 2022)
- Workers who prefer to get their work done and socialize outside of the office
- Employees who just do not fit in and do not care to do so

A survey reveals additional benefits to working remotely (Greenfield, 2021). Slack's Future Forum found, with multiple variables in the survey, that black workers at home feel more support from managers, greater equality, and more appreciation from their coworkers. The black employees have a sense of relief. Another positive result of working remotely emerges; it benefits workers and provides a sense of equality to all. Greenfield's article concludes that employees working from home are creating new cultures (2021).

Therefore, working remotely can accommodate a diverse group of people. Employees realize that working online may give a perception of belonging that the office did not offer. Coworkers do not seem to perceive differences as they did at the organization. This is an advantage to decreasing the feeling of diversity. Previously, these workers were the “odd ones out” but they do not feel this any longer. They are happy with getting their work done. Employees are now free to dine with others; however, they do not feel obliged to do so.

Corporate culture does not seem popular in today's environment. Rebecca Greenfield states in a Bloomberg article that “The latest panic about remote work isn't about lack of productivity but the loss of the ever-elusive workplace culture” (Greenfield, 2021, p. 1). Leaders want workers back at the office, in the way it used to be.

Executives perceive that a sense of normalcy will return. Nevertheless, if productivity increases to make the business succeed, justification for coming back to the worksite could discourage employees, causing productivity to decline. The next section supports the increase in job performance, again questioning the importance of conventional organizational culture back at the office.

### **Promote Something Better to Take its Place**

Leaders of organizations, surveys, and other research found that productivity improves when working remotely, and helps businesses succeed. Results show an answer for what will replace traditional culture, with better outcomes. Surveys prove that “people were wildly productive during Covid lockdowns.” (Greenfield, 2021, p. 1) In a series of “The New Rules of Work”, this writing backs up positive findings about working at home. A chief executive officer of one large company, “. . . was shocked at how well things went when her staff of 80 pivoted to remote work; the firm actually grew.” (Greenfield, 2021, p. 1)

Another example from the founder of WordPress and CEO of Automattic, Matt Mullenweg, explains business success by working remotely (Greenfield, 2021). This



entrepreneur loves thinking about culture and believes working alongside others in an office is not beneficial. Mullenweg encourages other CEOs to accept remote working and polish their writing skills for communication. Recommendations for managing workers at home include pairing and teaming with those who work in the same city, creating a platform for communicating informally and networking. Mullenweg advises everyone to improve their writing skills for clarity, such as for email and chat.

A real estate financing firm reports workers saying they felt as if they could “bring their own selves” while working at home during the Covid lockdown (Walker of Walker & Dunlop, p. 2, 2022). This is a major indicator of worker engagement, coinciding with keeping employees happy, with productivity. This decreases the probability of people looking for another job.

Thus, employees are performing their tasks at home; managers should support them. Managers have worked for equality and diversity; this is an opportunity to improve it. The next section explores how to accommodate and provide guidelines to help employees excel. Accommodations include revising policy and procedures as they are necessary standards for the firm and the employees.

### **Adapting to Remote Employees**

For our new world of work, managers must develop new policies, which clarifies the agreement for both parties. Mike Elgin of Computerworld in Framingham, Massachusetts advises starting from scratch (2022). Various work agreements from hybrid, onsite workers who work at home on the weekends, workcations, and other situations exist in firms now. To cover all the endless circumstances, an overall hybrid policy is essential. Unfortunately, many organizations do not have a policy in place. If they do, it is likely the procedures are obsolete. Elgin recommends current policies. Elgin explains, “Policies protect the company, improve morale, foster better culture, help employee retention, improve cybersecurity, and provide other benefits.” (p. 1)

Policies need to address:

1. Security with a zero-trust model
2. Safety with clarifying the boundaries
3. Productivity
4. Allocation of resources
5. Availability
6. Equipment
7. Termination

Elgin adds that “State law covering workplace safety, for example, means that injuries sustained by remote employees at home could qualify as ‘workplace’ injuries.” (p. 1).

Leaders should become familiar with employment law and adhere to policies, and revise them appropriately.

## Recommendations

We looked at where employees were and examined how something better could take its place by progressing to working at home. Proof of productive remote performance and increasing profit in a business should satisfy management. Leaders must provide the tools to workers for completing their tasks. Recommendations to managers are to:

1. Accept the situation and accommodate all employees. Managers encourage employees to embrace and accept change. This is management's opportunity to "practice what we preach" and provide a good example.
2. Provide incentives and flexibility in work arrangements, such as benefits, bonuses, more time off, educational tuition assistance, and flexible schedules.
3. Create Remote Employees Manual with Policy and Procedures
4. Provide training to develop better communication and writing skills for remote employees. Instruction could include technical training on communication platforms and improving presentations.
5. Make meetings and relating with others optional, not mandatory. This business practice accommodates those who need this without interfering those who do not want it. Perhaps some employee problems are not the work at all, but the sadness and frustration that they are feeling from something else entirely. A workplace where friends can talk and support each other is healthy. Managers must reach out, show empathy, offer a connection for those who want it, and listen, more than ever. Offer a better place, a place where people could talk and release, and offer a productive, fulfilling connection. Zoom and other technology communication platforms provide this.

## Conclusion

The current atmosphere is not limited to lower ranks or even income levels. It includes the small business, the corporation, and employees in different ranks. Managers who gain understanding can help them adapt toward a happy, productive workforce. This can show how managers can help workers become the best productive employees.

In closing, managers must consider workers as human beings. People spend a great majority of their life working. With God's values as the foundation, leaders must treat employees as they would have them care for them and their families.

"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (CBN ESV Bible Online, Matthew 7:12)

The resources prove that leaders can accommodate for their human resources and productivity increases, for a more successful business. Good managers not only want their employees to work well and produce to their maximum ability, but they also wish for workers to feel fulfilled in their work. A person's job can give them a sense of identity, a feeling of belonging and satisfaction. Analysis enlightens us on how to help employees be the best that they can be at work, innovate new ideas to accommodate them, and increase business productivity for success.

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### About the Author

Dr. Melody Cazort has over a decade of experience as a college professor. She earned a bachelor's degree in organizational management from John Brown University. She completed her Master's degrees in Business Administration and in Management with an Emphasis in International Business at Webster University. She is a doctoral graduate from Regent University's Global Leadership and Entrepreneurship Strategic Leadership Program. Her ambition is to serve God and others, building relationships and being productive.

Dr. Cazort relishes life in central Florida with her husband, Ben. In her leisure time, she enjoys riding her horse, Shiloh, with her horse club friends. She volunteers as a business consultant, assists in horse therapy, and gives horse rides to anyone who wants to ride Shiloh.

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# Agility in the Age Of Amalgamation and the Role of HRD

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*Roundtable: Human Resources Development*

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It appeared that the contemporary organizational environments undergo rapid amalgamations stemming from the necessity to alter business processes to realize maximum effectiveness and efficiency. It was also apparent that high-intensity rivalry in this dynamic global setting marked by uncertainty called for expeditious decision making that necessitates agility. While being expeditious within the context of this research meant the ability to combine velocity and effectiveness, agility applied to human condition reflected an individual's level of resilience to quickly embrace the speed and the implications of change for amalgamation and sustainability. It was hypothesized that resilience necessitated the presence and the active involvement of an intellectually curious adult learner based on (a) the need to know, (b) the learners' self-concept, (c) the role of learners' experiences, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation toward learning, and (f) motivation (Knowles et al., 2015) to be committed to life-long learning also known as the andragogy learning and self-development to acclimate to rapidly changing and amalgamating environments. Agility appeared to be the framework of organizations that focused on not only developing and sustaining technical competencies through human resources development (HRD) based on training and knowledge transfer, but creative and critical reasoning empowered by compassion and collaboration. HRD in short was perceived as the training and development of a company's personnel. While HRD could be delivered in a formal fashion such as training and training transfer into the existing or evolving processes for retention and sustainability, fostering agility appeared to call for the informal aspects of HRD such as coaching and mentorship to create and sustain a workforce of enthusiastic adult learners. This research involved analyzing qualitative data from four participants – two males and two females – to examine how closely their perception of agility matched the working definition presented and what traits they attributed with agility. Further inquiry examined the application of agility as interpreted by the participants into the organizational environments as they interacted with other firms to amalgamate and to incorporate changing conditions while doing business and their views on the role of HRD in sustaining agile and amalgamating organizations.

*Keywords:* agility, amalgamation, andragogical model

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Agility could be compared to the impact of boiling water, also known as the endothermic process on various objects in its environment. While a piece of raw vegetable entered the boiling water hard to become soft, an egg started interacting with boiling water as fragile to exit as hard. Ground coffee, on the other hand, transformed itself into a popular refreshment while permanently altering and amalgamating with its endothermic environment.

## Literature Review

Wufka and Ralph (2015) proposed that the agility construct has been adopted into organizational environments, but its theoretical understanding is still evolving. While agility could be interpreted as the rapid reaction to a change, this process appears to require a certain level of mutability or nimbleness. Aghina et al. (2021) proposed that agility had increased in popularity and importance, contributing to the agile organizational transformation construct. Based on Knowles et al. (2015), agility appears to enhance the andragogical model of education to shape and sustain enthusiastic adult learners to support agile organizational transformations.

### The Andragogical Model

Knowles et al. (2015) provided a working definition of an adult learner as a (a) biological person who could reproduce, (b) legal person who is able to participate in elections and/or obtain a marriage license without parental consent, (c) social person who is able to perform socially responsible roles such as an employee, and (d) psychological person able to arrive at and sustain self-concept. Wreczycki (2021) interpreted self-concept as the ability to draw self-worth from within to be patient to pursue a worthy cause. While perseverance was considered a virtue pointing at a strong self-concept, recklessness was considered as a shortcoming on the trait spectrum associated with a compromised self-concept (Wreczycki, 2021). Knowles et al.'s andragogical education model consists of several components as described in the following:

### The Need to Know

Socially, adults were expected to take ownership of their need for knowledge. They also needed to know the reason for enhancing their knowledge and turning it into wisdom (Knowles et al., 2015). Tough (1979) posited that adults who decide to learn something new direct their intellectual focus and therefore brain energy into the expansion of subject matter while considering the benefits of enhancing their knowledge base. This, in turn, allows for the emergence of intellectually curious individuals characterized by love of learning. Wreczycki (2021) proposed that education to develop a person by providing instruction in formal and informal settings to create and enhance the body of

knowledge to be turned into wisdom is best applied in a social context but must originate at the individual level.

### **The Learner's Self-Concept**

Wreczycki (2021) described self-concept as the ability to foresee the implications of decisions that result in social actions while assuming moral responsibility for them and their impact on the collective. Knowles et al. (2015) described individuals who maintained and sustained strong self-concept as self-directed. Wreczycki posited that strong self-concept individuals are inclined to ascend their free will to be in their highest selves, which in classical Greek meant individuals who were in the state of their highest instinct to know themselves from within rather than seeking self-validation from others. Such individuals would not have the will of others imposed on them (Knowles et al., 2015).

### **The Role of Learner's Experiences**

Knowles et al. (2015) stated that adults enter any situation in their lives referencing a broader frame of experiences in comparison to children and adolescents. The qualitative characteristics of adults' experiences gives them broader perspective to rationally analyze new stimuli using their moral characters for decision making (Wreczycki, 2019). Issler (2012) referred to the moral character formation as "heart having a settled grounding" (p. 15).

### **Readiness to Learn**

Needing to know was an effective motivator to start and sustain life-long learning. Readiness to learn occurred when adult learners continued to satisfy their need for knowledge to resolve the existing and evolving life situations. (Knowles et al., 2015). Wreczycki (2021) indicated that the trait of humility interpreted as "the state in which a person knows intellectually and experientially that they are not alone facing challenges to benefit the collective" (p. 75) is necessary to solicit support from others to pursue self-learning within the organizational context. Issler (2012) referred to this process as personal growth potential supported by the ability to assess the current state of the moral character and where it could be.

### **Orientation to Learning**

Knowles et al. (2015) proposed that in contrast with children and adolescents, adult learners pursued subject-centered learning orientation. Therefore, learning was perceived as a tool to solve the existing and anticipated problems. New knowledge was incorporated into the existing repository of wisdom to better understand new experiences and to enhance skills to solve problems. Wreczycki (2021) emphasized the trait of integrity as "cohesion of thoughts, words, and actions" (p. 75) to guide subject-

centered learning with deductive and inductive logic as well as balanced emotions to act in social interest rather than self-interest. Issler (2012) referred to this phenomenon as closing “the willing-doing gap of the universal human problem” (p. 17).

## **Motivation**

Adult learners respond to motivators such as job enhancement and compensation increases (Knowles et al., 2015). This is the monetary aspect of motivation associated with professional roles that adults play. Tough (1979) asserted that adult learners are motivated by nonmonetary factors as well as personal growth and development. However, personal growth and development depend on an individual’s self-concept (Wreczycki, 2021).

## **Agility**

Southwick and Charney (2018) referred to agility as resilience and the ability to restore to the (a) emotional, (b) psychological, (c) physical, and (d) spiritual baseline after facing a challenge. Gölgeci et al. (2020) researched agility further and identified resilient agility as (a) speedy, (b) robust, and (c) sustainable over extended periods of time. Aghina et al. (2021) proposed that agility allows organizations to surpass born-agile companies. From the biblical perspective, agility could be grounded in Proverbs 3:5-6 (English Standard Version): “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

## **Amalgamation**

In sociology, amalgamation is the process through which one group of people combine with another while maximizing the confluence of traits to transform the composite of the two populations to their fused core (Steinberg, 2001). Wreczycki (2020) referred to amalgamation in the United States as the melting of “various immigrated cultures forming ethnic groups/enclaves and bringing with them various religious and philosophical traditions” (p. 123). From the biblical perspective, amalgamation could be grounded in Genesis 1:1-5:

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face and the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, “Let there be light.” And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Based on the pericope and the observation of nature, the phases of night and day flowing into or amalgamating with each other are commonly known as dusk and dawn.



## Qualitative Research Questions

The literature review informed and guided the four research questions:

- RQ<sub>1</sub>: Within the context of agility applied to human condition as reflecting an individual's level of resilience to quickly embrace the speed and the implications of changes to act on them and to amalgamate them into the existing and/or evolving organizational processes, do you agree that attracting and retaining enthusiastic adult learners support agile organizational transformations for sustainability? If so, please elaborate. If not, why not (Schmidt Harvey & De Meuse, 2021)?
- RQ<sub>2</sub>: Given the working definition of agility applied to human condition as reflecting an individual's level of resilience to quickly embrace the speed and the implications of changes, do you consider yourself to be an agile individual? If so, based on what personality characteristics? If not, why not (Schmidt Harvey & De Meuse, 2021)?
- RQ<sub>3</sub>: Given the Knowles et al.'s (2015) andragogical model grounded in (a) the need to know, (b) the learners' self-concept, (c) the role of learners' experiences, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation toward learning, and (f) motivation, do you perceive yourself as exhibiting all its components? If so, would you assign the same value to all of them or prioritize some versus the others? If not, why not?
- RQ<sub>4</sub>: Given the role of human resources development (HRD) as the training and development of a company's personnel that can be delivered in a formal fashion such as training and training transfer into the existing or evolving processes for retention and sustainability, do you agree that fostering agility appears to call for the informal aspects of HRD such as coaching and mentorship to create and sustain a workforce of enthusiastic adult-learners? If so, please explain. If not, why not (Knowles et al. 2015)?

## Method

For the current study, Liamputtong and Ezzy's (2005) qualitative research method and analysis were used to collect and evaluate four participants' – two females and two males – narrative data as answers to four research questions informed and guided by literature review. In the tables, three columns were used to (a) present the narrative data in the left column, (b) allow for the emergence of themes in the middle column, and (c) translate themes into a single word code commensurable with a human trait to aid the emergence of characteristics potentially supporting agility and amalgamation.

## Results

### Interview Results

Four participants were asked the qualitative research questions. Two participants were females. Two participants were males.

Table 1: Study 1, Participant 1: A Male with a Biopharmaceutical Industry Background

Content	Themes	Codes
While I agree that attracting and retaining adult learners will support agile organizational transformations, I am going to say this. While I agree that an individual person’s learning motivations will provide some agility/resilience, other motivations such as material aspects and social conformity will also play a role in the person’s decision to be resilient. So, the real question here is whether agility is a decision.	Pointed at social conformity as a motivator to be resilient	Conformity
	Asked if agility was a decision	Decision
To me there are two types of resilience, one that is used to overcome challenges and obstacles and the other that is used to collaborate and construct. For example, tennis that appears to be a zero-sum game requires resilience to overcome challenges and obstacles. And there is a non-zero-sum game that requires collaboration and cooperation necessary to achieve more complex goals. As a tennis player, I consider myself to be resilient while in the game meeting challenges and overcoming them. As a person who by virtue of mixed ethnicity is a member of two minority groups, I am confronted with and overcome challenges daily. As far as my personality traits that support agility, I	Isolated two types of agility: overcoming challenges and collaborating in teams to build and create	Overcoming Collaborating
	Balanced personal resilience with collaboration and cooperation to function effectively in blended organizational environments	Agile
		Adaptive

Content	Themes	Codes
<p>would say intelligence, cleverness, grit, and the ability to learn from my mistakes and persevere. I follow my father’s wisdom: “Live and learn or you don’t live long.”</p>	<p>Identified characteristics that appear to support agility and amalgamation</p>	
<p>Although I find myself within the context of Knowles et al.’s (2015) model, I also think that we always need to survive challenges to feel safe. Once we overcome them, the higher need to learn can be present and acted upon. Putting yourself in the shoes of an HR recruiter, this person will meet various candidates. One candidate may have achieved great accomplishments via grit and overcoming adversity while the other may have achieved great accomplishments from the structured comfort of an academic environment. For example, you may encounter a company setting in which a group of professionals with the Doctor of Philosophy degrees may be placed in privileged settings while a group of engineers may be placed in more modest settings solving real problems while in the trenches of adverse conditions. In contrast, you will have a professor who achieves great accomplishments during comfort and convenience with thinking that is required for them to discover.</p>	<p>Agreed with all pillars of Knowles et al. (2015) but emphasized the need for safety as the basis human need from which more complex needs flow</p>	<p>Intelligence Cleverness Grit Perseverance Safety Motivation</p>
<p>The last question depends on a person and how and how fast they learn. While some individuals prefer on the</p>		

Content	Themes	Codes
job training, others may opt for a less formal setting.	Expressed flexibility in HRD role in training and development and pointed at personal preferences such as formal and informal settings	Flexibility

The male participant representing the biopharmaceutical sector emphasized the importance of recruiting and retaining agile individuals exhibiting two facets of resilience to quickly overcome challenges and to collaborate in teams to build and create to support agile organizations that amalgamate changes into their existing structures while continuing to evolve. The participant considered himself to be agile based on being a mixed-race individual and an experienced tennis player. The participant pointed at (a) cleverness, (b) grit, (c) intelligence, (d) learning from mistakes, and (e) perseverance as his traits supporting agility. While the participant identified with all pillars of Knowles et al.’s (2015) adult learner model with equal value, he referred to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs as important to satisfy the basic need for safety before psychological needs such as (a) love, (b) belonging, (c) esteem, and (d) self-actualization could be pursued with agility. The participant expressed flexibility in terms of the role of HRD in training and development of employees to be agile individuals and team members in agile and amalgamating organizations.

