

Transcript: A Practical Overview of Leadership: Research-Based Principles and Tools for Action

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Sara Weiner: Hello, everyone. Thank you for joining. My name is Sara Wiener and I'm an Industrial and Organizational Psychologist and a member of Division 14, The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology also fondly known as SIOP. I have been partnering with the APA on this lead-from-anywhere webinar series. Today's the first webinar and we are thrilled to have Dr. Nathan Hiller present a practical overview of leadership, research-based principles and tools for action. Dr. Hiller is Executive Director of the Center for Leadership at Florida International University and Professor in the College of Business.

His research in leadership crosses perspectives and domains from psychology to strategic management and he is co-editor of the forthcoming SIOP frontiers series book on senior leaders and organizational agility with Steve Zaccaro and Rich Klimaski. In his applied work, he regularly works with leaders and organizations across industries from technology, finance, healthcare, premium retail and manufacturing, to K through 12 education and various federal agencies. He received his MS and PhD in Psychology from the Pennsylvania State University and a BA in psychology from the University of Calgary. He has held visiting positions at Cornell, University of British Columbia, University of Washington, and FGV Business School in Rio de Janeiro. We're absolutely thrilled to have Dr. Hiller taking off this webinar series. I turn it over to Dr. Hiller now.

Nathan Hiller: Great. Thank you, Sara. It's a pleasure to be here with you today. It's great to see folks from as far away as Indonesia on today. Thank you for taking the time to be here with us. I guess you're in quite a different time zone, so thank you for staying up late and from all across the US and Canada and all over Europe and I'm seeing Latin America as well. So exciting. We're excited that you have decided to take your valuable and rare time and join us here today.

My goal for today is to provide a bit of an overview and provide value to you. We'll have some time for Q&A at the end. You can put your questions in the Q&A. We also have a list of those who have submitted questions ahead of time. I'd like to start by asking you to engage in a thought experiment. I would like to consider this individual. Obviously, this isn't this particular individual. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to coach a successful executive in the media industry and she had a very, very successful career.

I learned about a situation that she had had several years prior, where she had been moving up the ranks and been doing very well and just had all kinds of successes and was moved to a different organization in a different role but in a senior leadership role. Now, it also happens that this organization was in a different culture as well. This executive, by her account, failed miserably. I'd like you to think about why that might be the case. You have an individual who's very successful, who was doing the same thing that she had been doing her whole career and been very successful at and failed miserably.

You can put it in the chat if you'd like, we'll consider some of them. I don't really have time to look at the whole chat but think, or just write it down or get in your mind, what might be some of the reasons why this individual, in essence, failed in this role? We're going to come back to that later on in the presentation. I want you to answer this little bit of a fun question based on some recent research that I think is really neat related to communication. A lot of our work in the practical side with leaders is under the broad umbrella of communication but in some very specific ways because of course that can mean many different things.

This recent study looked at over-communication and under-communication and came up with a great sample, came up with a ratio of complaints about over-communication to under-communication. I'd like you to think about, what do you think is the ratio that employees state is a problem? How often do employees state that the problem is over-communication versus how often is under-communication? We'll come back to that as well later on in the presentation. We'll talk a little bit about what that means.

To be more clear about the goals for the session, in addition to adding value, we're going to spend a few minutes broadly describing the social scientific study of leadership, three important psychologically related factors. Along the way, we're going to spend some time thinking about how psychologists have been and how they can continue to be involved in this field. We'll touch on a few common misunderstandings. I'd like to present to you five questions or challenges that may help you lead or help your organization promote leadership better.

Then finally, I'm going to present some select research and practice focus resources for you. We're going to have those available for you. We're also going to have a PDF of today's slides that should have live links as well to some of those so that you have some practice, as well as some research resources. Obviously, this is a huge topic. Leadership is a massive topic. We're just going to have a time to touch on a few of those. I'm going to leave a lot of things out but I want to provide a frame that I hope will guide the next, not only 10 sessions that SIOP is partnering with APA on but that will help you understand, at a macro level, a little bit more about this field.

In 1998, when I started graduate school, right around that time, I wasn't sure what in particular I was interested in. I was in an industrial organizational psychology program. As Sara mentioned at Penn State. After about a year or so when I realized that I was interested in the topic of leadership and would tell people about this, I was given the advice, "It's not a real topic. You should probably do something else because it's nice on an applied side but there's not really a science of leadership." Well, I'm glad to report that that is, in fact, not the case. Certainly.