**Table 2:** Study 2, Participant 2: A Male with a Transportation Industry Background

Content	Themes	Codes
I absolutely believe that attracting and retaining enthusiastic adult learners supports agile organizational transformations for sustainability.	Identified traits that appear to support agility	Enthusiasm

Content	Themes	Codes
<p>Businesses exist only as part of a larger system, and not isolated in a vacuum. This implies that the evolution of the overall system cannot but impact the organization, and therefore dealing with change is inevitable. Enthusiastic adult learners have an open mind and a flexible mindset, in that they recognize their knowledge not as a stagnant/constant thing, but as an evolving thing. This flexible mindset—the learner’s mindset—is critical to the success of the organization with adapting to change and thriving.</p>		<p>Open mind</p> <p>Flexibility</p> <p>Adaptation</p>
<p>I do consider myself to be an agile individual, at least intellectually speaking. As with many of us, I have my challenges and I can be very bound to my routines and habits to mitigate the challenges, insulate myself against them, and/or control the number of variables in my day-to-day existence. Therefore, as my intellectual self evolves, additional and focused effort is required to apply the benefits of my intellectual evolution to my daily practices. I think that the distinction between intellectual agility and practical agility is an important one.</p>		
<p>Yes. In order, (a) I feel a need to know at some basic level at least. I can be very dismissive of things that I am not interested in, but my “need to know”—or curiosity—can drive me to immerse myself completely in new subjects or topics and my quest for knowledge in such situations can be quite intense! I am seldom “idly interested.” My interests are either very intense, or negligible. (b) I have a strong self-concept and would say that generally my motivation is mostly intrinsic, and seldom motivated by external factors. (c) Thankfully, my “learner’s experiences”</p>	<p>Identified as an agile individual yet bound to routines to mitigate challenges</p> <p>Emphasized intellectual growth and the application of its artefacts to daily routines</p>	<p>Agile</p> <p>Structured</p> <p>Intellectualism</p> <p>Growth</p>

Content	Themes	Codes
<p>have been ample due to a willingness on my part to place myself in environments that challenge me, challenge my beliefs, and cause me to continually validate or adjust my own thinking. (d) I would consider myself constantly ready to learn, and that is due to a flexible mindset (mentioned in my answer to question #1). (e) I have a strong orientation to learning—again, due to a flexible mindset by which I allow myself to constantly update and strengthen my knowledge with new experiences. (f) As mentioned before, I am mostly motivated by internal factors. Of course, some degree of external recognition is both good for the ego and the pocketbook, but it is not what truly motivates me.</p>	<p>Isolated intellectual and practical agility</p>	<p>Amalgamation</p>
<p>I believe that the human resources functions such as coaching and mentorship can contribute to a culture of learning in an organization. However, I do not believe that human resources departments or anyone else can imbue another with a true learner’s focus. At best, coaching can take a measure of learner’s focus and develop it more, but I believe that in the end the motivation to learn and the flexible mindset needed to be willing to constantly question, update, or renew one’s learning is more of an internal personal process.</p>	<p>Pointed at procrastination as a potential obstacle to sustain agility</p>	<p>Intellectualism</p> <p>Practicality</p>
<p></p>	<p>Emphasized two opposite ends of the need-to-know spectrum such as extremely interested and negligibly interested</p> <p>Identified with strong self-concept</p> <p>Assessed experiences as ample</p>	<p>Procrastination</p> <p>Intense</p> <p>Negligible</p> <p>Self-concept</p>

Content	Themes	Codes
	Expressed readiness to learn supported by an open mind	Experienced
	Identified with strong orientation to learning supported by flexible mindset	Intellectual curiosity
	Classified self-motivation as propelled by internal factors	Learning
	Identified the role of HRD as coaching and mentoring but emphasized that a person must have will to develop	Motivated
		Self-development

The male participant representing the transportation sector believed that recruiting and retaining enthusiastic adult learners (Knowles et al., 2015) supports agile and amalgamating organizations for sustainability and allocated equal weight to the pillars of the model. The participant considered himself to be an agile individual pointing at two facets of agility such as intellectual and practical. The participant identified the

traits of (a) adaptation, (b) enthusiasm, (c) flexibility, and (d) open mind as supporting and sustaining agility. Although the participant agreed that HRD through coaching and mentoring could contribute to individual development, he also emphasized the role of free will in self-development.

**Table 3:** *Study 3, Participant 3: A Female with a Service Industry Background*

Content	Themes	Codes
<p>I agree that attracting and retaining enthusiastic adult learners support the organizational transformations for sustainability. The future generations are adapting quickly when it comes to changes in the organization. We are willing to make changes in our environment to benefit the future of new generations. We must make sure the change is relevant to the human conditions. To attract and retain enthusiastic workers both ends need to have enthusiasm and have a work–life balance. To grow as an individual, you need to recover quickly from difficulties in life and incorporate the changes into the organization. Able to receive instructive criticism and imply It to change. Anyone can change if they see their actions needing to be changed. Below are some of the skills you will need to attract and retain adult learner’s support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson planning</li> <li>• Management</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Knowledge</li> <li>• Critical thinking</li> <li>• Decision making</li> <li>• Gather feedback</li> </ul>	<p>Agreed that recruiting and retaining enthusiastic adult learners supported agile organizational transformations</p>	<p>Velocity</p> <p>Balance</p> <p>Growth</p>
	<p>Emphasized the speed of adaptation to benefit the future of new generations</p>	<p>Agility</p>
	<p>Amplified the importance of change in synchronicity with the human condition</p>	<p>Humility</p> <p>Planning</p>
	<p>Underlined the importance of individual growth supported by agility</p>	<p>Management</p> <p>Communication</p>
<p>I do consider myself to be an agile individual and recover from difficulties quickly. Once I talk about a topic, I can move past it and forgive and move on. I adapt quickly to change; I am not scared to try new things or get a social and emotional lifestyle. For example, when I</p>	<p>Pointed at the ability to receive feedback to invest in self-development</p>	<p>Conflict resolution</p>



Content	Themes	Codes
<p>was a young girl, I would move every year to a new school and make new friends. Each year when I would move, I would have to quickly get over losing my friends and make new ones the following year. Sometimes change is for the best, and I have grown to like change and adapt to my unfamiliar environment or lifestyle.</p>		<p>Knowledge</p> <p>Critical thinking</p> <p>Decision making</p>
<p>When it comes to the need to know—it is important to know who we are from within. The role of learner’s experiences, readiness to learn, orientation toward learning, and lastly motivation is equally important. I do perceive myself as exhibiting all the components. I am a little of each and all these options. I sometimes want to expand my knowledge and always want to learn. Secondly, I know who I am as a person within, and I would not trade who I am as a person. I am always willing to learn and am always ready to learn new knowledge and experiences in life. I see all the options as the same value they are all important in life as a human being.</p>	<p>Identified as an agile and adapting individual</p>	<p>Feedback</p> <p>Agile</p>
<p>I do agree that the adult learners that were in a mentorship or coaching learned the skills to work as a team and listen to your coach and follow directions. I also agree that fostering agility appears to call for informal HRD methods. The eight stages of human development are important for us to go through to grow and sustain a balanced life. To get employees to enhance their skills and sharpen their ability to adapt to their surroundings prepares them for adversity. Having a fast culture will prepare you to have the ability to move</p>		<p>Adapting</p>

Content	Themes	Codes
quickly in your workforce and adapt to innovative technologies and work ethic.	Emphasized the importance of self-knowledge and placed the same weight on all pillars of Knowles et al.'s (2015) model	Self-knowledge  Experience  Learning readiness  Learning orientation  Self-motivation
	Confirmed the importance of formal HRD methods such and mentorship and coaching but pointed and the role of informal methods in self-development	

Content	Themes	Codes
		Formal
		Informal
		Self-development

The female participant representing the service economic sector agreed that recruiting and retaining enthusiastic adult learners supported agile and amalgamating organizations for sustainability. The participant emphasized velocity as important in agile transformations to benefit the future generations with respect to the human condition. The participant identified with the traits of (a) communication, (b) conflict resolution, (c) critical thinking, (d) decision making, (e) feedback, (f) knowledge, (g) management, and (h) planning as supporting and sustaining personal agility for amalgamation. The participant emphasized the importance of self-knowledge and placed the same weight on all pillars of Knowles et al.’s (2015) adult learner model. The participant confirmed the importance of formal HRD methods such as mentorship and coaching but pointed out the role of informal methods in self-development.

**Table 4:** *Study 4, Participant 4: A Female with an Educational Industry Background*

Content	Themes	Codes
I agree that the recruitment and retention of enthusiastic adult life-long learners is critical in an agile and amalgamating organization. The organization is its people not just as the sum of all traits, but their traits compounded.	Agreed that recruiting and retaining enthusiastic adult learners supported agile and amalgamating organizations	Resilient
		Flexible
		Moral
		Emotionally balanced

Content	Themes	Codes
		<p>Emotionally independent</p> <p>Courage</p> <p>Perseverance</p> <p>Authenticity</p>
<p>I consider myself an agile individual who flexes to adapt within the boundaries of my moral character. Self-awareness and balanced emotions are necessary to maintain and sustain a personality based on temperament. Also, I believe that an individual must be emotionally independent to be able to remain themselves considering rapid and vast changes present and emerging in our global environment. Courage is necessary to bring our traits to the organizational setting. Courage to persevere with authenticity in doing so is critical just as much as service to others.</p> <p>I agree with Knowles et al.'s (2015) adult learners' model and believe that the cascading pillars are of equal</p>	<p>Identified with resilient agility and the ability to flex within the moral constraints</p>	<p>Service</p>

Content	Themes	Codes
<p>importance to sustain the role of an adult learner for a lifetime.</p>		
<p>HRD just like any aspect of human life is constantly evolving. As much as training on the job used to be a preferred method of developing individuals and teams, considering that globalization has dissolved borders and boundaries and has contributed to cultural amalgamations across the continents, informal HRD including self-development to sustain the pillars of Knowles et al.'s (2015) adult education model is critically important.</p>	<p>Agreed with Knowles et al.'s (2015) adult learners' model and assigned equal value to all pillars</p> <p>Cited globalization as reshaping the world, dissolving borders and boundaries, and contributing to cultural amalgamation</p>	<p>Formal</p> <p>Informal</p> <p>Flexible</p>

The female participant representing the educational sector agreed that recruiting and retaining enthusiastic adult learners supports agile and amalgamating organizations. The participant pointed at the importance of traits and their collective exponential impact on organizational agility and amalgamation. The participant identified with resilient agility, which is perceived to be robust and sustained over prolonged periods of time. The participant pointed at the role of moral character as the repository of values in staying emotionally balanced and independent to rely on the primary trait of courage to authentically pursue and persevere in self-development and be of service to others. The participant cited globalization as a factor reshaping the world while dissolving borders and boundaries and contributing to cultural amalgamation.

## Limitations and Future Direction

The limitation of this study is its population composed of two females and two males representing the (a) biopharmaceutical, (b) transportation, (c) service, and (d) educational sectors. Since agility appeared to be the framework of organizations focusing on not only developing and sustaining technical competencies through HRD training and transfer but fostering creative and critical reasoning empowered by compassion and collaboration, group dynamics to (a) stay connected to effectively deal with changes, (b) motivated, and (c) develop new ways of working together are worth research consideration.

## Conclusion

This research involved analyzing qualitative data from four participants – two males and two females – to study if their perception of agility matched its working definition grounded in Southwick and Charney (2018) and Proverbs 3:5–6. Further inquiry examined if the participants considered themselves to be agile and how they applied their agility within their organizational environments interacting with other firms to amalgamate and to incorporate changing conditions while doing business. Additionally, the participants were asked if they exhibited Knowles et al.'s (2015) andragogy model of education pillars consisting of (a) the need to know, (b) the learners' self-concept, (c) the role of learners' experiences, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation toward learning, and (f) motivation and if they would prioritize any of them. Also, the participants were asked if they believed in a formal or informal method of HRD to promote agility and amalgamation.

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### About the Author

Alina Wreczycki, Ph.D. is a May 2020 graduate of Regent University's School of Business & Leadership doctoral program in Organizational Leadership and Human Resources Development. Dr. Wreczycki is registered as a sole proprietor bridging human resources, payroll, and accounting. Dr. Wreczycki currently serves the Virginia Transportation Corporation, Guaranteed Transport Service, and Errol Tractor Trailer Sales and Leasing communities of auto haulers, drivers, diesel mechanics, and administrative staff in the capacity of Payroll Manager leading and developing two individuals. Dr. Wreczycki has published five articles in peer-reviewed journals on organizational leadership theories, adult learning, and human resources development.

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# Building a National Kingdom Business Culture Through Integrated Discipleship and Entrepreneurship for the Youth: Lessons From Rwanda

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Richard L Miller

Patrice Habinshuti

*Regent University Center for Entrepreneurship*

*Roundtable: Kingdom Business*

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Christian research has revealed that one effective and sustainable way to transform people and nations is through *business from the heart* or *kingdom business*. Koshal (2008) noted that kingdom businesses are businesses started by Christians that pursue a multiple strategy – (a) profitability and sustainability and (b) job creation and income generation – and affirm that such businesses help make both an economic, as well as a spiritual, impact in developing countries. As Rae (2005) affirmed, exposure to entrepreneurship education and training delivers orientations to the cognitive features and skills necessary for initiating and managing entrepreneurial ventures. In the same way, efficient prior discipleship and transformation training is believed to inculcate kingdom business principles (Miller, 2012). This paper outlines the process of building a national kingdom business culture in developing countries through equipping youth to run kingdom businesses by integrating discipleship and entrepreneurship in high school teaching. The process has been developed by the authors and tested in Rwanda for over a decade (2012-2022).

*Keywords:* kingdom business, entrepreneurship, discipleship, youth, Rwanda

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## Introduction

Research has confirmed that business is the engine of economic growth in developed and developing economies to achieve socioeconomic transformation and accelerated development (Losccoco and Leicht, 1993). However, business owners fail to achieve this



goal of effectively transforming societies mostly because, as Koshal (2008) noted, they fall in love with their own ideas, products, and services and forget their customers, employees, and communities around them. This is due to the fact that, mostly, the world has centered all business science around profitability, which leads to more of the entrepreneurs *doing business from the stomach* or *doing business from the head* with less or no emphasis on sustainability and ethics.

Blackaby (2001) affirmed it is imperative for Christians to give a gentle, clear, and effective witness to Jesus Christ in the marketplace; as Jesus made it abundantly clear that every Christian is salt and light. Therefore, each Christian can and should have a real and dynamic influence on others. Certainly, one sure way to effectively and sustainably transform people and nations is through equipping its youth for spiritual transformation and for doing business from the heart or kingdom business.

Tsague (n.d.) defined *kingdom business* as

God's business, managed God's way, by God's steward, for God's purposes in the world; where business operations are managed by the guidelines of the King which are found in the Bible. Moreover, the products and services must be approved by the King; thus there should be no sin products, and the business itself must be a platform for ministry where we demonstrate our salt and light to a dark and dying world. And of course, it must be profitable since the King is concerned about the proper stewardship of His resources. However, the profit is not for us; the operators of a kingdom business, but for the King; the owner of the business, so we must use the profits as He directs.

Koshal (2008) added that kingdom businesses are businesses started by Christians that pursue a multiple strategy – (a) profitability and sustainability and (b) job creation and income generation – and affirm that such businesses help make both an economic, as well as a spiritual, impact in developing countries.

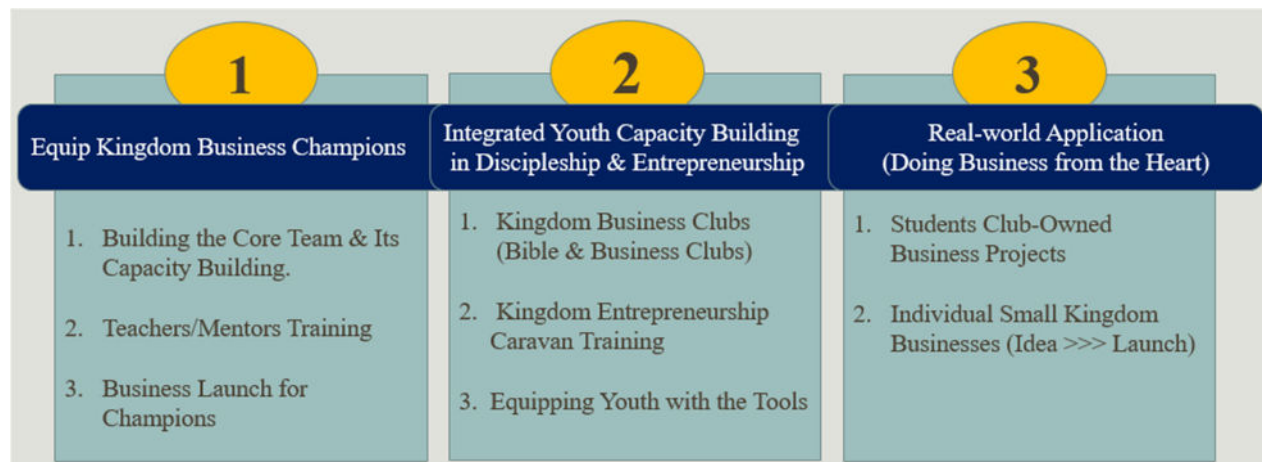
## Methods

Rae (2005) affirmed that exposure to entrepreneurship education and training delivers orientations to the cognitive features and skills necessary for initiating and managing entrepreneurial ventures. In the same way, efficient prior discipleship and transformation training are believed to be key inculcating kingdom business principles into entrepreneurs (Miller, 2012). Over the last 10 years, the researchers (i.e., Richard L. Miller and the team in Rwanda led by Patrice Habinshuti) embarked on a journey of building a national kingdom business culture in Rwanda through nurturing the next generation of Christian leaders to becoming who the Creator intended them to be and preparing them to run kingdom businesses. This was achieved by defining and testing a new approach through a decade-long capacity-building experimentation in the African nation of Rwanda. The presentation outlines the process of building a national kingdom

business culture in developing countries through equipping youth to run kingdom businesses by integrating discipleship and entrepreneurship in high school teaching. The three-step youth empowerment process outlined herein has been tested in Rwanda for over a decade (2012-2022).

**Figure 1**

*The Experimentation Process Used by Researchers*



**Findings: Achieved Milestones in the Rwanda Experiment**

Table 1: Step 1: Equip Kingdom Business Champions

Component	Description	Achievements from the Rwanda experiment
Team Building & Capacity Building for Leading Champions	Self-efficacy training	Three leading champions trained in 2012
	Entrepreneurship training	Four leading leaders took Regent’s 16-week training in 2012-2014
	Tools for transformation	Four leading champions took this training in 2012
Equipping Teachers & Mentors	Advanced formal training	One leader achieving Regent MBA (2015-2017)
	Teacher training in kingdom business	Teachers who are mentoring entrepreneurship clubs received an intensive training while on holiday in 2013; 20 teachers attended and were further

Component	Description	Achievements from the Rwanda experiment
		appointed to mentor entrepreneurship clubs in their respective high schools
Champions Business Launch	Trained leading champions equipped to start their own kingdom businesses	Each of the 4 Leading Champions started their own businesses (2013-2015)

Table 2: Step 2 Integrated Youth Capacity Building in Discipleship &amp; Entrepreneurship

Component	Description	Achievements in Rwanda
Bible & Business Clubs	Bible and Business Clubs are school-based, student-led clubs and coached by mentors who are chosen among the most passionate and practicing born-again teachers of entrepreneurship at the respective schools.	Twenty clubs in 16 districts across Rwanda were launched between (2012-2015)
Kingdom Entrepreneurship Caravans	A two-part caravan training delivered nationwide across high schools and the universities to focusing on “Who I Am” in Christ and “What I do” as a business.	Over 3,000 youth in 20 active high school-based Bible and Business Clubs and two universities were trained across Rwanda (2013-2018)
Equipping Youth With the Tools.	Every student participating in the Integrated Discipleship and Entrepreneurship Training receives a <i>Bible</i> and the <i>Course Booklet</i> .	Over 3,000 youth in Rwandan high schools who attended caravan trainings received a booklet and a <i>Bible</i> in Kinyarwanda or English

Table 3: Integrated Youth Capacity Building in Discipleship & Entrepreneurship Training *Content*

Content	Description
Who I am in Christ	<p>Review self-efficacy</p> <p>Tools for Transformation (construction metaphor with three building blocks: heart, soul, and mind)</p> <p>What is a transform</p> <p>Writing and assimilating transforms</p>
Resources I have	<p>Personal resources/attributes</p> <p>Who do I know</p> <p>Financial resources</p>
What I Do	<p>First principle: "Find a need and fill it"</p> <p>Second principle: Compare need with my resources</p> <p>Write a business plan</p> <p>Set goals</p> <p>Start the business</p> <p>Periodically evaluate</p>

Table 4: STEP 3: Real-World Application (Doing Business From the Heart)

Activity	Description	Achievements in Rwanda
Students' Club-Owned Business Projects	Club members required to carry out business projects that serve as entrepreneurship labs for student members to learn from.	Twenty clubs successfully started business projects.

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Individual Projects	Nurtured through Idea Generation through the Bible & Business Clubs (As part of the regular action plan) and through the Business Idea Competitions.	79% intent to start a business (survey after training) 100% consider the program to have brought new knowledge on the connection between the <i>Bible</i> and business 100% “like” the approach of “doing business from the heart” and are interested becoming kingdom entrepreneurs
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*Note. Actual business start-up statistics from program participants were not measured, as business start-up is an ongoing process after the training.*

## Conclusion

Exposure to entrepreneurship education and training delivers orientations to the cognitive features and skills necessary for initiating and managing entrepreneurial ventures. In the same way, efficient prior discipleship and transformation training are believed to inculcate kingdom business principles. Building a national kingdom business culture requires youth to be equipped with integrated discipleship and entrepreneurship knowledge and applied skills for them to know *Who I am in Christ* as people created with specific abilities and a unique purpose on Earth as assigned by the Creator and then *What I Do* enlightens them about and launches them into kingdom business.

From its experimentation in Rwanda, the developed approach outlined in this material has shown a huge potential to enable the creation of a nationwide kingdom entrepreneurship culture when rolled out in high schools and universities (colleges). The training manual used has been designed by Richard L. Miller, and its full content has been validated through a nationwide experimentation.

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### About the Authors

Richard L Miller, DSL, is a mentor and volunteer consultant with Regent Center for Entrepreneurship, which seeks to transform people and nations through business. Being a U.S. Army Veteran, Miller worked on various leadership, business consulting, and engineering projects with the U.S. Army and beyond. He holds a Masters’ degree in Electrical Engineering from Oklahoma State University and a Doctorate of Strategic Leadership from Regent University. Miller developed the curriculum on integrating discipleship and entrepreneurship for the youth, which has been tested, validated, and implemented in Rwandan schools by the Schools Entrepreneurship Network.

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Patrice Habinshuti, Ph.D. Scholar, is a business development practitioner focusing on kingdom business. He is the director of the Regent University-certified Business Development Center in Kigali, Rwanda, and a founder of the Schools Entrepreneurship Network, an organization that has been inculcating a culture of ethical entrepreneurship among the youth, especially in Rwandan high schools, using the model described in this article, under the mentorship of Richard Miller for over 10 years. Habinshuti holds an MBA in Entrepreneurship from Regent University and is completing his Doctor of Philosophy in Business Management at Ganpat University (India). You can contact him by email: [habipat@mail.regent.edu](mailto:habipat@mail.regent.edu)

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# Business by the Stomach, Head, or Heart

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This exploratory paper posits a typology of business thinking and behavior, draws logical implications of how each type would think and behave, and suggests how business results might differ under the three patterns of thinking and behavior. The paper draws on a biblical analysis of human nature to classify thinking and behavior into three categories: (a) *stomach*—controlled by the flesh, (b) *head*—controlled by the intellect unsubmitted to God, and (c) *heart*—controlled by the Holy Spirit. As defined here, stomach and head are manifestations of man’s sinful nature, whereas heart represents thinking and behavior led by the Holy Spirit. Scripture supports the description of each category; however, are the categories non-overlapping descriptors of reality that exhaust all possibilities of thinking and behavior in business? Are those categories useful for understanding and guiding thinking, behavior, and results in business? Further research is required to answer these questions.

*Keywords:* kingdom business, business as mission, theology of business, marketplace ministry, faith at work, Christian worldview and business

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Over the last 40 years, I have observed and interacted with many Christians in business. Many authors have written about how Christians should conduct business, with testimonies of beneficial results. In the early 1980s, the emphasis seemed to be on individuals applying biblical ethics to their business decisions. If asked, the decision-maker would usually be willing to explain how his Christian beliefs led him to make that decision. Still, he would usually say that it was his personal belief, and he did not want anyone to feel pressured to believe as he did.

Christian CEOs and executives promulgated widely accepted biblical values, such as honesty and keeping your promises. Still, they did not see themselves as having the authority to espouse biblical positions on controversial issues. Loud voices cowed them into accepting that one should not express a worldview or positions that might cause contention or discomfort in a pluralistic environment.

Few Christian business leaders were talking about their calling to “transform the marketplace with the Gospel” or to “advance God’s kingdom in the marketplace.” Perhaps to make themselves comfortable not rocking the boat, many Christians in business adopted the sacred-secular dichotomy. Church, missions, and evangelism are sacred. Business is secular.

Many wrote and spoke about being a Christian 24x7, Loving Monday, and being salt and light in the world, debunking the sacred-secular dichotomy. The 24x7 view of Christianity released many from their self-imposed constraint to discuss business and life topics with co-workers from a biblical worldview. But they still did not feel free to promote company-wide values and policies derived from that worldview.

A smaller but active and growing group of Christians in business began talking about running the business for Christ from a biblical worldview. The concept of Christians seeking leadership in and transforming “the seven mountains” gained followers. Organizations such as The International Christian Chamber of Commerce (ICCC), C12, and the Fellowship of Companies for Christ (FCCI) recruited business owners. They trained and encouraged them to run their companies for Christ to advance God’s kingdom in and through business.

I expected the “transform the marketplace for Christ” movement to take off like wildfire, like the early church in Acts. When it did not happen, I asked why. Why do we not see more lives transformed and signs and wonders in businesses dedicated to God?

In retrospect, it should not be so surprising. The Bible (*New International Version Bible*, 1973/2011) tells us that we cannot overcome our sinful nature and operate in godly ways without the power of the Holy Spirit. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Phil 4:13), but Jesus said that apart from him, we can do nothing (John 15:5). Believers have the potential to overcome sin, but not all believers activate that potential, and those who do, do not do it all the time. Much of what believers do *for God* they do in their strength, which, according to John 15:5, is worth nothing to God.

Many Christians operate more as the world than as the kingdom. Everyone is born with a sinful nature. Believers have a reborn spirit that will eventually transform them into the image of Christ (Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18), but during that transformation, they struggle with their sinful nature. Unbelievers do not have the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to empower them; however, God has given them a conscience that exerts a “spirit-like” influence on them, causing them to follow biblical principles without knowing those principles from the Bible (Rom 2:14–15).

For this paper, I propose a three-part typology of man’s beliefs and practices in business. Every Christian exhibits elements of each type to differing degrees. Unbelievers exhibit a similar typology, with conscience replacing the Holy Spirit. Rather than talk about their thinking and practice on a continuum, I divide the



continuum into three groups. It is an empirical question whether such a grouping accurately maps reality. But for this paper, I explore the implications of the three groups for business.

I labeled the three groups after body parts – stomach, head, and heart – to catch people’s attention and make the labels memorable. The biblical concept I attach to each label may not fit some of the uses of that word in the Bible. My goal was a typology of human thinking and behavior whose categories were non-overlapping and would exhaustively cover human thinking and behavior in business. Future research to test the validity of the typology should use the full description of the biblical concepts, not the labels I chose to capture attention.

### **Biblical Analysis of Human Nature**

Man was made in God’s image (Gen 1:26), but his nature became sinful due to the Fall. Since the Fall, all people are born with a sinful nature (Ps 58:3; Ps 51:5; Rom 3:23) that prevents them from knowing and pleasing God.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, man’s Spirit is reborn. The reborn person’s redemption is secure, but that person is just beginning a journey of being transformed into the image of Christ (Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18). Although they are redeemed and given reborn spirits, remnants of their sinful nature are still at work within believers. After his salvation experience, Paul lamented that he could not resist doing the things he knew he should not do (Rom 7:14–25).

In his depraved state, even the unbeliever has remnants of God’s image and has a conscience and some understanding of right and wrong (Rom 2:14–15). He tends to pursue the lust of the flesh (stomach) or the pride of life (head) (1 John 2:15–17), but he can also show some signs of godly behavior, even though he is not guided by or empowered by a reborn spirit (Rom 2:14–15).

### **Stomach, Head, and Heart Definitions**

Stomach amounts to unrestrained depravity, head to self-controlled depravity, and heart to spirit-led flourishing.

#### **Stomach**

This paper’s use of the term stomach equates to the term *flesh* in the Bible, from those verses in which flesh means *sinful nature*. The stomach is a good metaphor for the lust of the flesh. Gluttony is a practical example because eating habits are among the most challenging desires to control. These lusts are addictions that we cannot control even though we know they are bad for us. When our stomachs call, our brains turn off, just as Esau’s did when he sold his birthright for a bowl of stew (Gen 25:29–34).

This paper's concept of stomach extends beyond eating habits to any behavior people know is wrong, but they do anyway, as slaves to their sinful nature (see Paul's lament in Rom 7:14–25). Mark 14:38 says, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (*New International Version Bible*, 1973/2011).

## Head

One's sinful nature controls any behavior not controlled by the Spirit of God. People dress up their actions by appealing to logic and biblical principles, but if they do not submit their thinking to God, they sin. The head is more civilized than the stomach, but just as sinful.

In some ways, it seems worse. With stomach sin, we admit we are wrong but cannot help ourselves. With head sin, we claim we are right, take pride in our rightness, and are arrogant toward "stomach-people," whom we see as weaker. "Head-people" are either blind to their pride or do not see it as wrong and needing correction.

In pride and arrogance, we consider ourselves equal to or above God. Satan sought equality with God, who banished him from heaven. (Isa 14:12–14; Ezek 28:11–19). Adam and Eve sought equality with God in the knowledge of good and evil, so God banished them from the garden (Gen 3:1–5).

We feel good about our reasoning and self-discipline when it leads to worldly success, but we deceive ourselves when we think we are good. Apart from God, none is good (Mark 10:18; Rom 3:10–12).

Christians use the head to interpret biblical statements and examples and apply them to a current issue. The problem is that our sinful nature introduces bias into how we interpret the Bible. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their hypocrisy in misusing the Law to advantage themselves. In Mark 7:9–13, Jesus said,

You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! <sup>10</sup> For Moses said, "Honor your father and mother," and, "Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death." <sup>11</sup> But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God) – <sup>12</sup> then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. <sup>13</sup> Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that. (*New International Version Bible*, 1973/2011)

Because we are made in God's image, we are able to reason. But the Fall distorted and degraded that ability, leading to a depraved mind which leads to depraved behavior. Romans 1:18–32 describes this in the following excerpts:

<sup>21</sup> For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. . . . <sup>28</sup> Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. (*New International Version Bible, 1973/2011*)

## Heart

This paper uses the tangible body part—the heart—to represent the intangible Holy Spirit of God when it discusses business thinking and behavior. The following is a sampling of Scriptures (*New International Version Bible, 1973/2011*) that explain the concept of Spirit-controlled thinking and behavior (i.e., living by the Spirit) by contrasting it with living by the flesh:

- “<sup>16</sup>So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup>For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh” (Gal 5:16–17).
- “Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life” (Gal 6:8).
- “The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace” (Rom 8:6).

In Matthew, Chapters 5–7, Jesus explains Spirit-controlled living as living by the Spirit of the Law rather than the letter of the Law. “Aquinas holds that the gospel’s ‘law of love’ involves an interiorizing and spiritualizing of the Mosaic law” (Levering, p. 415). Thus, Jesus equates hate with murder and lust with adultery. He challenged the rich young ruler, who said he obeyed all the Law, to give everything away (Matt 19:16–22). Jesus summarized the law in two commands: love God and love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:28–34).

How does one live by the Spirit? It involves subjecting your intellectual and emotional intelligence to the guidance and control of the Holy Spirit. The overarching calling is to love your neighbor and serve him.

Through studying God’s word and prayer, one gets to know God—to understand and internalize his perspective on issues and his compassion for people. Living by the Spirit is being the heart, voice, and hands of Christ to the people you encounter—loving, thinking, caring, and acting as Christ would.

What causes Spirit-filled believers to fall short on spirit-led thinking and behavior? In a word—identity. We are created in the image of God and are being transformed into the image of Christ. Our essence, our value—that is, our identity—derives from God. But

Satan is a crafty, active accuser. He tries to sever the root of our identity in Christ by causing us to question it. “If God is so good, why is your business facing bankruptcy?” “How can you be right about contentious social issues when the majority, including the smartest ones, say you are wrong and terrible for believing as you do?”

It does not have to be this way. Spirit-led believers have the mind of Christ (2 Cor 2:16) to understand an issue. One can be “wise as a serpent but innocent as a dove” (*New International Version Bible*, 1973/2011, Matt 10:16) in standing firm for truth and godly behavior.

### Stomach, Head, and Heart Implications for Business

The tables below evaluate thinking, behavior, and results under the three categories: stomach, head, and heart. A leader’s thinking/worldview (Table 1) infuses a company’s culture, which leads to behavior/practices (Table 2), which causes results (Table 3).

In Table 1, the three critical elements of thinking/worldview in business are (a) the standard by which we measure behavior and practices, (b) the philosophy of doing business, and (c) the strategy the business develops to implement its philosophy according to its standards.

**Table 1:** Thinking/Worldview: Standard, Philosophy, Strategy

Issue	Thinking /Wordview		
	Stomach (Flesh)	Head (Principles)	Heart (God’s spirit)
<b>Standard</b>	Set own standard	Live by biblical principles	Internalize God’s perspective
<b>Philosophy</b>	Fight to survive	Play to win	Excel to glorify God
<b>Strategy</b>	Maximize self	Maximize profits	Maximize giving

## Standard

Those controlled by their stomachs set the standards they follow. They do not acknowledge any authority outside themselves. They do whatever they want.

Those controlled by their heads appeal to an established list of principles or rules. For Christians, the rule book is the Bible. Because the head is not submitted to God (according to the definition used in this paper), it interprets the rules to further self-interest and then takes pride in following those self-interested rules.

Those controlled by the heart follow biblical principles. Rather than interpret them independently, they rely on the Holy Spirit to teach them the essence of those principles and how they apply in any given situation. Biblical principles migrate from the head to the heart when we allow the Holy Spirit to teach us their meaning and application.

## Philosophy

Those controlled by the stomach live as if they have no umbrella of protection from laws made for their benefit or from a good God who is looking out for them. As a result, they act like animals, fighting for survival. There are no rules to guide or constrain them. They do anything that works or seems to work from their perspective.

Those controlled by the head see business as a game they seek to win within the established rules. To the extent possible, they interpret the rules to benefit themselves. They take advantage of the letter of the law, even when the Spirit/intention of the law calls for a different action. They have little empathy for the “losers” in the game of business, arguing that everyone has the same opportunity to succeed under the rules. They work hard and bask in the glory of their success.

Those controlled by the heart are more focused on others than themselves, so they readily follow the Spirit of the Law rather than the letter, even when it seems to disadvantage them. They also work hard, not to glorify themselves but to glorify God.

## Strategy

Economists and writers on strategic management formulate business decisions to maximize an objective subject to resource constraints. The objectives differ among the three categories. Those controlled by the stomach seek to maximize themselves – that is, whatever gives them the most satisfaction, whether money, power, comfort, recognition, etc. Those controlled by the head are committed to maximizing profits for their organization. Being self-centered, they tend to negotiate compensation packages tied to their pursuit of profits. Those controlled by the heart seek to maximize giving because they focus on others. They recognize that if they obey God’s commands, he will likely bless them with resources (Deut 8). God pours his blessings into “rivers” that channel blessings to others, not “reservoirs” where the recipients hoard the blessings.

Table 2 shows three important vehicles of behavior/practice in business: (a) product, (b) customer, and (c) employee.

**Table 2:** Behavior/Practices: Product, Customer, Employee

Issue	Behavior/Practices		
	Stomach (Flesh)	Head (Principles)	Heart (God's spirit)
<b>Product</b>	Cut corners to save costs	Excellence to meet customer demand	Create life-improving products & services
<b>Customer</b>	Do least you can get away with	Do what you promised	Do the right thing regardless of cost
<b>Employee</b>	Drain him, then discard him	Equip him to produce	Equip & care for whole person

## Product

Those controlled by the stomach want to get all they can while providing the least possible. They will cut corners on the product, especially if the effects are not immediately visible or apparent. Those controlled by the head will provide excellent products designed to deliver what customers say they want, even if the product is harmful to the customer. Those controlled by the heart provide life-improving products and services. They will avoid industries and companies where it is impossible to do that.

## Customer

As with products, those controlled by the stomach will do the least possible while still attracting and retaining customers. Those controlled by the head will honor promises the company has made. They might even go beyond a promise if they calculate that the goodwill earned will exceed the cost. Those controlled by the heart will go beyond legally binding commitments to do the right thing for customers even when the costs exceed what they expect to gain from goodwill (Ps 15:4).

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## Employee

Those controlled by the stomach do not invest in employees. They view them as commodities to be used and discarded when new employees can provide more than the existing employees. Those controlled by the head treat employees as productive assets. They invest in training when it provides benefits greater than the costs. They would not “waste” training on employees they expect to leave the company. Those controlled by the heart treat employees as God’s children. They partner with God to develop the full potential of the whole person. They do not worry that what they pour into an employee might benefit another company.