There are hundreds and thousands of-- There already had been, of course, a growing literature up at that point, but it was really a somewhat marginalized field. In fact, a senior editor of a major journal, this was not Journal of Applied Psychology, which is APA's Applied Psychology journal but of another major journal, told me when visiting Penn State and meeting with some of the grad students that the journal would not really be interested in leadership. There are a few journals that will take it but it's not a real field. I'm happy also to report that that journal publishes a ton in leadership now.

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There are two niche journals that are a sort of higher prominence, the highest one being *The Leadership Quarterly*. It has been rising rapidly and receiving about 1,000 submissions per year. Another up-and-comer that's really doing fantastic is the *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*. LQ has an impact factor of about 9.9. JLOS has an impact factor, I believe, of about 3.6. There's widespread appearance of leadership and leadership-related articles in really all the major journals in Applied Psychology.

Of course, not to leave that leave out but in social psychology, in evolutionary psychology, a whole bunch of fields have been and continue to be accelerating their interest in the topic of leadership. When we triangulate that, the scholarly interest alongside continuing robust emphasis on leadership development in organizations and hundreds of pop books, leadership each year, people often ask me, "Have you read this book? Have you read this book?" My answer is usually no because I can't keep up.

Of course, this links to the burgeoning field of executive coaching and I know that there are some individuals who are on this call who have a background in psychology and those who don't, who are engaged in executive coaching which, of course, interacts and intersects very much with leadership. At a high level, let's just review, not review, I'm just going to give a quick mention to some prominent approaches and theories of leadership. I'm not going to really talk about these much, but they all emphasize something a little bit different as to where the locus of leadership is and what the mechanisms of leadership are.

I think it's helpful to think of them not as necessarily at odds with each other, but when we're thinking about a massive phenomenon that involves leaders, followers, interactions, and shared in collective leadership and all of these, and of course, intersects with formal leadership and informal ways of leadership that we really can't be thinking about one unifying theory of leadership. They all describe different parts, as it were, of the elephant. Transformational leadership is another one. It's had a huge impact on our field. The moral approaches to leadership, which includes servant and ethical as well as authentic leadership.

For those of you interested in a review of that, James Lemoyne, Chad Hartnell, and Hannes Leroy have a great review paper on these moral approaches to leadership that came out just a few years ago. I believe it's 2017. Shared and collective leadership. We're going to be talking about leaders a little bit more than the shared approaches to leadership that include collective leadership. No longer is anyone under the illusion, and there's widespread acceptance that both hierarchical leadership and we can think of leadership as an individual oftentimes appointed or even informally a clear leader.

At the same time that does not preclude the presence of shared or collective forms of leadership that can exist in many different ways. There's a great paper on the topology of collective leadership that Noshir Contractor, Leslie DeChurch, and others have written. There's also the upper echelons theory and the upper echelons approach to strategic leadership, which continues to gain substantial momentum. Of course, economic, biological, neuroscience, evolutionary, and even things like the

trait approach, which dominated much of leadership research for the first several decades, and still remains, of course, prominent.

What do we do with all this? I've thrown all these leadership theories and approaches. Where do we go with this? How do we think about leadership? I think a really helpful way as a starting point to think about leadership that cuts through a lot of this is to think about the key behaviors and tasks of leaders and/or leadership. They fall into four buckets. Now, there might be some debate as to whether it's four or five. This is not factor, or this is not a factor analysis here but all of these are based in substantial research. A lot of the theories focus on one or more of these buckets.

Really what it comes down to is leaders and leadership needs to attend to relationships and people. It needs also to attend to tasks and goals, getting things done. It needs to focus on change and strategy, and it needs to focus on managing yourself. Those four buckets with these specific behaviors underneath them are, I think, a very nice way to having some manageable format, the core tasks of leading and leadership. What does that look like? Just a few examples here of what that means for relationships and people. It's important that leaders maintain high-quality individual relationships.

They should manage the emotional temperature of the team, developing leadership under and around you. A key task of leadership is to develop leadership around you. There are some great organizations out there that actually will not promote you unless you can show evidence that you are developing leaders under and around you. That's really a fantastic best practice to tie it to. Look, you're not going to get ahead unless you're helping others lead. Being trustworthy and treating people fairly with principles of justice, as well as being inclusive.

What does it look like in terms of results and goal focused-tasks? This is getting things done. Goal setting, structuring processes, and managing resources, the skill development of your team, solving problems, providing and ensuring feedback and contributing technical expertise. Technical expertise is particularly important at lower levels, and I'm talking about lower hierarchical levels. I don't mean that in any value judgment way of an organization when you're a frontline leader technical expertise is often more important than it is when you rise up in an organization.