In Table 3, the three key business results indicators are (a) power, (b) wealth, and (c) health. Each column records the expected results of operating by the stomach, head, or heart.

**Table 3:** Results: Power, Wealth, Health (of Society)

Issue	Results		
	Stomach (Flesh)	Head (Principles)	Heart (God’s spirit)
<b>Power</b>	Strong take from weak	Strong outperform weak	Strong help weak
<b>Wealth</b>	Low incentives, low investment, low income	High incentives, high investment, high income	High incentives, high investment, high income for more people
<b>Health (Society)</b>	Misery & despair	Striving & questioning	Shalom joy and peace

## Power

When those controlled by the stomach dominate business, we should expect to see the strong take from the weak. The weak would not be protected by rules or by the goodwill of the strong. The more that organized crime and corruption in society go unchecked, the more you would expect to see this outcome.

When those controlled by the head dominate business, we should expect to see the strong outperform the weak. The most skilled, highly disciplined, and hardest working will accumulate power in society and be proud of their status. If society agrees that they have obeyed the rules, their status is accepted.

When those controlled by the heart dominate business, one would expect to see the strong helping the weak through acts of kindness, generosity, and mentoring.

## Wealth

Those controlled by the stomach do not believe investing in the system will benefit them; therefore, they focus on short-term thinking, taking what they can get. They do as little as they can to get by. As a result, they reap minimal financial benefits.

Those controlled by the head focus on success and the self-discipline needed to achieve it, believing that following the rules will bring rewards. Consequently, they work hard, save, and invest, accumulating wealth and income.

Those controlled by the heart also believe that working hard, saving, and investing will generate wealth and income. The difference is the focus—others rather than self. Working diligently for self and others should produce more societal wealth than working diligently for self only because it follows God's model.

## Health

Those controlled by the stomach will be unfulfilled because they violate so many of God's principles. The stress of fighting for survival and barely making it leads to a miserable existence. Without hope for a better future, miserable conditions lead to despair.

Those controlled by the head strive for and often achieve worldly success; however, it rarely brings contentment. If your identity is in your material success, the fact that someone always has more leads you to strive to beat them and, when you do it, ask, "Is that all there is?"

Those controlled by the heart know whose they are. Because their identity is secure in Jesus Christ, they can be content with little or much. A society populated by heart people will have shalom—peace, harmony, wholeness, and prosperity.



## Example of Business by the Heart

No individual or business will perfectly represent any of the three categories: stomach, head, or heart. Many Christians may strive to operate their businesses by the heart; however, the head likely infiltrates more than we would like to admit. Fortunately, most successful Christians in business have enough self-discipline to avoid operating according to the stomach.

I have chosen a well-known, large company you have likely experienced so that you, the reader, can join me in assessing the degree to which this company runs by the heart. This exercise aims to get a feel for applying the heart metaphor, not to evaluate the company comprehensively according to the metaphor. That is beyond the scope of this paper.

The company is Chick-fil-A (CFA), founded in 1946 by S. Truett Cathy (1921–2014). It has become the most powerful fast-food brand in the U.S. Let us assess Truett Cathy and CFA on the elements in Tables 1, 2, and 3 to examine to what extent CFA operates by the heart.

### Standard, Philosophy, and Strategy (From Table 1 – Thinking/Worldview)

#### *Standard*

One can see that CFA's standard is God from its corporate purpose statement: "To glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us and to have a positive influence on all who come into contact with Chick-fil-A" (Chick-fil-A, n.d., Who We Are section). CFA consistently points to God as their standard in many ways. One of the most widely known is closing all stores on Sunday, even though Sunday is the highest sales day for fast food restaurants.

#### *Philosophy*

CFA excels to glorify God. Their emphasis on product quality, employee training, and customer service helps them fulfill their corporate purpose statement.

#### *Strategy*

CFA emphasizes giving.

Everyone's job at Chick-fil-A is to serve. No matter our title or job description, our reason for coming to work is to generously share our time and talents. . . . Whether it's treating customers like friends, or serving our communities like neighbors, we believe kindness is a higher calling. (Chick-fil-A, n.d., Giving Back section)

Truett Cathy modeled giving by pouring himself out personally for people (Sunday school, foster children) and generously supporting life-improving programs through the CFA and Lifeshape Foundations.

## **Product, Customer, and Employee (From Table 2 – Behavior/Practice)**

### ***Product***

According to Cathy (Chick-fil-A, n.d., Great Food section), “Food is essential to life, therefore make it good” (Chick-fil-A, n.d., Great Food section). The CFA website goes on to state:

In our kitchens, we try to focus on freshly prepared food crafted with quality ingredients. We serve chicken made from breast meat, breaded by hand in-restaurant. Fresh produce is delivered to our kitchens several times a week. Salads are prepared throughout the day. (Chick-fil-A, n.d., Great Food section)

“That capital A [in Chick-fil-A] is on purpose – it means ‘grade A top quality’” (Chick-fil-A, n.d., Who We Are section).

### ***Customer***

Second-mile service is the philosophy and name of the training program CFA has implemented to maximize customer service. “We should be about more than just selling Chicken. We should be part of our customers’ lives and the communities in which we serve” (Chick-fil-A, n.d., Who We Are section).

### ***Employee***

“‘We are better together’ – one of our core values at Chick-fil-A – means when we combine our unique backgrounds and experiences with a culture of belonging, we can strengthen the quality of care we deliver” (Chick-fil-A, n.d., Who We Are section). Employees in each store are hired, trained, and mentored by the Operator. CFA is meticulous in its selection of operators, with a long process to get to know candidates and a pool of more than 20,000 applicants for about 80 new operator positions a year (Vinnedge, 2022).

## **Power, Wealth, and Health (From Table 3 – Results)**

### ***Power***

Chick-fil-A has the strongest quick-service restaurant brand in terms of brand loyalty, sales growth, customer satisfaction, and financial strength. According to the American Customer Satisfaction Index, Chick-fil-A has been named the king of fast food for the seventh year. Chick-fil-A came out on top with a customer satisfaction score of 83. It even beat out all the full-service restaurants surveyed (McHugh, 2021). CFA’s per-store annual sales of \$6 million dollars (\$8 million dollars for stand-alone stores) are double

second-place McDonald's and 4–5 times the per-store sales of most other fast-food restaurants (Klein & Coley, 2022).

How does CFA use its strength to help the weak? Every day, CFA associates engage with customers to fill their orders accurately with delicious food and positively influence their day, especially if they are going through a difficult time. Due to its financial strength, CFA can afford to employ staff whose job it is to fix problems and help customers with special needs. CFA's profits also make it possible to fund many programs that help people in need, such as youth in turmoil and marriages needing help.

### *Wealth*

According to Forbes Magazine, the Cathy family has amassed nearly \$20 billion dollars of net worth, almost exclusively from CFA (LaFranco & Peterson-Withorn, 2022). In addition, CFA has provided outstanding financial opportunities for thousands of operators. With a small buy-in (\$10,000 franchise fee), no cost to build and equip the store (CFA owns the land, store, equipment, and inventory), and a 50% share of profits, a young, motivated operator can earn more than \$200,000 per year (Stice, 2020). By teaching teenage associates excellent work habits and a philosophy of service and by providing college scholarships, CFA has invested in the wealth-building potential of the next generation.

### *Health*

Employees are part of the CFA family and treat customers as part of that family. By extension, the community is also part of the family. Although community health is challenging to measure, the fact that CFA is perennially #1 in customer satisfaction reinforces the stories that customers feel a family affiliation to the brand. Community events and grants to community organizations add to the picture of CFA contributing to community health.

### **Summary of CFA's Success at Doing Business by the Heart**

Truett Cathy's many statements, policies, and actions show he consistently operated his business by the heart. The common theme in all of them is his love of people. Everyone in the Chick-fil-A family – executives, employees, store operators, store employees, and customers – knew that he loved them and cared more about them as people than as contributors to the business.

On a personal note, I first met Truett Cathy in the 1990s when I presented him with the first Servant Leader Award from Regent University Business School. He was like a father to the CFA operators who attended his talk and award ceremony. Over the next few years, I visited him at CFA HQ in Atlanta and met some of the young people he mentored. In addition, as dean of Regent's Business School, I was the recipient of his

generosity when he wrote a personal check for our recruiting reception at an Atlanta hotel because security reasons prevented him from following through on his offer to host the event at the beautiful CFA campus.

### **Conclusions and Questions for Future Research**

What has this paper accomplished, and what directions does it suggest for future research?

#### **Conclusions**

The paper has posited a plausible typology of business thinking and behavior derived from a biblical analysis of human nature. While there may be other plausible typologies, this one seems complete because the categories are non-overlapping and logically exhaustive.

It also proposed three critical elements of business thinking/worldview and three key elements of business practices. Although I would argue that standard, philosophy, and strategy are foundational elements of business thinking and worldview, I do not say they exhaust the list of possible foundational elements. Although the categories of product, customer, and employee certainly do not exhaust the elements of business behavior and practice, one could argue that they should be on any list of essential elements.

The statements about how thinking and behavior vary by stomach, head, and heart are logical deductions from the characterizations of the types. That is, the way each type would think and behave is supported by the biblical analysis of that type.

The paper assumes that business thinking/worldview and behavior/practices are key determinants of business results within a given environment. This causality of results should not be controversial because all a business does can be contained within the categories of thinking and action.

How results classified by power, wealth, and health vary across businesses operating by the stomach, head, or heart is more speculative. The suggested results align with what the Bible says about the consequences of obeying God (blessing) and observations of these behaviors in business. Future research should test these suppositions empirically.

#### **Questions for Future Research**

Below, the paper briefly suggests four threads for future research: (a) concepts, (b) measurement, (c) mapping thinking and behavior to results, and 4) training, equipping, and leading people to do business by the heart.

### ***Concepts***

Are stomach, head, and heart good concepts for thinking and behavior in business? That is, do they form a robust description of business reality? What are alternatives?

Are stomach, head, and heart effective and reproducible concepts? For example, will a stomach person think and behave predictably in different environments, and will they think and act differently than a head or heart person?

### ***Measurement***

What are some reliable, repeatable measures of stomach, head, and heart thinking and behavior? Can statements about an issue or behavior in a situation be unambiguously classified as stomach, head, or heart thinking or behavior?

Develop an instrument to classify people's thinking and behavior into three types. Interview people to classify them by type. Interview and observe (e.g., 360 interviews) people of each type. Refine understanding of the types by results of these interviews.

What is the distribution of stomach, head, and heart thinking and behavior among Christians in business?

### ***Map Thinking and Behavior to Results***

How do stomach, head, and heart thinking and behavior map to results? Can we model how they should affect results and then test to see if that model is confirmed?

### ***Training and Equipping Heart Thinking and Behavior***

If business by heart is best, how can we get more of it? How do Christians mature into Holy Spirit-guided executives? What are the implications for training and equipping people to function by the heart? How can business by the heart values be promulgated throughout an organization? To what extent can unbelievers practice them? If a business achieves heart thinking and behavior, how can those be transmitted to the next generation of leaders and employees?

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### **About the Author**

Dr. John Mulford joined Regent University as a founding faculty member in the Business School in 1982. In addition to serving as a professor, he has served as dean of the Business School, chief financial officer and chief investment officer of Regent University, and founder and director of Regent Center for Entrepreneurship. Through the Center, he has pursued his passion for helping entrepreneurs start and grow businesses in dozens of countries, most notably by creating a model for Business Development Centers that has been licensed in nine countries. He has been active in the Christian business movement, serving on the boards of several key organizations, including Nehemiah Project International Ministries, Fellowship of Companies for

Christ International, and C12. Prior to Regent, Dr. Mulford conducted policy research at the Rand Corporation and served as vice president and senior economist at First Interstate Bank of California. He earned the B.S. in Engineering, *Magna Cum Laude*, from Brown University, and the Ph.D. in Regional Economics from Cornell University, where he was a National Science Foundation Fellow.

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# Heart, Soul, and Mind: Basis for Spiritual Transformation for Kingdom Business

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*Regent University Center for Entrepreneurship*

*Roundtable: Kingdom Business*

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In *Waking the Dead*, Eldredge (2003) wrote, “The story of your life is the story of the long and brutal assault on your heart by the one who knows what you could be and fears it” (p. 34). Therefore, if you are seeking to be transformed to the image of Jesus, *Get ready for the battle!* This paper records the results of various courses of study and investigations conducted by Richard Miller to determine the effectiveness of selected change agents with the ultimate goal of identifying change agents and processes to enhance biblical, spiritual growth in believers. Miller (1992) reported the positive change in soil quality from adding various levels of nutrients. This project also proved beneficial as a learning vehicle to conduct research. Miller’s (2003) doctoral dissertation reported the results of a correlation study to evaluate the change in spiritual traits using scripture verses as change agents. The results of this study led to the development of a seminar titled Tools for Transformation (TFT; Miller, 2004), which uses Scripture verses as the change agents to enhance spiritual development in believers. The TFT seminar was beta tested with a group of 15 believers over 6 months, which confirmed the hypothesis that ingesting scripture verses increases spiritual development. The TFT seminar was adapted for use in Rwanda as a joint effort between Richard Miller and Patrice Habinshuti and was titled Rwanda Kingdom Entrepreneurship Caravan.

*Keywords:* heart, soul, mind, zone of congruence, transformation

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## Introduction

The search for appropriate methods of applying change agents led to a course of study at Regent University and subsequent cooperative effort with the Regent Center for Entrepreneurship (RCE) in Rwanda. John Mulford (2010), who organized the RCE, wrote that the mission of RCE is “Transforming people and nations through business.” He defined kingdom business as “For profit business designed to facilitate God’s transformation of people and nations through Christ the Redeemer and Provider” (p.1).



Soon after Richard Miller graduated from Regent University's Doctor of Strategic Leadership (DSL) course in 2003, a representative from the RCE contacted him and offered the opportunity to mentor a student, Habinshuti Patrice, from Rwanda. Using his previous studies and investigations, as well as a visit to Rwanda, Miller worked with Habinshuti to develop a seminar to be presented to high school students in Rwanda. Miller's Tools for Transformation (TFT) seminar, which had been beta tested with positive results, was adapted for use in Rwanda. The results of the beta test are presented.

## Method

Miller's (2003) reported the results of a correlation study testing the hypothesis that a positive relationship exists between a believer's belief in their ability to make things happen, or spiritual efficacy (SE), and his level of spiritual development. The study participants included 70 college students and 163 members of various churches. The Spiritual Assessment Inventory (Hall & Edwards, 2002), and the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (CSPP; Thayer, 1996) were used in this study. Miller wrote,

The strongest correlation of SE (Self-Efficacy) with AW (Awareness of God) (.48,  $p < .005$ ) occurred with respondents who memorized 10 or more verses of Scripture per year . . . There was no correlation of SE with AW for those who did not memorize Scripture. These results lend support to Woodbridge's (1985) finding that memorizing and mediating on Scripture has a positive effect on spiritual maturity.

The test hypothesis was supported, and the results of the correlation study acted as a basis for continuation of the effort to develop an effective tool to enhance spiritual growth in believers.

Miller (2004) then developed the TFT seminar based upon the results of the 2003 DSL study. The seminar was presented to 12 members of Sedalia Community Church one night per week for a period of 6 months. The instrument used to measure spiritual maturity was the Christian Life Profile (CLP) developed and validated by Creative Leadership Ministries, an extension of Pantego Bible Church in Arlington, Texas. Table 1 presents the results of a pre- and posttest of the TFT seminar. Participants completed the CLP before the seminar began and the same assessment after the seminar was completed. The percentage change in the average scores is shown for each of the six categories. The change was positive for all variables, indicating there was positive spiritual growth during the 6-month period.

**Table 1:** *Spiritual Growth Resulting From TFT Beta Test*

Variable	Before	After	% change
Love God Benefits (LGB)	93.40	97.00	+3.85
Love God Practice (LGP)	75.73	89.89	+18.70
Love God Virtues (LGV)	71.44	80.33	+12.44
Love Neighbor Beliefs (LNB)	86.67	94.78	+9.36
Love Neighbor Practice (LNP)	68.00	82.44	+21.23
Love Neighbor Virtues (LNV)	74.07	84.89	+14.61

## Discussion

This presentation is based on the hypothesis that, when asked by the Pharisee what the greatest commandment was, Jesus identified the three building blocks He used to create human beings: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your *heart*, with all you *soul*, and with all your *mind*. This is the first and greatest commandment” (Matt. 22:37-38, emphasis added). According to Genesis 1:27, God used Himself as the model when He “created man in His own image.” Then, according to John 1:3, God created all things through the Word, meaning Jesus. “All things were made through Him.” Therefore, when Jesus answered the Pharisee, He knew precisely how to describe the totality of the building blocks He used to create humans and their potential capacity to love Him with three unique and definable building blocks.

Why is it important to understand the definitions and functions of heart, soul, and mind?

1. Jesus said this was the *first and greatest* commandment.
2. These are the *nonreducible* building blocks of human spiritual structure.
3. These blocks are always *unique* and *distinct* in definition and purpose: The heart is definable and is always the heart, the soul is definable and is always the soul, and the mind is definable and is always the mind.

As part of his DSL program at Regent University, Miller (2003) performed an extensive comparative analysis of each time *heart*, *soul*, or *mind* were used in Scripture and arrived at the following conclusions:

## **With all Your Heart – The Center of Value**

Value is the relative worth, merit, or importance of an idea or thing. Here is a sample of Scripture verses containing the HEART that were used in the comparative analysis:

1. “For with the HEART one believes” (Rom. 10:10). It is the heart that compares and analyses various constructs and assigns the proper God-intended value to each of the constructs.
2. “As a man thinks in his heart so he is” (Prov. 23:7). This verse affirms that it is within the heart that value is determined. This verse also identifies a synergistic link between heart and mind by stating “as a man thinks in his heart.”
3. A man’s heart reveals the man” (Prov. 27:19). The heart not only determines value but externally projects that value so the man’s true self can be observed by society.
4. “He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38). The heart is uniquely the wellspring of value; spiritual truth flows from the heart to quench thirst and refresh the believer so that the believer conducts kingdom business managed God’s way, by God’s steward, for God’s purpose in the world.
5. “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38). Most recent versions translate belly into heart. However, the King James Version may be more accurate and identifies the location of the spiritual heart – not the physical pump. Have you heard the expression, “I have a gut feeling”? This may be the resonance of comparative truth occurring in the heart.
6. To love Jesus with all our heart is to totally assimilate all His value leading us to declare, “I delight to do Your will O my God and Your law is within my heart” (Ps. 40:8). When our heart is saturated with His Word (law), it produces joy in our soul and positive actions to promote kingdom business in our daily lives.

## **With all Your Soul – The Center of Identity, Relationships, and Emotions**

1. Identity is the essence of who I am. “My soul magnifies the Lord” (Luke 1:46). My soul is me. In this verse, it is me who is magnifying the Lord. When I am totally surrendered to Jesus, my identity is totally encased within His identity. “I am crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal. 2:20). When a believer is totally captured by Jesus, doing His kingdom business is a joy and kingdom businesses accomplish His objectives in the world.
2. Relationships are interactions with other persons. “My soul shall abhor you” (Lev. 26:30). Notice the strong emotion in this relationship. In Matthew 5:12, Jesus gave an example of a positive emotion: “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad.”