One of the core differentiating pieces of leadership. We can't also forget change in strategy. Leaders don't just operate within a system and do the things that keep the system running. They think about changing the system. We're making certain strategic decisions to align the organization in a certain way. Change in strategy can look like this. Anticipating external trends, threats, and opportunities, proactively reorganizing structures and processes that may also be reactive at times as well. You need to really lead the strategy and realign the team, not only within the organization but within the external environment as well.

An important piece of this is advocating for the team or unit or organization. This is something that people often miss as they rise up. That part of their job becomes more and more advocacy and situating their unit within a broader context of other units maybe in an organization or within an ecosystem of different organizations.

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Finally, influencing the environment is also important and a bit tricky because we often think of individuals as being recipients of the environment and needing to adapt to the environment. In a very real way, leadership often involves trying to advocate and change the environment.

You see this with senior leaders in major organizations are often engaged in lobbying or trying to get different trade groups together to actually change the environment. That can go down. That's just the senior leader example of that, but that can go down all the way down the organization that the leaders need to engage in influencing the environment. Finally, managing self. This could include things like self-knowledge and insight. It's critical to know who you are and how that shows up in the way that you lead. Leadership self-construal, how do you see yourself as a leader?

Is that part of your identity? Managing emotions, growth, mindset, flexibility, and agility, as well as authenticity, which is in the way that it's defined in the literature, more aligned with this managing self and knowing who you are and authentically representing that in various contexts. If we think about these four buckets, I think it's a really helpful way to think about leading. If you are leading, which specific tasks of these are more important will depend on your situation. There's no formula saying you need to do all of these at all points in time, but if you're not thinking about those four buckets, you're probably missing an opportunity.

It will involve at least some things from each of those four buckets. We've been talking broadly here, and we've zoomed in on a few things. I'm going to zoom in on three particular topics. The first of which we're going to spend a little bit more time on. The first one here of psychologically related factors that I think are really interesting in understanding leadership, and they're interesting not just at the individual level, but thinking about how those manifest and what the implications are for developing leadership capacities in teams and organizations as well.

This isn't just an individual-level phenomenon, but we can think of these as having pretty substantial implications across various types of organizations. Let's return for a moment to the executive who in this case failed. Just in case any of you're wondering, this individual went on to a very successful career after that failure. This wasn't derailing. I want to present two possibilities first, and then we'll talk about some of the other ones. The first two that I want to present to you, I mentioned that this individual moved-- it was in a new organization in a new culture as well.

It's possible that the employees didn't value or recognize the approach to managing or leading that she brought to the table. It's also possible that they wouldn't accept or grant leadership credibility. Now, it turns out that the second one was really key in this scenario because this individual went to a culture and an organization where they had never had a woman leading this group of all men at the time. This was also several decades ago. We're essentially having none of it, and so it was what chance do you have as a leader if individuals who you are supposed to be leading are unwilling to grant you or accept your leadership?

The reason that I'm talking about these two first is that we can't think about leadership without thinking about followers. There is no leading, there is no

leadership without followers. Again, I don't mean this necessarily in evaluate, like there has to be followers who are willing to go along with whatever anyone says. That's not the way that we're using the term followers, not at all what we mean. If you are leading, if you are not leading anybody, you are not leading. Followers are a critical part of that process because unless they are willing to go along with your leadership, you are not leading.

Now, in cases where there is a formal leader, they may have to go along, at least to some degree, they may comply, but they will never be engaged and they will never commit. They will never really help you or the organization and they'll often be trying to push back and find ways to sabotage you as well if they're not a priori, willing to accept your leadership. This brings up the important topic of implicit leadership theories, what in the leadership literature is known as implicit leadership theories, and it is in essence, what do you think leadership is?

What does it look like and who is involved? At some very basic level, that might include certain groups of people who it is more expected are able to fill or are more appropriate, and these can be implicit or explicit biases, of course. They may be based on surface-level characteristics that are readily identifiable. That we are less willing to grant leadership or less willing to, in our minds, have a model that certain people are able to lead. It has huge implications for organizations because if we leave these unchecked, it's a wonder that we're losing leadership capacity within organizations because we're not identifying if these biases can replicate and go on unchecked.