3. Emotions are reactions to internal or external stimulus and can be negative or positive. “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful” (Matt. 26:38). This strong negative emotion is being expressed by the soul.

### **With all Your Mind – The Center of Logic and Cognition**

1. Logic is defined as the science of reasoning. “And do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2). The mind that is renewed by salvation in Jesus and saturated by His Word will operate in kingdom business enterprises to fulfill God’s perfect will for His glory and work to contribute to a transformed society.
2. Cognition is the act, power, or faculty of apprehending, knowing, or perceiving:
  - a. “How precious are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them” (Ps. 139:17). The unrenewed mind is limited by human capacity; the renewed mind has infinite resources from the vast reservoir of God’s mind and will.
  - b. “You will guide me with Your counsel and afterward receive me to glory” (Ps. 73:24). The renewed mind is always attuned to the will of God in operating kingdom businesses that bring glory to Him, and He responds by receiving the person into His indescribable glorious kingdom for eternity!

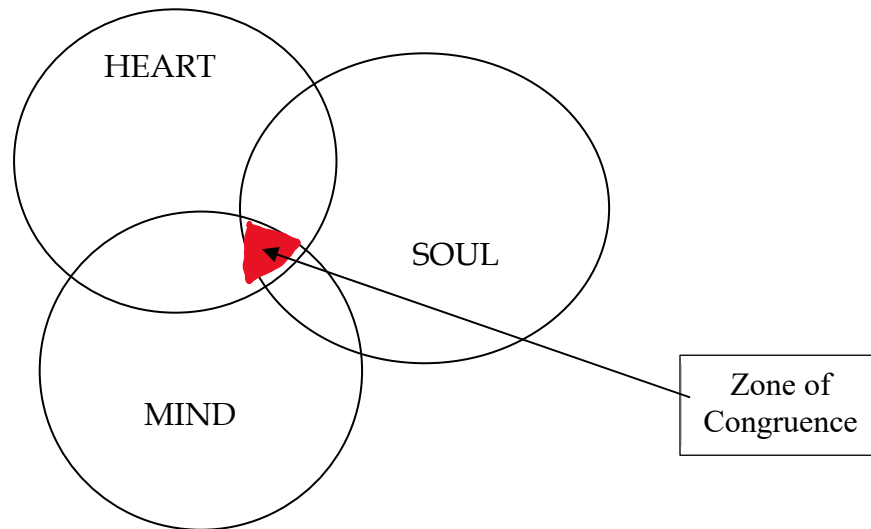
### **Connectivity of the Human Building Blocks**

1. The heart, soul, and mind are connected synergistically:
  - a. “For with the heart one believes . . . and with the mouth (mind) confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:10). The heart believes and the mind expresses that belief to transform our culture.
  - b. “And that my soul (mind) knows very well” (Ps. 139:14).
  - c. “My heart rejoices (soul) in the Lord” (1 Sam. 2:1).
2. Paul understood when Jesus identified the greatest commandment (Matt. 22:37), He identified the three building blocks He used to construct human beings and cited their connectivity: “For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12).
3. There is overlap between the heart and mind, the heart and soul, and the soul and mind. Where there is overlap is called the *zone of congruence* (ZOC). Therefore, Proverbs 23:7 has more meaning: “As a man thinks (mind) in his heart so he is.” In the ZOC, the mind is doing the thinking but with the value of the heart.

When Jesus talked about the body, he talked about it being joined together in unity. Paul used building terms to describe the spiritual body. He wrote that Jesus is the chief cornerstone “in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:21). Likewise, our heart, soul, and mind, while maintaining unique identity, are interconnected to form a unit represented by the *personal congruity* diagram in Figure 1.

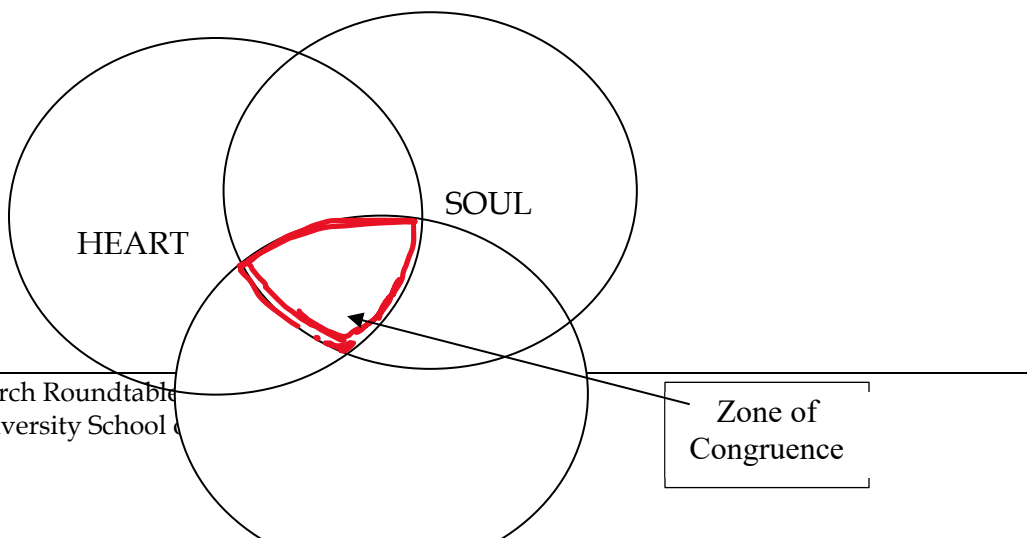
In Figure 1, circles represent the three building blocks. Notice the overlap between the heart and the mind, between the heart and the soul, and between the soul and the mind. The area of total overlap is the ZOC. The ZOC is relatively small and indicates the congruence among the heart, soul, and mind is low.

**Figure 1:** Relative Low ZOC Among the Heart, Soul, and Mind



Miller (2003) and Leaf (2013) confirmed that ingesting God’s Words tenaciously over time causes the heart, soul, and mind to coalesce (grow together), resulting in greater congruence among the three building blocks (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2:** Increased ZOC



The ZOC in Figure 2 is larger than the ZOC in Figure 1 because the power in God's Words that were ingested have caused the heart, soul, and mind to coalesce or grow in more unity. One would expect Jeremiah's ZOC to be large as a result of devouring God's Word: "When I discovered Your words, I devoured them. They are my joy (soul) and my heart's delight" (Jer. 15:16). Since Jesus was perfect in every respect, His ZOCe would totally encompass the three building blocks: "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30).

The increase in the ZOC is concluded to be the result of ingesting the power contained in Scripture for a 6-month period by the participants at Sedalia Church. The following data were obtained from a correlation study using the CSPP as the measuring instrument. The 12 members of Sedalia Community Church also completed the CSPP before and after the 6-month period. The character traits measured by this profile follow:

- SE = Spiritual Efficacy, AW = Awareness of God, LO = Love, JO = Joy, IP = Inner Peace
- PG = Patience/Gentleness, FA = Faith, KG = Kindness/Generosity, SC = Self-Control
- FO = Forgiveness, GR = Gratitude, CO = Compassion

*Note.* The term *spiritual efficacy* is used in lieu of *self-efficacy* because of the negative connotation of *self* among Christians.

The correlation of SE with each of the five character traits appears in Table 2. The top row, Pretest, shows the magnitude/confidence level of the correlation of each of the character traits with SE for the participants prior to the 6-month beta test. Row 2, Posttest, shows the magnitude/confidence level of the correlation after the 6-month seminar. The number before the back slash (/) is the magnitude of the correlation and can be between minus one (-1) and plus one (+1). The number after the (/) is the confidence that a correlation actually exists. A high confidence exists when this number is between .05 and .00. The smaller this value, the higher the confidence, with .00 being extremely high confidence. There was an amazing increase in the magnitude and confidence level of the correlation of CO with SE. The pretest magnitude of the correlation CO with SE was only .39 with a no confidence level of .14. After 6 months of focusing on and ingesting Scripture, the magnitude of correlation increased to .79, which is very high, with a confidence level of .00, which is extremely high confidence.

**Table 2:** Correlation of SE and Five Selected Character Traits

Test	Pretest	Post Test
AW	.52/.04	.79/.00
LO	.52/.04	.80/.00
JO	.59/.02	.74/.01
PG	.51/.04	.71/.01
CO	.39/.14	.79/.00

As the overarching finding of this study, the researcher opines that the power in God's Word assimilated by the participants penetrated barriers between the various character traits resulting in a significant increase in congruity among the traits evaluated. Based on these findings, the researcher developed a special training program that uses the biblical model of heart, soul, and mind as the basis of spiritual transformation of future kingdom entrepreneurs as they prepare themselves to run successful kingdom businesses. Named Rwanda Kingdom Entrepreneurship Caravan: Integrating Discipleship and Entrepreneurship for the Youth, this program was tested in two phases in Rwanda between 2012-2022. Phase 1, Who I am in Christ, takes participants through the transformation process illustrated in this paper. Phase 2, What I Do, is a series workshops to equip participants to run kingdom business. Miller addressed the theoretical basis for the content of the training; Habinshuti addressed the training as it was presented in Rwanda.

## Conclusion

The heart, soul, and mind are the building blocks Jesus, the Creator, used to create human beings; they are synergistically connected. The partnership established by the Creator results in joint responsibility between the Holy Spirit and each individual believer for the transformation of individuals and nations through spiritual growth and through spiritually managed kingdom businesses. The three steps to be used to assimilate the power contained in God's Word follow: (a) the Scripture verse is memorized with the mind, (b) the content of the verse is assimilated by the heart, and (c) the power contained in God's Word is manifested by growth of the soul and projected to transform society.

Personal Testimony: I, Richard Miller, suffered severely from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) upon return from combat in Vietnam in 1969. I had violent nightmares and experienced paralyzing fear at the thought of leaving the house. A small pamphlet by Norman Vincent Peale (1951), *Thought Conditioners*, had been given to me as I was boarding the plane to depart Vietnam. The pamphlet contained 40 Scripture verses and instructions for how to use them. Out of desperation, I committed to try the suggested process for 30 days. One morning, I stepped through the door and stopped in

amazement; I was excited about leaving the house! I checked my packet of Scriptures; I had processed 21 Scriptures. The power contained in the Scripture verses conquered the PTSD in 21 days and launched a life journey of memorizing and ingesting Scripture. Forty-three years later, this 21-day transformation process has been confirmed by Caroline Leaf (2013) in *Switch on Your Brain*. In Chapter 10, "How and Why the 21-Day Brain Detox Plan Works," Leaf described the brain detox plan in detail, which is very similar to the plan Jesus mapped out for me in applying Peale's *Thought Conditioners* in 1969.

"It is to the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter" (Prov. 25:2). We have been given the magnificent privilege of taking an exciting journey of discovery with our Creator to align our lives with His and then to transform our culture through God-honoring kingdom businesses!

### About the Author

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**Richard L Miller, DSL**, is a mentor and volunteer consultant with Regent Center for Entrepreneurship, which seeks to transform people and nations through business. Being a U.S. Army Veteran, Miller worked on various leadership, business consulting, and engineering projects with the U.S. Army and beyond. He holds a Masters' degree in Electrical Engineering from Oklahoma State University and a Doctorate of Strategic Leadership from Regent University. Miller developed the curriculum on integrating discipleship and entrepreneurship for the youth, which has been tested, validated, and implemented in Rwandan schools by the Schools Entrepreneurship Network.

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# Abraham Lincoln: A Wise and Just Servant Leader Motivated by Natural Law Principles, Faith, and Virtue

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One can hardly doubt the servant leader's contribution toward a more just society. Well-researched are the virtuous qualities of the servant leader. Not as well explored are the steadfast convictions and principled beliefs driving the servant leader's reasoning. This paper explores Abraham Lincoln's conviction of beliefs and steadfast principles primarily noted in his 1860 Cooper Union speech through the lens of natural law theory that serves as a foundation for his servant leadership style. It further asserts in companion to virtue in the servant leader is the principled belief in justice and unity that contributes to a *just* and flourishing civil polity for all. It is hopeful that this study of Lincoln's servant leadership, rooted in natural law, could benefit society in improving race relations, *just* public policy making, and *just* public leadership.

*Keywords:* Abraham Lincoln, natural law, servant leadership, virtue

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In leadership, a virtuous character matters, and how well a political leader reasons matters; its quality determines the pursuit of just or unjust policies. In vogue within leadership scholarship today is the role virtue plays in leadership; what is not in vogue is the matter of "good," or in the Thomistic sense, "right" reasoning. In today's post-modern culture, one might critically respond, "who or what determines right or good?" Yet, invariably from the ancient days to the present day, leadership—specifically servant leadership—yields a bountiful harvest of influence and goodness, such as justness upon the lives of others, communities, and polity when reasoning aligns well with the virtuous character of a political leader. It would be Cicero and Saint Thomas Aquinas, in their philosophical and theological discourse, would detail this important relationship between virtue and reasoning (MacIntyre, 1988). This relationship is important if one were to assess the moral quality of a leader's character and decision-making. Few historical and present-day people exhibit in their leadership evidence of

right reasoning and virtuousness if one were to evaluate leadership decision-making to include policymaking through the lens of natural law theory. Studying one's positive historical leaders, their motivations, worldview, and origin of reasoning can provide today's public and political leaders immeasurable insight into leadership that touches the heart of all generations and social-cultural backgrounds in terms of serving its citizens with justness that benefits all people. In particular, and for this paper, public and political leadership focusing on natural law could benefit race relations, just public policymaking, and *just* public leadership in general.

One such historical servant leader who was committed to justness, based on his reasoning stemming from natural law sentiments, is the decades-honored President Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln would reflect the wisdom of the natural law thinker and practitioner of virtue that was unlike politicians of his day, those before him, and those who came after him. Consistent with the theology of Aquinas, Lincoln's highest duty was to lead in the humblest humanly conceivable way according to William Wolf (1959) to fulfill what he believed was the will of God. Lincoln's life and leadership exhibited the fear of God reflected in Proverbs 9:10 (*King James Bible*, 1989) which sets one on the path of wisdom. The actions and decisions Lincoln would take to become president of the United States and fulfill his duties would transform his reputation from a politician to a servant leader. He would be a servant of a *just* cause, one that would bring to fruition—although with great personal and collective cost—freedom for the slave. Through personal and political suffering and trials, he would become one of the most admired American presidents in American history. The very nature of who Lincoln was in spirit and mind, albeit his human frailties, would catalyze his moral pursuits.

This paper will discuss, through a natural law theory lens, Lincoln's reasoning—his right or good reasoning, that is, the relationship between the "ends" he served or *telos* (conviction of fulfilling God's will), virtuousness (specifically justness), and servant leadership (seeking to protect the unalienable rights of the slave) as both candidate for president and as president to better understand its role in servant leadership. Specifically, exploration of Lincoln's more distinguishing and major decisions and speeches, such as his February 27, 1860 Cooper Union (CU) speech delivered at the Cooper Union Institute provides an opportunity to better understand the motivation and first causes of Lincoln's leadership. Lastly, this paper focuses on how public and political leaders can utilize this information in their servant leadership development. Important in arriving at these conclusions, analytic methods utilized for this paper relied heavily upon hermeneutic approaches, such as phenomenology as well as social-rhetorical methods. Lincoln's social-historical context and Lincoln's sense that the nation could slide backward rather than press forward over time toward the abolition of slavery provides the context leading up to his CU speech. It would be this speech that, according to Miller (2008), would secure his Republican presidential nomination, having also already provided a consistent moral argument in his speeches on slavery up until that point.

## Seeking to Understand Lincoln's CU Speech

Although Lincoln's overall beliefs toward slavery were established (Miller, 2008), his answers to solving this issue did not appear to be settled, either from the moment he sought a political vocation, during his time as an Illinois U.S. representative, his time seeking a federal Illinois Senate seat, or during his time as a U.S. president, or lastly through the end of his life as president of the United States. Lincoln deeply believed in justness toward all people. Further, the level, vigor, and convictions of his belief toward the abolition of slavery and its ultimate determination to eliminate it from American institutions is analogous to a war drum that beats louder and louder until war commences. To better understand Lincoln's views toward the morality of slavery in greater depth, discussed are two hermeneutic approaches to understanding Lincoln's speeches and actions. The first one involves phenomenology, the process of attempting to understand what Lincoln believed to be true as it relates to the moral "rightness" of the institution of slavery, of which he would use reason as a guide in his servant-leader decision-making. The second one involves a hermeneutic approach in seeking to understand the role that sociological factors and Lincoln's historical context played in his views on slavery, and thus, his public policy telos and mediating servant leader qualities encouraging his policy telos.

## The Phenomenology of Lincoln's Views on Slavery

Hans-George Gadamer (George, 2021) argues that to understand something is to experience it as true or the truth; it would not result from scientific method-type analysis. Thus, a hermeneutical interpretation of Lincoln's CU speech that references the Declaration of Independence would conclude that Lincoln's understanding of those unalienable rights penned in the Declaration of Independence, guaranteeing unalienable rights, would be the same rights endowed to all people equally. As such, these unalienable rights given and taken away by God only would also then mean a certain freedom for all, regardless of one's skin color. One might rightly deduce that Lincoln's CU speech, having deeply resonated with his audience, would also be viewed as truth in their estimation. Not only in their mind would they be confident of the truth, but also in their heart when reasoning, that it is natural to all people, echoes such a profound agreement as to the rightness of an argument and belief. This would be evident throughout America's northeast region as newspaper reports, such as those that not only shared with readers his speech, but also shared reactions to his speech. There was no lack of listener enthusiasm regarding Lincoln's moral aptitude extolled in his speech. A *New York Times* article dated the day of the speech, February 27, 1860, makes mention of Lincoln's extensively research-supported speech that took months to research, and as such, it electrified his hearers (Lincoln, 1860/2004). William Cullen Bryant, who introduced Lincoln for this important speech, spoke of Lincoln as one of the vanguards of liberty fighting the barbarism of slavery and of whom was not afraid to use their own hands to till their land rather than rely on the hands of slaves

("Republicans at Cooper," 1860). It was evident that those who knew Lincoln and those who heard Lincoln's speech, that Lincoln would be the epitome of the rising crescendo cultural attitude toward the longing to end slavery, which Lincoln would diligently fight to win that cause over subsequent months and years. Lincoln's CU address was an expression of his moral understanding, given his learning toward the matter, not only within human reasoning but the reasoning that understood God's divine purpose for humankind. For example, just as the Jews asked how such a man as Jesus attained such learning without training (*King James Bible*, 1989, John 7:15), one might also have been perplexed by Lincoln's well-articulated moral sentiment and argument questioning the institution of slavery noted in the CU speech, especially in his words to those in the South, whereby he argues that nowhere in the U.S. Constitution was slavery mentioned and, to his fellow Republicans regarding having the effect of reversing divine rule if they did not address this wrong (Basler, 1953). Through presenting an argument on the U.S. Constitution that also has its roots planted in the Declaration of Independence based upon natural law (Strauss, 1953, and Jaffa, 2012, as cited in Fornieri, 2016; Skousen, 2006), as well as addressing divine rule, Lincoln is integrating a moral argument whose origin is the law of God.

As such, the moral undertones of his reasoning within this CU speech require an interpretation that honors Lincoln's beliefs and worldview of God as a primary influence behind those assertions if Lincoln believed in those very unalienable rights articulated and expressed within the Declaration of Independence. But one may desire to know how these unalienable rights express themselves in the reasoning of how the late 1880s ought to view slavery as well as those very actions and steps a political leader might take to eradicate slavery if it did indeed contradict the nature of God regarding true and unalienable rights. It is in this context that Lincoln's words and decisions flowed from those natural laws emanating from divine and eternal laws he believed were the truth set forth by the Judeo-Christian word of God, not necessarily the tradition of the faith.

The phenomenon of Lincoln's reasoning sourced in what he believed was the truth is comparable to the theology of Aquinas and the philosophy of Aristotle, especially considering Lincoln's character of virtue and desire for unity. It would be his duty in a Ciceronian way and as president to absolve discrepancies and the misalignment between the Declaration of Independence's unalienable rights and the practice of slavery whereby he sees himself in a Lockean way as a trustee or steward of these unalienable rights and the common good; it was according to Miller (2008), a vast trust that those who were free gave him. It would be a matter of conscience culpability if Lincoln had not sought to address the unjust practice of slavery. Exploring Lincoln's guiding worldview would require a multidisciplinary approach to understanding Lincoln as a candidate for president and as president. Thus, in a Gadamerian way, exploring the phenomenon behind one's actions would require the use of multiple disciplines to better understand the whole picture, lest, according to Gadamer, one loses

the “whole of life” without exploring the multiple varieties of disciplines of knowledge by focusing on one discipline (Jasper, 2004). Hence, seeking the whole of Lincoln’s view toward slavery and the decisions he must make as president requires studying Lincoln through some of those multiple integrated lenses that, according to Jasper (2004), Gadamer ventured into, such as *theology* (that is, Lincoln’s views toward God and his relationship with God), *legal theory* (Lincoln’s use of reason and argument), or perhaps another discipline I recommend, *political philosophy* (Lincoln’s use of power to attain ends). Lincoln, an epitome of having the faculty of thoughtful reasoning, seems to take a Thomistic approach toward reasoning when it comes to his mindset, who, according to Jasper (2004), notes of Saint Thomas Aquinas, would deem necessary to have a God-centered rather than human-centered focus behind one’s reasoning. For Lincoln, this God-centered approach would serve as a foundation for the multitude of ends of his reasoning, whether it be his behavior, relationships with others (friend or foe), or even policymaking. Lincoln’s hermeneutic appears to be like the philosophy of Martin Luther, whom Jasper (2004) notes believed a hermeneutic of the Bible would be set free from substantiating church theology and instead allowing the Bible to serve as a sole arbitrator toward tradition while also considering the reader’s own experience as it relates to a meaning of the text. Lincoln’s analysis of what the Founding Fathers believed, noted in his CU speech, is an example of the plain interpretation of Scripture to support his reasoning in the very message he wished his listeners to understand. It would be why the effect of Lincoln’s reasoning is rooted in right reason that is accordingly associated with divine and eternal law that bears upon the witness of all cultures. In this case, according to Cantril’s 1965 study on human need and desire for freedom across multiple nations (1965, as cited in Christians & Traber, 1997) found as a consistent human value the freedom to act upon ideas to improve their self and their context, and freedom to make and act on choices.

### **Using Social-Rhetorical Methods to Analyze Lincoln’s CU Speech**

Lincoln’s CU speech further presents an opportunity for scholars of leadership to utilize socio-rhetorical methods to provide further insight into what Robbins (1996) asserts is important in the social-cultural analysis of a text so that one can better understand what the author seeks to communicate to others; this analysis is accomplished through exploring time-specific social roles, institutions, codes, and relationships among people. Within the social-historical context within which a leader makes decisions on a wide variety of issues, policies, etcetera, understanding the language of the writer or speaker is also helpful if more insight into a particular phenomenon is necessary.

Understanding language, according to Robbins (1996), might reveal who one’s friends and enemies might be. As an example, in Lincoln’s CU speech, one will find that Lincoln speaks to three distinct groups: the president and “fellow citizens of New York,” Southerners, and Republicans (Lincoln, 1860/2004, pp. 2, 6, 9). And, seeking to explore how his social-historical context informed, influenced, or mediated his message, can provide further insight into what Lincoln was thinking, what he believed, and why

he was willing to fight with every ounce of his being to not only try to keep the Union together but also end the institution of slavery. It is with these methods of inquiry in trying to understand such a complex political leader and servant leader that this paper strives toward as a goal. The inclusion of a discussion of these methods is to provide servant leaders with the significance of understanding our ways of knowing the truth we possess in our heart and mind, what we share with others, and further identifying with those very beliefs of servant leadership that we believe to be true as a phenomenon in our leadership development that is necessary to become a better servant leader. Understanding what we believe and sharing with others what is by nature a good servant leader provides a rich opportunity to produce a culture of servant leaders. Consequently, the reason to study servant leaders, such as Lincoln, is that it methodically lends insight into the nature of servant leadership. As with the leader today, the established social-cultural norms and roles pervasive in a society are not also without those winds of changing values pressing upon important societal institutions. And, if human history teaches us anything, it is that changing the status quo in those institutions embedded in the economic and social system would change the very way people live and interact with others and would indeed cause upheaval and stress for some people in society. For Lincoln, the northern abolitionist stance would find a friend in him. Yet, at the same time, he knew that the brewing anger of those in the southern states, recognizing abolition was on their heels after his CU speech, would require a very calculated and careful strategy if he wished to maintain a united nation. Progress toward preventing the spread of slavery was occurring through recent significant legislative and judicial decisions.

### **Lincoln's Realism: The Increasing Institutional Support of Slavery**

Lincoln understood the reality of slavery expanding in 1860 when he decided to run for president. The Compromise of 1850 would at least limit the spread of slavery into new territories; however, shortly thereafter, the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 would allow territories under the guise of the Declaration of Independence's doctrines of popular sovereignty that, according to Lincoln, believed that the Democratic Stephen Douglas perversely called upon the principle of self-government to decide for themselves if it would be a slave state or not (Goodwin, 2005). One might think in retrospect that postmodern reasoning, if this philosophical age had occurred earlier and was in existence in Douglas's time, might have been a basis for Douglas's perversion of the important principles of popular sovereignty and self-governing sanctioning state rights to determine one's status in life as a slave. Jasper (2004) writes of Jacques Derrida, the postmodern hermeneut that deconstructs language to the extent that there is no standard bearer such as God to provide the meaning in life, nor is there reasoning. While Derrida's thinking on the postmodern mind is at work in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, his philosophy speaks to the unreasonable and irrational mind that has plagued humankind since the fall of man – that is, that humans can easily pervert those concepts meant for good, such as self-governance and popular sovereignty to irrational

reasoning oriented toward the oppression of others. It is no wonder that Lincoln, who received his standards from a natural law orientation embedded in the Declaration of Independence (Goodwin, 2005) and his understanding of the Bible, would find views such as Douglas's worth addressing, refuting, and worth fighting against as a matter of law and policy, recognizing that natural law is the driver of his moral and legal philosophy. Consequently, Lincoln found it quite easy to speak of Douglas's interpretation of the Declaration of Independence as perverse; in the end, the Kansas-Nebraska Act would therefore reawaken and provide purpose for the Republican Lincoln's interest in running for the Illinois state Senate race (Goodwin, 2005), especially after the unjust 1857 Dred-Scott Supreme Court decision. In a sense, these events provided the resolve Lincoln needed to lead with fervor those moral ends that comported with his biblical worldview.

Unfortunately, for Southerners, moral and ethical reasons for abolishing slavery would not be a predominant value among its political leaders and overall population. As noted earlier, Lincoln would address Southerners in his CU speech. As with any other system whereupon practices that oppress and take advantage of others, it was not so difficult for Southerners and some Northern service organizations to irrationally justify their stance on the institution of slavery by seeking to tie it to legal and moral grounds. According to Faragher et al. (2003), referencing biblical scripture – albeit incorrect exegetical and hermeneutical interpretation – and finding it existing in Greek or Roman history were just a couple of rationalized reasons for slavery. Further, the economic reliance upon slavery to support the expansion of cotton production in America and abroad, due to the invention of the cotton gin, only reinforced slavery (Faragher et al., 2003). However, for a leader guided by a deep conviction based on a moral foundation, these reasons would not meet the muster of sound reasoning. By the 1830s, abolition would become a national movement through the work of different reformers (Faragher et al., 2003). Yet, according to Degler (1984), the changing culture would not end heavy-handed, government-sponsored retaliation against citizens and groups promoting freedom. Needed was a form of virtuous leadership that could move all citizens and leaders of various groups to collectively move in a direction that would yield the momentum necessary for long-lasting cultural change.

The constant struggle and fears expressed between the north and south regarding slavery would result, as noted in part earlier, in several legislative acts including the Compromise of 1850, Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, a very unjust Dred Scott Supreme Court decision, and continued rebellions such as that of John Brown (Faragher et al., 2003); these events, for the most part, would be responded to and addressed eloquently with fervor in Lincoln's CU speech. The South would view Lincoln's victory as an imminent threat to their commerce, economy, and way of life so much so that upon Lincoln winning the presidential election, southern states, one by one, would secede from the union (Faragher et al., 2003). Lincoln's views toward the moral wrongs of slavery would not waiver, however. Not only is this evident in his CU



speech, but also other correspondence. Just a couple of months later in May of 1860. in a letter written to the Massachusetts Dr. Theodore Canisius concerning German-speaking citizens, mentioned that Lincoln deplored “the oppressed condition of the blacks” and, as such, it would be inconsistent of him to approve of “any measure that infringes upon the inalienable rights” of any person “born in another land,” or who may “speak a language different from his from his own” (“Political,” 1860, p. 2). Lincoln’s commitment toward protecting inalienable rights for all people regardless of one’s race and language is not a customary practice throughout human history, yet, as noted earlier, according to Cantril (1965, as cited in Christians & Traber, 1997), the desire to be free is a desire that all humans share. As such, it is important to discuss the natural origin of this common desire of all humans rooted in the natural law tradition that since the beginning of humankind is embedded in the DNA of human reasoning. And part of leading people in a way that promoted those rights shared by all is an indicator of great leadership practiced by those throughout history who have brought significant social change to societies and nations alike.

### **Lincoln’s Jurisprudence Rooted in Natural Law**

Jurisprudence, exploring those significant questions behind the philosophy of law, such as what law is, whether it is bad, good, or based on custom (Grilliot & Schubert, 1992) is a natural process that humans engage in. Human reasoning has not necessarily yielded consistency in defining what exactly natural law is. It can be, however, more easily identified when human laws infringe upon natural laws that human beings know, by their innate sense of reason, are wrong. When humans determine that actions (whether individually or collectively) are unjust, there is a strong conviction to address those wrongful actions. More modern-day examples might include the tension between the state and its citizens, such as state-mandated COVID-19 vaccinations and individual privacy and self-determination and liberty. When any group or individual perceives another entity, such as the state, as unjust in their policy or laws, humans will inevitably seek a resolution to these perceived injustices. While one’s philosophizing may not have the character of calm and focused study of the laws itself and, in fact, may take on quite aggressive and uncivilized behaviors of those not in power, there is a degree to which the offended party believes in their gut that something is unjust about the relationship or action. Whether or not leaders or citizens have practiced a form of reasoning that yields right reasoning (discussed later) is an entirely different matter in that the offended party believed another transgressed a natural right law. It is, for this reason, why we turn to John Locke’s philosophy on natural rights before turning to Lincoln’s views.

John Locke (ca. 1689-1690/2011) argues in his *Second Treatise of Government* that natural liberty does not allow enslaving others or themselves, and people, in this sense, have a “double right” of freedom, first in their person and second, as a right to inherit “his father’s goods” (p. 100). These rights are rooted in eternal law and extend the

application to and limit the power of those in authority regarding these rights. For example, rulers are subject to the laws of God and nature and cannot be exempt or provide an exemption from the obligation to eternal law (Locke, ca. 1689-1690/2011). Deduced then is that only God can take away natural rights sourced in God. And, while God has given the world in common to all people, God has also allowed people to make the best use of what has been given in common. For example, people as their own person who with the labor of their hands can rightly say that its result is the right to own their property, also then further supporting the right of inheriting the result of the father's goods that results from the work of the father's hands (Locke, ca. 1689-1690/2011), of which of course cannot occur if slavery exists. As a result, a grave injustice against freedom in one's person affects not only the present generation but all enslaved progenies. For Locke (ca. 1689-1690/2011), it is the government's duty then to restrain people from invading the rights of others and further punishing those for transgressing the rights of others to maintain peace among people. Lincoln understood this duty well.

Lincoln, in his CU speech, albeit reasoning through the rule of law, also applies nicely the construct of natural law when he arduously refutes the court's decision (inferring the Dred Scott Supreme Court case) that the U.S. Constitution considered slaves as property (Basler, 1953) of another. In analyzing and interpreting the Douglas-Lincoln debates, Dyer (2010) asserts Lincoln's assessment of the Dred Scott decision was based on moral principles grounded in human nature, which also guides the U.S. Constitution, and then also goes on to explain William Wolf and Reinhold Niehbur's arguments as to the importance of understanding Lincoln's political ideology through his theology. After a comprehensive review of Lincoln's rhetorical views through a theological lens, Dyer (2010) presents nicely Lincoln's political philosophy as the theological axiom between America's Constitution and those natural rights given by God to all people. Further, as indicated throughout Lincoln's political life, of which Wolf (1959), in his work *The Almost Chosen People*, provides a thoughtful review of Lincoln's faith, religion, and views toward providence. Gleaned then from the work of Dyer and Wolf on Lincoln's theology and applied the topic of leadership, one not only gains a better idea of Lincoln's political philosophy, but also how he would lead by character and sound reasoning as a servant leader. As a servant leader, Lincoln led with a moral and creative imagination rooted in his understanding of who God is and how God works with His Creation to bring about His ends and purposes established albeit the fickleness and fallen human condition that some people might believe would be difficult to utilize when it comes to fulfilling God's plans. Albeit human frailty is common to all including Lincoln, it would be the worldview lens through which Lincoln would seek to lead and make those important decisions that had significant consequences for a nation. According to Wolf (1959), those decisions that were moral in nature and dependent upon foundational principles, Lincoln looked to God in making those decisions. Accordingly, his Christian faith would provide the divine space through which Lincoln would strive to align his will with God's will, and in the process

of doing so, it would result in a form of reasoning that, according to MacIntyre (1988), the natural law theologian Aquinas and philosopher Aristotle would call right reasoning. But before arriving at this important topic of right reasoning, needed is a brief exploration of Lincoln's theological beliefs.

### **Lincoln's Source of Right Reasoning: Not by Creed, But by God's Word**

Phenomenologically important to the origin of Lincoln's servant leadership, e.g., having acknowledged God's supreme government, Lincoln's reasoning, and decision-making according to Wolf (1959) was developed through his unyielding desire to do God's will rather than relying on human understanding. With God as the origin of Lincoln's motivation to lead as a servant to a sovereign God and through God's purposes and power rather than man's through their political power and might, Lincoln's servant leadership is quite different from the norm of leadership utilized within political settings. Given Lincoln's worldview, it was incumbent on Lincoln's mind to address the very problem of slavery. It would take every ounce of his being to be humble before God and even lose his own life as a result, to fight for the cause of freedom for an oppressed people who could not fight for themselves within the current political and judicial system. Lincoln, thus, was on a determined path to correct the lie America was living due to enslaving Black people, which was contrary to the Declaration of Independence (Wolf, 1959).

As it relates to Lincoln on the emancipation of slaves (albeit stated after becoming president) and further providing a historical contextual understanding of Lincoln's beliefs, Wolf (1959) provides two examples of Lincoln's views toward emancipation. First, Carpenter notes Chase Steward was a witness to Lincoln himself and stated that he would make a solemn vow to God to declare slaves free if General Lee were "'driven back from Pennsylvania.'" (p. 17). Second, Gideon Welles's diary, published by *Atlantic Monthly* (1909, as cited in Wolf, 1959), notes that if victory was given in a forthcoming battle, the emancipation of slaves would follow. His commitment and focus on God were notable on many occasions, and this would determine his philosophy behind several problems he needed to address. When it came to understanding slavery and self-government, Lincoln saw a clear distinction between the two based on his understanding of God's word. For example, Lincoln made it known that whites were able to self-govern, yet against an ancient faith of all beings having been created equally when one governs himself and another (as with slavery) it would be considered despotism, not self-governance; therefore, slavery could not be morally right in Lincoln's view, as it would go against deeply held beliefs that consent of the governed is a natural right (Wolf, 1959). In another example, Lincoln draws upon both divine and natural law during a debate with Douglas at the 1854 Illinois State Fair. According to Goodwin (2005), Lincoln invokes the Declaration of Independence in criticizing the Kansas-Nebraska Act as a perpetuation of slavery that takes away both self-governance and governing another man without the other's consent and further arguing that the

spread of slavery would prompt war against the Declaration of Independence. Further, by rejecting slavery and nullifying a law that was not just, Lincoln reflects what Koterski (2002) notes of Aquinas's theology regarding human law's necessity of having a foundation in divine and eternal law. Lincoln's leadership, thus, is not dictatorial or coercive, but instead deeply respects the individual agency of others who consent to his leadership due to his unyielding servant's heart committed to the promotion of equality and justice.

Lincoln's conviction further was consequently grounded in his reasoning of divine law as applied to natural law and, subsequently, human law, an alignment among each level of law that Aquinas would articulate in his work, *Summa Theologica*. Aquinas presents his answer to the question of whether or not there is in us a natural law by noting that the rational creature's natural inclination in acting toward a proper end (that is, eternal law) is known as natural law (Aquinas, ca. 1265-1274/1947). Understanding Aquinas's concepts of proper ends and natural inclinations appear on the surface as a complex concept to master. However, Deutsch et al. citing Strauss (as cited in Fornieri, 2016) note the necessity of genuinely knowing what is true in making normative judgments. This true standard, in Lincoln's mind, was the foundational belief and worldview behind the words of the Declaration of Independence which would then exhibit the wisdom of God. This wisdom and knowledge of God would require proper practices, behavior, and holiness, as well; to know God, according to Ray Vander Laan (2006), is to have the same character as the rabbi (or teacher) as they walk with God. Intertwined then together is both reason and virtue rightly centered and focused on God's divine law that would serve as the central focus of Lincoln's servant leadership mindset. This relationship between reason and virtue, understood throughout the ages, is evident in the philosophy of Aristotle, Cicero, and Aquinas.