There are significant problems because we are likely to discount people based on observable characteristics from leading in very subtle ways, but that have pretty substantial effect. It may be that, but it may also be, so it doesn't just look like in terms of surface-level characteristics. This may actually mean in terms of style as well. It may be something around behavioral traits or psychological traits. It may also be something around the way that they tend to interact with some of their tendencies. It also may be these implicit leadership theories are really critical in what you think leadership looks like in terms of enactment.

Is leadership like a family? I've heard people say this, "I love working in this organization." I've heard people also say, "I hate working in a certain type of organization where it feels like a family." Is that your mental model for thinking about what leadership is? Do you think it's about authoritarianism and hierarchy? Is that part of what your model is? Is it more about a shared or collective team process? People have strikingly different mental models of what they think effective leadership is.

That's really important because not only will you enact leadership based on the mental models you have for leadership, and if you have a limited subset of mental models, and if they're the wrong ones. If you only see leadership as, and there are indeed many people out there who fundamentally see the role of leaders as to be very clear in their direction and to be unquestioned. They will maybe be kind but be very clear. Actually, there's a term in our field for that called paternalistic or better should be called paternalistic in, of course, very one meaning of that term leadership that combines authoritarian and this kind of benevolence.

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If that's the way you see leadership, that's how you're going to enact it. These form very important boundary conditions that help us understand and enact leadership. Not only do we then enact leadership in that way that we see it, but it sets the conditions under which we identify and grant leadership to other people. Combined implicit leadership theories set the stage and limits for leadership being granted or not, and set the boundary conditions for how one enacts leadership.

I've been using the term grant and claim a little bit, and I'm just going to make a side note here about a really fantastic paper by Scott DeRue and Sue Ashford in 2010 in *Academy of Management Review* that lays out in a really, I think, fascinating way with all kinds of implications about claiming and granting. Leadership claims may be formal from your organization. If you actually are formally appointed, your claim has some backing or legitimacy from the organization, or you may make a leadership claim, you may engage in an influence attempt. That might be another way to think about it.

Are only successful if others grant leadership to you. We have to be thinking about this as a relational, dynamic, interactive process that involves an individual's influence attempts and others granting that influence attempt. If someone makes continual influence attempts and it's not granted, then they are not leading, and of course, it's going to have implications for how they see themselves as well, which we're going to talk about in a few slides. These are very important to check at an individual level and at an organizational level of what is our assumption about what we think leadership looks like.

In a lot of organizations, it's a little bit worrying when they say, "Look, here's what leadership needs to look like." You have senior executives being very clear. Some of that is okay, but where it's dangerous is when it inadvertently, it's usually is how it is, is leaving out individuals who may be very effective in leading but are not granted and not identified as having leadership capacity because of a narrow and rigid implicit leadership model that is occurring in an organization or by a particular leader.

If we return to the possible reasons for failure again, on this hypothetical executive, we think of a few that are follower based about granting leadership. We could also, of course, think about many others. I saw many of you had some comments that were related and also some that were different that you might be a new-- When you're in a new job and you've been successful before, an individual tends to do that job again and tends to go with what made them successful in the last job.

There's a famous book by someone who's considered generally the father of executive coaching Marshall Goldsmith, and it's called *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*. It's based on this idea that leadership context matters and often when you get that promotion or when you change roles that the things that have made you successful are not necessarily the things that will continue to make you successful. Maybe there was non-work spillover effects, something going on in this individual's personal life. They couldn't adapt to culture and country.

Maybe they didn't adapt to the new organizational culture because we can think about organizational cultures and country cultures. Those are not the same thing but we can also think about what was the previous leader like. Maybe there was

something about the previous leader and the previous leader was beloved. That's a hard position to come into. Maybe there was something about the way they were introduced or brought in. Maybe everyone knows that this person was the second choice. I'm not saying that this was in reality, but maybe this person was the second choice. That is the context.

All of these get to this point that we cannot be thinking about leadership in an abstract sense. We need to be thinking about leaders, followers, and situations. That if we go back to this list here, that many and most of these involve something about the situation. Almost none of them, really, none of them are pure leader-based explanations for why this individual in this particular moment wasn't successful. If we're going to be thinking about the effectiveness, an individual being effective or ineffective in a role, we have to be thinking about leaders, followers, and situations.