### **Virtue Guiding Right or Rational Reasoning**

Virtue is an important characteristic in leadership and can determine the quality of the leader's actions and decisions; thus, drawing from the classical literature on the topic can be quite valuable in one's analysis of the quality of Lincoln's ethical and servant leadership quality. For example, Aquinas's (ca. 1265-1274/1947) natural law informing human law is also congruous to Cicero's rule of law philosophy (Ebenstein & Ebenstein, 1991) asserting the validity of law for all nations and times. Also important to this discussion is Cicero's philosophy regarding virtue and what it takes to develop virtue. Cicero believed that all humans, regardless of race, could attain virtue if they found a good guide (Ebenstein & Ebenstein, 1991). Aristotle's beliefs also include this philosophy. Aristotle referred to the relationship between virtue and reasoning as right reasoning or rational reasoning, and Aquinas would assert that right reasoning would require education in virtue and moral development and friends who are willing to teach virtue (MacIntyre, 1988). Differing from Aquinas's predecessors, however, was determining who might be the best teacher. Because the precepts of natural law are an

expression of divine law, God in his sovereignty is the best legislator and teacher of humankind (MacIntyre, 1988). Aquinas, having followed Aristotle's philosophy in part, also importantly differs from Aristotle as he regards the natural inclination of a person to lean toward moral evil, noting that it would be God's divine grace that would provide the ultimate remedy of this natural inclination, according to Aquinas's *Summa Theologica* (MacIntyre, 1988). For Lincoln, his ultimate teacher of virtue was God. While Lincoln has flaws, as with all humans, one cannot disagree that Lincoln's virtuous character oftentimes was beyond reproach. Those virtues Lincoln extolled throughout his life, given this analysis of his life and experiences, specially developed under the fire of trials he faced, which included patience, docility, honesty, decency, righteousness, and kindness. In response to the newly chosen Republican candidate Lincoln, the Michigan Republican State Committee would say that the West could not find a more fit candidate than Lincoln, given his "exuberant vitality . . . rude strength . . . cordial heart . . . straightforward honesty, manly firmness and intellectual vigor of the Western character" ("The Nominations," 1860, p. 1).

In reading several accounts of Lincoln's life, one could estimate that he was a teacher and model of virtue, which would lead to good reasoning, obeying God, and further motivating him to bring about justness for those who were enslaved. His right reasoning guided by virtue is necessary for a genuine servant leader. The servant leader bound by duty to virtue further echoes Cicero's philosophy noted in his work *On Obligations* (ca. 44 B.C.E./2000) what is necessary to encourage duty to others and what is a necessary foundation for right reasoning. Cicero argues that there is a true law that is universal and eternal whose commands result in natural duties toward others rather than necessarily natural rights, which also guide one to discern what is good and what is evil – respectively, that which is in harmony and not in harmony with human nature (Koterski, 2002). This significance of right reason bounded by virtuousness, which is difficult for humans to accomplish on their own, necessitates characterizing Godly virtue as not only the nexus or mediator for right reasoning, but also for servant leadership. Lincoln's virtue and duty to others serve as a model of virtue, and inherently a leader of virtue with a profound duty to others serves as a model for those who desire to lead in such a fashion as Lincoln did.

Lincoln did not develop these virtues overnight but developed them throughout his life. It was in trials and difficulty through the loss of those he loved, struggles with depression, etcetera while engaging his conscience and spirit to determine to do good, that he grew in virtuousness. Lincoln understood throughout his life that the source of all comfort was God. While others who grew up with different trials, hence forging a more negative response such as that with the life of Hitler or others facing similar challenging childhood situations, this was not the case with Lincoln. Lincoln's childhood and adult trials would prepare him to become the virtuous leader he needed to become to pursue with conviction the end of slavery in a world and country that did not as easily see the same depravity in slavery as Lincoln did. His bearing toward

justice and justness historically has blinded people in terms of having a lack of zeal toward such virtue. It would only be through the William Wilberforces of history who took hold of the cause of abolition to such a degree that it would cost a leader dearly – whether in health or death – for doing such.

A virtuous character disposition such as Lincoln's does not occur without yielding one's mind and will toward that which is virtuous and good. According to Bonaventura, a difference between conscience and synderesis is that God has implanted in each human heart the ability to judge in a right manner, avoid evil, and instead do what is right through one's will ("Synderesis," n.d.). Lincoln's judgment was right, and his disposition was to follow good rather than evil. Although Lincoln loved people and conversation, he took time to study, pray, reflect, and think to guide his decisions and behavior in a right manner rather than an evil manner. Lincoln's virtuous disposition is necessary for him to reason well as a leader. Further, he held in deep regard the rule of law as well as the spirit and foundation of truth behind those laws. In writing his CU speech, noting again that it took several months for him to research and write (Lincoln, 1860/2004), one could only imagine Lincoln's commitment to ensuring his words were found to be an accurate statement of historical truth and veracity regarding what each Founding Father believed in when framing the U.S. Constitution. The commitment of his will toward regarding the good, as it relates to truthfulness, is evident in his analysis and communication of his findings within his CU speech, and it further indicates how important to servant leadership is the ability to communicate and convince one's hearers of the leader's reasons for a position or course of direction a leader desires to take.

### **Virtuousness As a Nexus Between Natural Law and Servant Leadership**

Virtuousness allows people to have a proper perspective of themselves in relationship to others, and as a result, the person will focus on others more if their desire truly is to serve the needs of others. This focal point on others girded in virtuousness that yields judging or reasoning rightly occurs when the political or public servant sees himself as a steward or trustee of its citizens. The notion of the ruler as a steward or trustee is a position that Locke (ca. 1689-1690/2011) takes and affirms that the extent of legislative power that government is entrusted with uses only to those ends that secure the property of people. Locke further notes regarding subordination of commonwealth powers that government trust may be forfeited when a legislative body acts contrary to that trust given to them. Lincoln, as a time-tested and established reputable trustee or steward of the unalienable rights of every person, would increasingly, throughout his life, become more adamant about the emancipation of slaves. His conviction as a younger politician, who was continuously molded by his beliefs that God could allow the perpetuation of slavery to exist, grew to a point when he finally yielded to God's divine law that slaves must be emancipated; if he decided otherwise, America, according to a reply of Lincoln to an emancipation memorial presentation by Chicago

Christians September 13, 1862 (as cited in Ostergard, 2008), may meet God's divine judgment to a nation that oppresses others. Jaffa (as cited in Fornieri, 2016) affirms that Lincoln often cited Thomas Jefferson's warning of divine punishment regarding slavery noted in Koch and Peden's (1993, as cited in Fornieri, 2016) work published on Jefferson's writings. Consequently, Lincoln laid hold of his predecessor's warning. As noted earlier, the time was ripe for change as more people believed in the moral evil of slavery; thus, Lincoln had a keen sense of insight into the past, why society had not changed course [most likely due to its tendency toward inaction], and insight and foresight of what may come if slavery was not de-institutionalized. These capacities are important to the servant leader who has a deep understanding of human want, will, nature, and being, measured against God's standards rather than man's standards.

Patterson (2003) notes servant leaders are visionary in the sense that the leader sees the vision of a person in an organization "as a viable and worthy person," (p. 4). and as a result, will assist another in attaining that state. This sentiment is like that of Lincoln's vision on a more macro scale in terms of seeing all people viable and worthy as people free from enslavement. Lincoln's vision, however, would mirror God's vision for humankind which, as noted already, merges eventually with God's created order noted in the book of Genesis, Chapter 1 (*King James Bible*, 1989) that his created human beings would rule over the beasts of the field rather than over one another when it comes to subjecting to one another. It would be Jesus Christ himself that would note that man desires to rule over one another, but if one were a follower of Jesus, they would need to serve one another as noted in the book of Mark in 10:43-44 (*King James Bible*, 1989). Lincoln, while earnestly desiring to save the Union would only see a turn of events when he became committed to emancipating the enslaved person. It is quite common to read that Lincoln's top priority was to save the Union and not end slavery, and while there are several arguments for this sentiment, one cannot dismiss (nor Lincoln himself if he were alive) that the primary reason the Civil War began was the South seceding from the Union due to a fear that Lincoln would end slavery for good (Faragher et al., 2003). The Civil War, too often called a needless war, was not a needless war at all, but was a necessity, given such depravity of man through ill or wrong reason rooted in vice and holding on to that vice so tight that it would take a war to break its hold. Lincoln's vision of a united nation was not a vision without justice for all; a united nation could not exist under the injustice of slavery throughout perpetuity and progeny that is contrary to both natural and divine law. In considering God's providence over humankind and Lincoln's use of the Declaration of Independence as a basis for leading all people toward freedom, any slavery would contradict God's will and, in this defiance of God's justice, would be judgment for the whole nation, not just one section of the nation (Wolf, 1959). Justice for Lincoln is not something that has a life of its own but is instead deeply rooted in whether it agrees with God's will and laws, whether in action, deed, policy, or law it comports with God's divine and eternal law. To strive to analyze slavery outside of this lens results in the very perspective of injustice in which those in the South and even the North were entrenched. If justice, as a characteristic of

discernment, is a corresponding virtuous characteristic of the servant leader noted in Lanctot and Irving's (2010) work, then required of serving another is the leader understanding God's divine laws and principles. The book of Proverbs, as noted earlier, would call this *wisdom*—its requisite is fearing the Lord (*King James Bible*, 1989, Proverbs 9:10). Wisdom, according to van Dierendonck and Patterson (2015), is the facet of foresight and stewardship in servant leadership. Lincoln's actions reflect humility before God born out of diligence in serving God. In other words, his character and reasoning were not void of attention and commitment to learning. Applying MacIntyre's (1988) understanding of Aquinas's theology to Lincoln's philosophy results in the conclusion that Lincoln's reasoning was not of deficient education incapable of exercising sound practical reasoning. If one were to take this principle to heart, then it would be appropriate to deduce a lack of true virtue and its development in those who supported slavery, and as a result, in supporting slavery, they would have lacked sound reasoning. Having a lack of education in virtue, however, is not enough to excuse the irrational or insufficient knowledgeable person a pass on accountability. Aquinas, reflecting on the book Deuteronomy and the Apostle Paul's writings, asserts that human beings knowing God's standards regarding justice through His law are to be accountable to that knowledge (MacIntyre, 1988). Specifically referring to Paul's exhortation in Romans 2:15 (*King James Bible*, 1989) that the law is written on the heart of a person might then bring into question, "why then does a person need training or an education?" An answer may lie in part that while the law (e.g., divine law) is written on the heart of a person, it does not mean that the person will act upon what is right, but may reject it, and as such, allow a person's reasoning to lead him or her astray from what is good. Resulting is the practice of vice, that which is contrary to good, and that which leads to ill or wrong reason, such as that of defending and rationalizing slavery.

The most important virtuous characteristic of the servant leader is one who has a compassionate love for others in a way that encourages servant-leader behaviors that empower others, are authentic, provide stewardship, and provide direction (van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015). Within a society, Hooker (as cited in Locke, ca. 1689-1690/2011) writes of justice and charity requiring a foundation and obligation of mutual love among people that form duties owed toward one another. Accordingly, without obligating people to love one another through ongoing servant leadership, it is difficult then to create a society of justice and charity. Several instances in Lincoln's life, too numerous in number to detail sufficiently here, exemplified well virtues of love, justice, and charity. Goodwin's book, *Team of Rivals* (2005), encapsulates these examples in the historical account of Lincoln's leadership, with the title of the book referencing who it was Lincoln would select as members of his Cabinet. Most political leaders today would find it quite difficult to muster the fortitude to pursue such a cohort. However, because Lincoln did muster the capacity to select these individuals as part of his Cabinet, he personifies an unmatched ability to harness the necessary talents, skills, and abilities to select those he believed would assist well in serving all Americans, serving ultimately



as a trustee of those endowed unalienable rights expressed within the Declaration of Independence and enshrined in the U.S. Constitution.

### **Encouraging Servant Leadership That Is Grounded in Natural Law**

It is hopeful this paper accomplished its goal of communicating the significance of Lincoln's servant leadership analyzed through the lens of natural law using phenomenological and social-cultural-historical methods. This work only provides a small snapshot of who Lincoln was in spirit, intellect, virtue, and desire. If anything at all from this analysis that could provide for further exploration or integration into one's servant leadership development, it would be perhaps considering the following sentiments as points for starting one's journey toward integrating what our great thinkers of the past considered was necessary for a good and excellent life, of which many already realize when it is dependent upon virtuousness, it has the capacity to influence others positively. Consequently, principles gleaned from this study to guide the servant leader (regardless of which sector they lead in) include: 1) knowing the importance of studying God's Word and allowing it to transform the leader, 2) focusing one's mind toward the development and practice of virtuousness, which relies upon virtuous teachers committed to helping others grow, 3) allowing virtue to guide one's reasoning toward right and good actions, 4) learning to recognize when irrational or wrong reasoning has taken hold of leaders or followers, 5) seeing oneself as a steward or trustee of the rights of others with a duty toward one another to take to heart the importance of those rights shared in common with others, 6) making moral decisions using standards of what is good before God, 7) seeing others as those made in the image of God and treating them as such, 8) making course changes when needed and not being afraid to do so, 9) recognizing that a course of events is not always discernable, but there is a purpose God wills to occur that is fulfilled through the course of human events, therefore necessitating a commitment toward goodness and justice regardless of the situation, and 10) learning to lead with wisdom. As one can conclude from this list, this focus of servant leadership is not necessarily just a relationship one has with others, but the relationship that one has with serving God. While some scholars and students may find this discussion on Lincoln as a servant leader outside the contemporary literature on servant leadership, it is hopeful that this discussion will engage leaders in exploring the moving force behind good servant leaders who have a history of utterly understanding what drives their decision-making and thoughtful leadership toward others.

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#### **About the Author**

Dr. Jacqueline Faulhaber's experience has included helping organizations in for-profit, government, and church sectors become more effective in reaching their vision, mission, goals, and objectives. She served in the Air Force and currently serves as a senior lecturer and advisor for the University of South Dakota in the Political Science Department, and as an affiliate faculty member at Johnson University's School of

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# Nelson Mandela: Leading in Volatile and Uncertain Environments

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*Roundtable: Servant Leadership Roundtable*

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The purpose of this article is to make it possible for leaders to have a better understanding of the overarching idea of servant leadership as well as the qualities that define servant leaders. An examination of Nelson Mandela's style of leadership is used as a model to better comprehend the notion of servant leadership as described by Robert Greenleaf. Greenleaf is widely regarded as the person who pioneered the idea of servant leadership. This report aims to discuss the significance of servant leadership from the perspective of one of the greats in a turbulent and unpredictable environment with base points on leading through service, remembering servant leadership is a choice, and leading with servant leadership. Compassion, respect, and sacrifice are just a few of the components that are essential to the servant-leadership style of leadership. An examination of Mandela's leadership style as that of a servant leader offers a context within which servant leadership can be better understood, while also attempting to determine whether or not leadership in today's world exhibits attributes that are characteristic of servant leadership.

*Key words:* servant leadership, leadership, characteristics

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Agreeing with Nelson Mandela's life and accomplishments, universal acclaim is a powerful source of motivation and education for political and business leaders. The legacy of Mandela's servant leadership continues to live on, generating overwhelming agreement on the beneficial impact he made both during his life and after he passed away. In servant leadership, the leader is required to work hard to meet the needs of their subordinates in contrast to the conventional belief that subordinates should strive to please their superiors. Typically, we see a leader as someone whose subordinates should want to impress. To the philosophy of servant leadership, if you do this, your employees will be able to focus on their work and the demands of the client, resulting in greater productivity. However, only some things are necessarily based on organizational needs. Social issues and environments have a substantial impact on how one leads. The beauty of servant leadership is its global applicability. Anyone may possess the characteristics of a servant leader. This report aims to discuss the

significance of servant leadership from the perspective of one of the greats – Nelson Mandela – in a turbulent and unpredictable environment.

### **Leading Through Service**

“Our human compassion binds us to one another – not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learnt how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future” (Mandela, 2000, para. 4).

The notion is widely accepted within politics and describes servant leadership as a concept geared at bringing about social equality. In today's world, division is often accepted as the standard. Those on opposing sides, whether in politics or any other arena, are more interested in preventing agreement than in reaching out for mutual understanding. According to Reynolds (2014), servant leadership, with its emphasis on love, care, and service to those who are less privileged, has the potential to be an effective antidote to patriarchal binds. This is because servant leadership can act as a driving force for the generation of discourse on integrative approaches to organizational leadership. Having foresight, awareness, and the ability to listen, empathize, and care for others are essential qualities for leaders during a crisis (Reynolds, 2014). According to the findings of research carried out by Horsman and Spears (2018), the purpose of servant leadership is to start a link with the people being led in a way that results in better societies.

However, that idea is driven by various viewpoints on servant leadership, and egalitarianism is one of those perspectives (Liu et al., 2019). Egalitarianism is predicated on the principle that, in terms of their innate moral standing, all persons are on an equal footing with one another. Additionally, due to the diversity of ways other civilizations interpret the same principles, some communities link servant leadership with empathy and humility (Irving, 2010). This is because of the myriad ways other societies interpret the same ideas. As a result, the philosophy envisioned by Langhof and Guldenberg (2020) may differ in terms of how it is understood and how it is put into practice. However, one aspect of servant leadership stands out from the rest; it is a philosophy of leadership that places a greater emphasis on the qualities of the person rather than the use of scientific methods (Kumar, 2018). Because of this, the implementation of this leadership style in South Africa can be traced back to Nelson Mandela. He was the first African to hold the president's office in the nation.

After a protracted war for the nation's independence, which was eventually won in 1994, the country finally gained its freedom. Nevertheless, according to Arndt (2018), this marked the beginning of the post-apartheid era, even though legal independence had been given in 1961. After Mandela's triumph, a new era of servant leadership was ushered in within this environment. To commemorate the beginning of a new era and give birth to this ideology, South Africa's president appealed to the country's populace, imploring them to join forces and participate cooperatively in the process of national

healing and construction (Falzon, 2015). In doing so, the president did not show any prejudice towards anybody, but concentrated on the country's healing and construction. Therefore, the goal was to maintain justice while contributing to society's general advancement.

Even though many people expected the president to extract revenge, the subsequent acts that he demonstrated were selfless; instead of focusing on repairing and building up the nation, he focused on building up the country. In this sense, he advocated the concept of forgiving one's transgressions while simultaneously remembering them while putting even more considerable importance on fostering growth and bringing people together. The attributes of humility and empathy, paired with a dedication to equality, are characteristics that the president should show in his or her capacity as chief executive (Tilghman-Havens, 2018).

These characteristics should be linked with a commitment to equality. In this situation, Mandela proved that despite his power, he was a humble and compassionate man even though he held that authority. Here is an excellent example: Mandela was concerned about the welfare of all South African people and what would become of them if they were discriminated against. Specifically, he was concerned about what would happen to them. Because of this, he campaigned for peace and collaboration among all the participants in the procedure responsible for the country's extraordinary accomplishments. Again, he ensured that the conditions that led to the division of South Africans remained constant. Mandela could steer his nation toward almost complete freedom from discrimination thanks to his position as an influential leader. As a notable leader, he raised the awareness of his followers by appealing to their more exalted beliefs and aspirations (Morse, 2008). He even encouraged many of his followers to educate themselves, stating that doing so would be the key to their success. Mandela and his business partner Oliver Tambo founded the first African law practice in 1952. Mandela served as the volunteer-in-chief of the campaign at this time, traversing the country to increase people's awareness and organize resistance against prejudicial regulation. In addition, he successfully advanced the Freedom Charter, which the African National Congress (ANC) ultimately accepted.

During the time that Mandela was the leader of the Congress, he was able to motivate his people by assisting them in comprehending the significance of his goals and the principles they represented. He urged them to build their idea of what is vital for the country, such as the battle for equality by getting rid of racial prejudice, and he encouraged them to do so (Friedman, 1962). This energizing leadership has been crucial in assisting the nation in overthrowing the apartheid system and building it into a stable modern democracy. In his lectures, delivered while going to every region of the nation, he motivated and persuaded the people, adding his self-assurance that he could do something to end the apartheid (O'Fallon, 2012). At the same time, he cautioned the populace not to allow themselves to be bullied by the ruling elite and not to fight back, either physically or verbally, no matter how difficult things were.

Mandela began a road toward wealth despite the terrible transgressions committed against him and his fellow Black people in South Africa. According to Mandela, the purpose of the effort was to aid future generations – an idea that has brought international attention to the nation. The country's economy is comparable to that of Western and European nations, making it the most developed nation on the African continent (Fawell, 2006). Therefore, the sacrifices made in servant leadership are not intended to benefit the leaders, but rather the community as a whole and the world in general.

### **Remember, Servant Leadership is a Choice**

“Honesty, sincerity, simplicity, humility, pure generosity, absence of vanity, readiness to serve others – qualities which are within easy reach of every soul – are the foundation of one’s spiritual life” (Mandela, 2011, p. 6).

The concept of servant leadership has spread worldwide, both individually and nationally, even though many other leaders have assumed the role after Mandela. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Mandela's chosen ideology made it possible to establish organizations and frameworks that have, to this day, maintained their position as the most authoritative ones (Baker & Baker, 2017). On the other hand, several scandals have recently come to light in the nation as a direct result of changes in those who hold positions of authority. However, the fundamental concepts and underlying institutions have always worked against these individuals. The efforts ultimately resulted in a former president's prosecution, unprecedented in many other nations. Because of this, South Africa's founding fathers’ attitude of treating people as servants prevailed. As a result, the nation achieved a position of stability with a reduced number of people suffering.

However, the propensity of the people to elect leaders without the concept is deeply ingrained in their hearts and has put the democracy of the nation and the people's health in peril. Because of this, constant attempts to ensure continuity of the spirit necessitate thorough screening of the political leaders, which is difficult in and of itself. Understanding what it means to practice servant leadership and what it includes is essential to overcoming long-standing problems in South Africa and other nations (Ferch, 2011). The rise to power of individuals uninterested in the welfare of the people in a society, whether developing or already established, poses the greatest danger. As a result, several routines and efforts must be built and maintained to guarantee that servant leadership is the norm across the nation. Establishing regulations that indefinitely exclude someone from running for political office if they have committed acts that violate their integrity is one of the essential steps that may be taken (Ramsey, 2006). In this scenario, the systems must be implemented utilizing procedures designed to assist the general populace, not particular persons or specific organizations (Mitroff, 2004). Commissions on ethics and anti-corruption, as well as a robust judiciary, are examples of such institutions.



Consequently, the reason for the existence of these institutions is to ensure that people are held accountable and responsible for their behaviors. Suppose these institutions are appropriately coordinated with one another and given enough resources. In that case, it will be far more difficult for those in positions of authority to misuse the privileges that come with their jobs (Kincaid, 2017). To guarantee that compliance is mandatory and that failure to do so would result in legal action, a method like this must be implemented at all offices, even those at the local level. Because this strategy and these mechanisms are in place, those with other intents than serving the public will be prevented from participating because they will not have such opportunities (Spears, 2002). Those who feel a sense of duty to help others will find it more exciting to occupy these positions and work toward improving the world and the nation where they live (Song, 2020).

On the other hand, it is common knowledge that charitable acts should start in the family. Therefore, it is essential to establish communities committed to upholding high moral standards. As a result, community and local leaders need to be engaged to guarantee that the correct moral principles are included as an essential component of the people's upbringing (Nandram & Vos, 2010). As a result, the idea needs to have some bearing on family units and communities in which appropriate moral and ethical norms are greatly prized. The initiative effectively ensures that people vying for leadership positions or other significant tasks are prepared to maintain the necessary values and standards by providing them with the necessary tools. Then again, the same procedures and structures already in place in the local community will be able to record individual characteristics to track who should be given leadership responsibilities in the future. The alternative, although giving the impression of being discriminatory, is more expensive, and its effects will have far-reaching repercussions.

Consequently, it is essential to construct profiles of people based on their native communities. Local and community leaders, members of the church, and other people renowned for their strong moral character are one means to achieve this goal (Havenga, 2005). Give these individuals permission to collect and save this information. It will be much simpler to look things up in the past when possibilities present themselves.

### **Leading with Servant Leadership**

“A leader . . . is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind” (Mandela, 2008, p. 28).

A nation may make significant progress in developing its leadership by adhering to the norms established at the international level. The fact that nations that have changed their economies and societies in this direction and pursued that road might serve as a significant source of motivation (Hernandez, 2009). Therefore, a nation may adapt the structures and framework of its institutions to align with a specific country if it has

international links with comparable nations. To reiterate, many of these nations are always eager to engage in commerce with other nations. In return, nations may obtain valuable insights into effective leadership and government from one another (Jaipaul-O'Garro, 2013).

Therefore, servant leadership is essential to improving people's lives in a society, despite the various obstacles it encounters. The evidence shows that progress relies heavily on selfless, servant-oriented leadership (Ferch, 2011). Again, it has been abundantly evident that servant leadership is either the outcome of an individual's character or the consequence of governance structures and mechanisms that make it difficult to operate in any other way (Marinho, 2005). People with the necessary servant leadership characteristics have shown their role's significance. As a result, it is in everyone's best interest to support and protect all activities directed toward establishing servant leadership (Manala, 2014). South Africa managed to become on par with western countries even though it is located on a continent that is still growing. This was a success story that not only benefited this nation, but also set a footprint across the globe.

However, the fact that the modern nation was established on the principles set forth by a genuine servant leader who paved the way for the nation to become what it is today is of the utmost significance. Despite the many obstacles, they have always been overcome by using the infrastructure that was already in place. As a result, those around the globe who have adopted the ideology of servant leadership have seen more success and advancement because of their efforts (Marinho, 2005).

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### **About the Author**

Joycelynn Green is a doctoral student at Regent University's School of Business and Leadership. She has always desired to pursue a career as a PharmD. Recognizing the significance of healthcare inequities and hesitation, she determined that working only in pharmaceuticals would not accomplish the aim of reaching individuals who lack the means of communication to comprehend the need for health screening and frequent medical visits. After 10 years in pharmacy, she chose to work with the mental health community, emphasizing self-care and teaching individuals about programs that promote mental and medical stability.

Recognizing that trauma manifests and sounds different for everyone, her objective is to create a middle ground where everyone feels welcomed and accepted in a world of healthcare where misunderstanding and bias influence the support received. She was able to address and help the unspoken taboo demographics of mental health after obtaining her Qualified Mental Health Professional - Adult license.

Her academic credentials include a master's degree in government, healthcare policy, and ethics. She is pursuing a doctorate at Regent University in Virginia Beach in Doctor

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# Beyond Traditional Risk Management: Integrating Horizon Scanning and Strategic Risk Prioritization

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*Roundtables: Strategic Foresight Roundtable*

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This journal article examines current efforts to merge horizon scanning and risk prioritization methodologies to comprehend emerging concerns better and classify them as either risk-related problems to be resolved or strategic opportunities to be exploited. Continuing to concern governments and global enterprises is the lack of correlation between data on developing challenges and credible strategic decisions. As demands for time and money expand, these obstacles are expected to intensify. Gathering insights would guide strategic choices at every level of the firm. Efforts to merge horizon scanning and risk prioritization using a qualitative weight of evidence framework is one method for developing a systematic procedure. This strategy detects all potential signs of future change with a significant influence on risk-stratified strategic missions and underlying values. Moreover, this approach supports the investigation of elements beyond the control of organizations, understanding that resilience is contingent upon the adaptability of management methods and the readiness to deal with various unforeseen events. I will also examine how leaders may utilize this framework to develop an excellent strategic plan with consistency. Last but not least, there will be proposals for future improvements to bolster trust in using horizon scanning for risk-stratified strategic planning.

*Keywords:* futures, horizon scanning, prioritization, risk, strategic decision-making

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While it is likely that enterprises of all sizes were unprepared for the disruption created by Covid-19, the question is whether better foresight utilizing horizon scanning would have been helpful.

The *2020 Global Risk Report* (Brende, 2020) describes the most likely and consequential threats that could have occurred in 2020. Furthermore, while the usual suspects, such as

climate change, cyberattacks, and geopolitical tensions, were included, there was little discussion of a global pandemic, nor was it listed as one of the most likely or significant risks to consider in 2020. Of course, it is crucial to evaluate specific risks, but it is equally essential to avoid becoming overly fixated on them to the exclusion of all other possibilities.

Undoubtedly, enterprises of all sizes were unprepared for such disruption, but one can only ponder whether the outcomes would have been different had better foresight measures been appropriately applied. With the world becoming more interconnected than ever before, it is not inconceivable that another crisis of similar proportions could occur in the future; and if it does, what lessons are there to be gleaned from the catastrophe of 2020?

Post-pandemic, the current risk landscape is greatly influenced by an unsettled geopolitical climate in which new centers of power and influence are rising. At the same time, existing alliance structures and global institutions are tested. While these developments can pave the way for new partnership arrangements in the future, they are now straining coordination systems and posing challenges to shared responsibility norms. Risks that were formerly apparent only on the far horizon may become a tsunami of catastrophic proportions if leaders do not learn how to analyze and respond to these tumultuous situations. The good news is that the opportunity for action still exists for a short time. Despite global concerns, there is still an opportunity for leaders to go beyond balance sheets and concentrate on the most pressing needs of the future, using the integrated tools of horizon scanning and strategic risk prioritization.

### **Evaluating risk velocity**

The most straightforward method would be to incorporate risk velocity into the effect score (see Figure 1). The higher the score, the faster the effects or repercussions are perceived, and vice versa. Other risk experts recommend including risk velocity in a well-defined scoring model.

Figure 1: Risk Prioritization Matrix



Risk assessment and rating is a crucial component of the horizon-scanning procedure, as it helps to identify the most critical threats and opportunities that require concentrated attention. Horizon scanning involves not only the detection of prospective dangers but also the discovery of possibilities, difficulties, and expected future developments on the periphery of present thought and planning.

Should risk velocity be measured as part of enterprise risk management? Again, the perspectives of professionals vary. Some insist that risk velocity must be incorporated. Others take a more realistic approach and emphasize that the organization's size and complexity must be considered before deciding. Those in the latter group stress the need to keep risk management as straightforward as feasible.

Regardless of the position one chooses, it is essential to consider how quickly the organization will feel the effects of risks. This will provide a more accurate risk assessment and enable one to prioritize risk mitigation actions by assessing the amount of reaction time available.

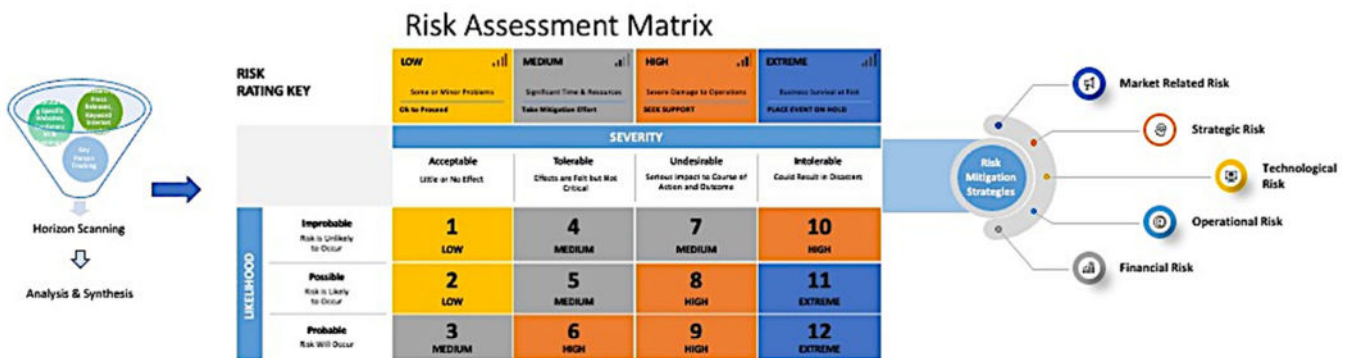
### Overview of the Process

Concerns about the origin, plausibility, and relevance of horizon scanning data affect decision-makers' faith in the process and use of the outputs (Garnett et al., 2016). These issues can be addressed by integrating elements of risk assessment and prioritization to



provide decision-makers with a risk-based framework for interpreting horizon scanning outputs in a meaningful and relevant manner, thereby supporting strategy for long-term planning, typically beyond a 10-year time horizon. In the suggested technique, information is continually collected from open sources and evaluated to acquire real-time environmental context data. For a comprehensive analysis of the external macro environment (big picture) to detect and comprehend early (weak) signals of change, open-source knowledge and information about emerging issues are cross-referenced with academic and non-academic literature and expert opinions using a weight of evidence framework (Garnett et al., 2016). Through informal and institutional networks (e.g., national security, governmental policies, economic dilemmas, societal issues, healthcare, food, and the environment), risk prioritization methodologies and horizon scanning (Linstone & Turoff, 1976) are applied to identify developing trends and appreciate their far-reaching, long-term consequences. Clustering approaches, such as network analysis (Könnölä et al., 2012), are used to discover cross-cutting problems and priorities to aid decision-making (Miles & Saritas, 2012).

Figure 2” Integrated Horizon Scanning and Risk Prioritization Approach



## Applying the Framework

The notion of *degree of certainty* is used to improve issue comprehension, modify strategic thinking, and assist the communication and support of corporate choices (Campbell et al., 2007). Evaluating the degree to which several forms of evidence support or refute a claim, known as the *weight of evidence*, is a crucial component of decision-making processes (Linkov et al., 2008). The Integrated Horizon Scanning architecture (Figure 2) employs several data or information sources (lines of evidence) with varying provenance (quality) that vary in the degree to which separate lines of evidence support or contradict a specific claim or hypothesis (strength of evidence) (Garnett et al., 2016). The Integrated Horizon Scanning architecture enables the synthesis of information from several sources instead of relying on a particular assessment method (Suter & Cormier, 2011). Every paradigm for strategic foresight includes a measure of causality and assures data relevance. Each appraisal entails the challenge of relevance, which necessitates an assumption of causality or link (Susser, 1991).

## Assessing Information

Even when supplemented by academic and non-academic literature (where available), the information and data generated during horizon scanning do not represent proof in the scientific sense that corporations have grown to expect. Instead, horizon-scanning information is often based on expert opinion and may originate from various sources, including trade organizations, social networks, corporate websites, and blogs. Using the Integrated Horizon Scanning framework, it may not be possible to regulate the quality of these sources, but these limitations may be overcome if (Schultz, 2006):

- Formal examination of a vast array of information sources in horizon scanning is conducted, in addition to the consideration of conventional kinds of evidence (e.g., academic journals).
- An evaluation of the statistical or methodological rigor applicable to all information sources in horizon scanning occurs.
- The evaluation score assesses the evidence supporting a claim without implicitly discarding essential information or weak signals.

These conditions suggest that horizon scanning processes should combine two core functions: an intelligence-gathering function that collects various information to challenge conventional thought consistently, and a sense-making function that transforms data into knowledge to inform better decision-making (Garnett et al., 2016). The use of a qualitative approach by the Integrated Horizon Scanning framework satisfies both requirements, allowing for consistency in evaluating different sources of information and synthesis of other lines of evidence, as well as rigor in assessing the

significance of emerging trends and deriving the broad, long-term risk implications and strategies to mitigate them (Garnett et al., 2016).

### **Connecting to Decision-Making**

Horizon scanning strategies purposely challenge the mental maps of today's leadership teams by providing these decision-makers with future, high-impact problems that reflect an increase in uncertainty and are thought to be the outcome of actions that are becoming more unpredictable. It is difficult to convince decision-makers to examine probable future occurrences that deviate from current trends and growth patterns. According to studies on the use of foresight (including horizon scanning) to build forward-thinking innovation strategies, the role of strategic leaders shifted from being mere budget cycle thinkers to forward-thinking strategists of opportunity.

Leaders must make significant attempts to use the combined knowledge of several subject matter experts to examine and challenge prevalent mental models. The utilization of stakeholder workshops to engage on a wide scale and at all organizational levels demonstrates the significance of intelligence gathering inside the company. The active engagement of leaders and other critical internal stakeholders in workshops fosters buy-in. It increases the likelihood that workshop outputs will influence the formulation of strategies and other long-term organizational initiatives. Horizon scanning may, thus, serve as the beginning phase in intelligence collection for strategy formulation, which can subsequently be used to build or launch various processes or strategic intelligence instruments necessary to assist strategy and risk mitigation development (Havas et al., 2010). It is crucial to engage the proper mix of experts. It should engage several leaders, stakeholders, and interest groups, including academics, industry, government and non-governmental organizations, and consumers.

Increasing the use of expertise to validate horizon scanning data has not had the desired effect of increasing degrees of certainty; somewhat, claims of bias or inadequate representation of knowledge in workshops have undermined the legitimacy of outputs, resulting in dissatisfaction with scanning processes or outcomes (Garnett et al., 2016). The selection of specialists is essential for tackling bias issues. Chapman (2004) advises the use of "the best professional judgment" (p. 13). This refers to those with a comprehensive understanding of the subject, such as those with a firm grasp of current problems, knowledge of the trajectory and development of the issues, and awareness of stakeholders and public perception (Garnett et al., 2016). Selecting a range of experts ensures that multiple knowledge bases inform the process since distinct groups of experts may emphasize specific challenges and reach particular conclusions.

For the findings of horizon scanning to impact decision-making, knowledge management/translation and interpretation are also necessary. If a strategy is progressed, it is often essential to synthesize concerns into meaningful clusters

connected to decision-making frameworks. This involves identifying problems that may affect the number of strategic opportunities and issues that may impact operational specifics.

### Summary

In the Foundation series of science fiction books by Isaac Asimov (Asimov, 1991), a mathematician constructs a system to foresee and control the future. *Astounding Stories Magazine* published the first story in the series in 1942, and Mr. Asimov's prescience is remarkable (Asimov, 1942). Similarly, modern risk managers may profit from horizon gazing. This tool helps corporate risk managers identify early indicators of future changes or trends to proactively evaluate the effect of business risk on the company.

As the world grapples with rapid technological and demographic shifts, integrating horizon scanning with strategic risk prioritization is more critical than ever. Today's leaders need to sharpen their focus on future risks and opportunities as owners of this framework in the risk management process. This can be accomplished by:

- Assessing the situation first
- Considering quickly obtained information
- Thinking creatively beyond a particular situation or sector
- Mapping change drivers to inform strategy and delivery
- Creating peer groups and collaborating

Implementation of this framework will promptly alert leaders to potential dangers, allowing them to identify risks and opportunities associated with these occurrences and to adapt as necessary. Leaders can create robust, novel, and future-oriented strategies by integrating this essential tool into the risk mitigation process.

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