Number 2, I want to talk for a few minutes and explore this idea of do you see yourself as a leader? Now, you might be asking yourself this question. I mean this both in the personal sense where I'd like you to potentially consider that, but more broadly of does an individual consider themselves as a leader. We know based on decades of self-construal research from a whole bunch of domains and now, including in the leadership domain that leadership identity, the extent to which people have an identity for leadership or include part of their identity as including leadership, is really important in a number of ways. Often times, when people are asking this question, here's where they're going with their reference. Here's where they're going, they're going to folks like Indra Nooyi, who is the former famous CEO of PepsiCo, or potentially someone-- Again, I'm not holding these folks necessarily up all as fantastic models here, but they may say Elon Musk, that's the North star, or Martin Luther King Jr. is the North star.

Part of the problem, there's a problem, not so much among leadership scholars, but I think there's a problem, in general, that we tend to want to focus on these heroic leaders. If that is my reference point, if that's what we're talking about, if I'm going to ask myself, "Do I see myself as a leader?" For most of us, we're going to answer, "No." I think this is a danger to promoting leadership capacity in organizations by emphasizing this heroic model of leadership. Most folks who are involved in leadership and leadership development want to try and get away from that as much as possible from thinking of these heroic leaders because those people are generally not like me. I can't identify with them.

They are probably endowed with a great set of skills and maybe specific opportunities. How could I see myself as a leader if that's the model of a leader? Being and having some of your identity or having leadership identity as part of your overall identity, it turns out, it's quite important, and what we know is that the rich get richer. First of all, if you have an identity for leadership, if that's part of your identity, you are likely to try and take on leadership roles. You are likely to seek them out. You're likely to persist in the face of failure when you don't do well.

In some, individuals who already have a leadership identity are more likely to engage in activity that allows them to further their leadership capacity and become better in the long run. How do we get people who don't have any leader identity to have that? That's a huge amount of work that folks at the Doerr Institute at Rice, and David Day

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and his colleagues at the Kravis Institute at Claremont McKenna, when they're thinking about student leadership development are doing some really great work developing and showing the importance of leadership identity and ways that you can do it.

DeRue and Ashford would say, "Well, the way that you do this is by getting people to test claims of leadership and having it granted to them." Collectively, when people see that they can lead, they develop some efficacy for it that it can become part of their identity that is relationally constructed. Do you see yourself as a leader is really critical. I will also say not all leaders do, leaders do to varying degrees, even senior leaders. There's some neat research showing that they do to varying degrees. Now, is the goal to have everyone have a hardcore strong leader identity that's critical to their overall view of themselves? No, but for many people, they're not engaging in leadership at all because they don't think it's something that they can do.

How do we do that? We focus on behaviors rather than traits, and a lot of people get hung up because they think of, not only those hero leaders, but for introverts, they often think, "Well, I can't do that because I need to be extroverted." We know, of course, that that isn't the case. Extraversion does relate to leader emergence, but leader effectiveness, not so much. We've come across hundreds of individuals over the last 14 years at the Center for Leadership who are just incredible leaders in a different way and are quite extrovert.

The third thing that I want to talk about very briefly here is do you think that leadership can develop? This, in essence, I'm not going to say much about this beyond efficacy and growth beliefs matter, and trait beliefs hurt this assessment for many individuals. If you think that leadership is about immutable, it's about trades, and of course, there's emerging literature on the movability of some traits. If we focus on things that are more stable and internal to an individual that are related to leadership, it's hard to think about leadership as being developable.

We have evidence that it can, but wait, what is the evidence? Can you really develop leadership? I like to always present some of the evidence absolutely that you can to individuals in the context of leadership development because there's a sub-portion of folks in the room who may not be fully convinced yet, and that's really important. If your people are going to be thinking about engaging in leadership development in a course or in a program or in any other kind of setting. If you can develop leadership, how? What does that actually look like?

I'll have to say on the whole applied psychology or the field of leadership and leadership development is a bit behind what's going on in clinical psychology. There's a really strong emphasis that really started a few decades ago on making really strong causal inferences. That is happening in leadership. We've just been a little bit slower and it's exciting to see it unfold. I think there's a lot of opportunities for psychologists of all stripes and even, I know many of you who are not psychologists at all, we want you involved as well.

I want to point to two studies that are really neat here. The first one is done by Christina Lacarenza and colleagues in 2017 in the Journal of Applied Psychology which estimated the training effects of leadership development interventions and

found that across all four categories of reactions, behaviors, learning, and results that there were substantial positive effects. This is a bit of a contrast to some headlines that make for a nice reading or for a nice clickbait that leadership development programs don't work and a lot of executives are not happy with their leadership development programs.

I think there's probably some interesting opportunities to investigate why that is and how people look at changing what they're expecting. It's really largely unexplored. The second one is a really neat study that just came out in Academy of Management Learning and Education by de Haan and Nilsson, that only looked at randomized controlled studies of coaching and did a meta-analysis of only randomized control trials of the effects of coaching and demonstrated a substantial impact on leading and leadership. Two neat studies to know.

As a field, I'm going to point to three things that are happening. One is the evidence-based leadership development program awards that is promoted and being done by the Network of Leadership Scholars and the League of Leadership, this is part of the Academy of Management. Folks like at the Doerr Institute, who I mentioned just briefly, in an emphasis on measuring leadership development effectiveness, and they have a micro-credential that is open to individuals to take around measuring the effects of leadership development, trying to help the field progress.

Finally, the major journals are doing a really great job in LQ, I'm going to point to LQ leadership quarterly in particular which has done a really nice job encouraging and getting the involvement of folks with different skill sets looking at naturalized experiments, regression discontinuity designs, and, of course, field experiments as well. There are a number of field experiments that go back several decades in the field but they have been few and far between.

Where does that put us? The focus of leadership development. I'm going to make a few statements here around what we know around leadership development. This is a combination of the literature and my experience working with now about 5,000 leaders over the last 15 years in the context of the center that I run. The focus of leadership development should be on behaviors and self-growth. This is really, really important, that we need to be focused on the actual behaviors. If we go back to that key behavioral or that competency list, back those four buckets, and we actually start to look at those, when you present leadership as a series of skills, behaviors, competencies, that is learnable, right? But if you're focusing on heroic leaders, if you focus on traits, that that is not learnable.

We need to get people quickly into-- not only is it more effective but it is more you see people's face sometimes when you present this way, saying, "Look, here's how we're going to approach leadership development." You see sometimes some relief on a part of folks saying, "Maybe I can do this." It can be maximized with deliberate attention. Practice and behavioral experimentation is key for all of us. Leadership identity that gets some social and some task reinforcement. Hardships and challenges are key.

Sometimes, people just need an opportunity. They're not leading because they have not had an opportunity. Even those folks who have and are leading need an

opportunity to grow their leadership capacity. The mentorship coaching and feedback are really central as well to leadership development. The CCL model for the Center for Creative Leadership of Assessment Challenge and Support has really received widespread adoption and endorsement in our field. Finally, a belief that leadership skills and behaviors are developable. These are really important. Here's a few questions and challenges for you. Then we're going to go right to the Q&A after I'll whizz by a few resources and point you to them for later as well. Here's a few questions and challenges.

Who can you grant leadership to? Who can you encourage? If you are formally leading or not or you have an opportunity to **[unintelligible 00:41:55]**, who can you encourage to make claims of leadership? In other words, who can you encourage to make influence attempts and grant leadership to them to help them develop some self-efficacy and identity around leadership? Is your mental model of leadership narrow and rigid, or does it, not only your mental model, but do your behaviors adapt and flex? We need to have a broad model of what leadership can include in various situations.

We need to have a big playbook and we need to be able to adapt and flex according to the situation. We know, but boy, does the situation ever matter, and we're starting to do a better job at figuring that out in our literature and come up with some systematic ways of understanding that. We know cultural context matters, organizational context, but even things like history and teams and what kind of individuals are on a team that you're leading and level matters a ton.

Frontline leading looks a lot different. There's some similarities but there's a lot of differences between that and mid-level and senior executive leadership. Behavioral experimentation is key. I love the way Herminia Ibarra talks about the idea of authenticity that it is a potentially a bit dangerous to take authenticity in to an extreme which is that you don't want to do anything that doesn't feel authentic to you but new things often don't feel authentic. Number four, transitions are key pain points. Pay attention to new roles and promotions. That is the leadership tasks and skills. What you need to do changes across levels and changes across, even sometimes, within the same organization, even a lateral move may require different leading from you. Back to the question of under and over-communicating, what is the ratio? I think this was really neat. It was a 10 to 1 ratio of under-communicating.

Employees were almost 10 times more likely to say that their leader was under-communicating as opposed to over-communicating. My message for you, and this goes for me too, is I'm probably under-communicating. That means not only strategic priorities and again, this isn't just for senior leaders, right? Where are we going? What does it look like? Am I giving enough feedback? The answer, probably, for all of this, it is you're not. It is maybe clear to you, then you feel like you've done it, but we have to recognize that the receiver may not be hearing it and it may need reinforcement in different kinds of ways.

Finally, caring relationships matter. There is some really work from across different domains, specifically in the context of leadership, that empathy and caring relationships are particularly important, and potentially, even more important post-pandemic that it matters a lot. Who do you need to connect with? Who can you show

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that you care? Organizations have been a bit shy in promoting this because I think they're worried about potential HR implications.

Of course, this could go wrong, if there aren't some guardrails. We've wanted to keep everything at a distance and professional. Of course, it needs to be professional but that can involve actually empathy and caring of individuals. I think there's some huge goal to be unlocked that in the leadership field, we are just starting to get our hands around. I have a few resources for you. My encouragement to you is what can you experiment with to get 2% better at? We've seen for years now individuals who get 2% better at something specific, just one thing often tell us that it has pays huge dividends in how they feel and how they are how people around them respond to them in the context of their leadership.

I have some practical resources, a few articles that you should be able to freely access. One from Sloan Management Review, two from Harvard Business Review, a few books that I think are really great, and a few resources as well. Siop.org has some great white papers and other resources. The Center for Creative Leadership has some great insights and resources, as well as a link to a leadership competency builder assessment that you can take to try and understand which competencies or which behaviors and skill sets that you want to focus on that are relevant for you and your leadership right now.

This is really an impossible task. For those of you who are just interested in a smattering of different topics in the area of leadership, I've listed a number here that I think represent some of the breadth of what we're talking about. Of course, I'm missing so many things. Just to get you familiar with some topics and papers that I think are particularly compelling in leadership. With that, let's move to questions. Sara's got her camera on. Do you want to feed us or you have control of the reins, I'll do my best to answer.

Sara: All right. Fantastic. Thank you, everybody, for the great questions. I've been sorting through, I think, a couple of different people asked about some tips for handling cultural differences between leaders and staff and whether there's a related question of whether you think there that leadership is a global concept or if it is, indeed, culturally-based.

Nathan: Yes. I think those are both huge and really interesting questions. Maybe I'll start with the second one first. There've been a number of initiatives looking at that, to what extent is leadership global or culture-specific? And the largest one of those was the GLOBE study that was done by Bob House and dozens and dozens and maybe have even been hundreds of other collaborators and contributors. There's a few papers that have several pages of authors on them that have come out from the globe studies.

Just at a very high level, there's some aspects of leadership that are globally endorsed and there are some that are a bit more culture-specific. The answer is a little bit of both, but that a lot of the main models of leading, they may not reflect all of the ways that leadership is done in all in it, but a lot of the ones that have been developed in Western-educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic countries, which is most of the literature, have been shown to have value across a wide variety of

context. That is not to say that leadership in totality does not look a little bit different. I think we still have some things to figure out on that. Then what was the first question again, Sara?

Sara: I think you've answered them both.

Nathan: Okay.

Sara: It was the cultural differences between leaders and staff and whether leadership is a global concept.

Nathan: Yes. I think this is where inclusivity is really important, that, oftentimes, if an individual isn't contributing in the way that we expect, we have to meet them halfway, right? They may be more comfortable in certain kinds of contexts interacting or giving feedback or contributing, and so we always, of course, need to find a way to both include people and make them feel like they're part of a collective and have that collective identity while still, of course, retaining and balancing that with an individuated identity as well. I realize that's sort of 35,000 feet.

Sara: That's great. There's also some context questions that came up. Considerations for remote and hybrid work, which, of course, is increased quite a bit. Clearly, we've been teleworking for decades now, but there's more of an intensity around that. Then specific strategies for effective leadership during periods of organizational transition or when there's substantial change going on in the organization. What about those contexts?

Nathan: We've all come out of this global transition. The pandemic was really probably one of the first times everywhere. Everyone was in a crisis, in some ways, all at the same time. We know that things like the economy and the economic context changes the way leadership gets enacted. There's some really cool work by Janka Stoker and Harry Garretsen that have looked at the economic context and how that actually changes leadership behaviors. We know that some of these macro factors have a substantial impact on that.

I think this is where empathy becomes really important and that we have to know where our people are at and what they're feeling and know what people are struggling with and know when to hold back and know when to push. If we think about a lot of our change models, they're based on this idea of creating urgency and oh, it's going to take time. It was amazing what happened in the first few months of the pandemic because organizations transformed in ways that no one really thought was possible for them to transform that much.

To me, what's really interesting is I don't think we should try and replicate-- there's parts of it, of course, we're not going to try and replicate the causes that happened, but I think there's some interesting potential to look at what allowed that change to happen in such a quick way. These fundamental radical shifts organizations were doing in six months, what they had planned out for the next five years and just doing it, and people were going along with it.

That takes a long-term toll on individuals.

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I think we're starting to see the echo, the rebound effects of some of that, of the last several years, that there's a lot of fatigue going on, and we need to be mindful that we can't push people. We can't falsely push people and create urgency that isn't really there, or we need to make sure that they are in a healthy spot to be able to shift and change. For some people, obviously, that change is a lot harder than it is for others. We can get them there, but we really need to be managing and ensuring that the emotional temperature of our team is not too high and it's not too low and that, we, as leaders, have a chance to modulate it.

A lot of that is by our rhetoric. It's by our rhetoric and it's emotional contagion. That just means that that ups the expectation of what we need to do as leaders. That, "Okay, now, I also need to be thinking about how my emotional displays," and of course, for many of us, are psychologists, that isn't that big of a deal, but actually practicing it, to be thinking about, it's not that big of a deal to be thinking about, but to actually do it is really tough. To have, in our care, the emotional set point of the team and being able to invoke change at the right point in the right ways ensuring while we care for them, and at times, we need to push, and at times we need to nurture.

Sara: That's a great answer. I think there's a certain point where we recognize how resilient everyone really was and resilience has some endpoints. That's an important point. To that, there are a couple other questions that I'm also combining here. One is what really defines an organization or a leader as toxic. Then similarly, to that is, what recommendations you have when followers are not granting credibility based on sexism or racism, which is also toxic? How do we handle that kind of toxicity or discrimination?

Nathan: There's an interesting literature and so it's not exactly the same, but that covers part of this which is the abusive supervision literature. There's a pretty substantial literature on abusive supervision. There's also a lot on the dark triad and how that relates to bad forms of leadership. If anyone's interested in learning a little bit more, if you Google dark triad leadership or toxic leadership or abuse of supervision is a keyword to learn a little bit more about that.

I think if some of these prognostications about the continuing rise of authoritarianism in our world made possible by artificial intelligence and misinformation and other things, I think we need to be paying really careful attention to that topic from a policy and from a macro perspective for individuals who are working for a toxic boss. I don't have any suggestions because I think it stinks. It stinks. Sometimes, it's not till we're out of the situation that we see how bad it was or we see how badly it affected us. I was just speaking to an individual who had a chance to work within a coaching engagement who was really in a toxic environment. It wasn't till about six months later that he was able to reflect on it because he was so embedded in it and he was like, "Oh, my gosh, that was so horrible," that oftentimes, there's not a lot that you can do.

Sara: Very, very challenging, for sure. This is an interesting question. What is the evidence for effective leadership through influence when one has no line management powers?

Nathan: In this talk, I've been going back and forth between formal and informal leadership, and so sometimes, when I say, "Leader," I'm talking about an individual who is in a formal position of leadership. Of course, leadership exists even in the cases where there's formal top-down or when there's hierarchical or formally appointed lines that many, many instances of informal leadership are happening. There's a huge literature on informal forms of influence. It happens all the time. There's all kinds of ways that individuals can engage in informal, not just influence, but really informal acts of leadership and are often recognized.

Network analysis is really neat because you can look at formal chains, and then you can look at informally who's leading. Sometimes, who shows up in the formal line of chain of command is not where the, if you look at it from a network, "Oh, who's emailing people about their problems?" The person they email to get them solved is a different person than the person with the highest level of authority. There's really a huge amount of evidence that individuals, at times, are able to, and one of the key mechanisms they would be able to do so would be through networks.

There's a great new article called *Managing Your Boss*, I'll point folks to that, by Ravi Gajendran, who's a colleague of mine at FIU, the department chair in my department, that some folks may find interesting that we also have to manage our superior. In most organizations, we are reporting to somebody. That's a huge skillset. It's a recent *Harvard Business Review*.

Sara: Great. I wish we had more time. We do not. Thank you very much, Dr. Hiller, for this fantastic presentation. Thanks to all of you for joining today and the outstanding questions. There'll be a feedback survey. We'd love to have your feedback. Please fill that out. Please join us for the other webinars in this series. The next one is March 31st at 3:30 US Eastern Time entitled Perspectives on Leadership from Starting Your Lab to Directing a Research Institute, with Dr. Bowes and Dr. Abel from the University of Iowa. With that, have a great rest of your day or evening. Thank you, once again, for joining.

Nathan: Thank you, all.

[01:00:02] [END OF AUDIO]