

**Executive and Organisational Leadership Development in
Universities: Exploring Key Elements and Perceptions**

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CERTIFICATE

I certify that the work contained in this PhD by Publication submission has not been submitted previously at any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this PhD by Publication contains no material published or written by another person, other than as authored or co-authored papers published as part of this doctoral submission during the period of enrolment for the PhD by Publication degree.

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ABSTRACT

Organisational and leadership development is said to be one of the most challenging and important activities facing universities, particularly in the current environment of fast-paced change and accelerated age-related attrition. Succession leadership development being timely, the purpose of this study was to explore the nature of leadership development most suited to meeting the leadership and organisational development challenges for contemporary universities.

A blend of literature-based and empirical research was undertaken. This resulted in seven papers submitted to internationally refereed journals; five papers published, one in press, and one under review. Six of these are sole authored papers and one is a co-authored paper.

The papers identify some of the issues and challenges facing the tertiary sector. They shed light on factors influencing executive and organisational leadership development deriving from the literature review and from empirical research reporting the views of current university leaders. The papers and submission document herein include recommendations and suggested models informing executive and organisational leadership development in universities. The “Lantern” model – an Illuminated Model for Organisational Leadership Development - is a key original conceptual model framing the study.

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Paper 1 - Published

Drew, G. (2006). Balancing academic advancement with business effectiveness?
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Paper 2 - Published

Drew, G., (2009). Leadership and organisational culture: Can the CEO and
executive leadership teams in bureaucratic organisations Influence
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Paper 3 - Published

Drew, G. (2008). An Artful Learning Framework for organisations.
Journal of Management & Organization, 14, 504-520. 149

Paper 4 – In Press

Drew, G. Issues and challenges in higher education leadership:
Engaging for change
Submitted to *Australian Educational Researcher* on 8 September 2008. 181

Paper 5 - Published

Drew, G., Ehrich, L.C., & Hansford, B.C. (2008). An exploration
of university leaders' perceptions of leadership and learning. *Leading &
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Paper 6 - Published

Drew, G. (2009). A “360” view for individual leadership development.
Journal of Management Development, 28 (7), pp. 581-592. 237

Paper 7 - Submitted

Drew, G. Positive or ‘real’ power and influence in leadership.
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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Background

The focus of the PhD by Publication was executive and organisational leadership development in the university environment. The terms “executive development” and “executive and organisational leadership development” are used somewhat interchangeably in this study. The overlap reflects the aim of the study to pursue an integrated, whole-of-organisation approach to supporting and developing current and future senior leaders in cognizance of the key internal and external drivers which affect planning, strategy and operations. In the study, the term “executive” and “senior” may be understood to mean, respectively, the top executive team responsible for university operations, and the larger group of senior supervisory personnel who, in typical university structures, report to members of the executive. When using the term “leadership development”, this refers broadly to building leadership capability across the span of leadership roles. The study acknowledged that part of pursuing sound executive and organisational leadership development is paying attention to succession in terms of building leadership strength for the future. Accordingly, the study explored some of the key issues and challenges affecting leadership and management practice in universities.

Field of Study

The field of the study is “Executive and Organisational Leadership Development in Universities: Exploring Key Elements and Perceptions”. This focus was chosen because the author has a particular interest in, and values the importance of, executive and organisational leadership development and support. This is from

the perspective of being a leadership practitioner and, in more recent times, a researcher in the relevant field. As a leadership development practitioner in the university sector, the author values the notion of continuous improvement, learning from others and taking into account diverse standpoints in gathering data and forming views about how best leadership development may be pursued.

Moreover, the author entered the study with a perception that leaders in universities face significant pressures relating to time paucity and complexity with somewhat ambiguous priorities and increased administrative accountabilities. This observation was supported strongly by the writing in the field both nationally and internationally (see Gayle, Tewarie and White (2003), Marshall (2007), Snyder, Marginson and Lewis (2007)), since universities are experiencing large-scale change as they re-conceive and restructure themselves to meet changing needs. As a leadership development practitioner in universities, the author had formed the view that, for example, academic leaders generally could be better supported in their leadership roles, since they reach those roles primarily on the basis of their scholarly expertise and knowledge rather than through leadership and management experience or courses. Moreover, she believed there was a need for a concerted, integrated approach to executive and organisational leadership development as a means of addressing the increased anticipated erosion of the leadership ranks through age-related attrition. It was for these reasons that the researcher decided to pursue a study that explored executive and organisational leadership development to identify what would appear to be the most salient challenges calling for specific capability building; and to suggest some models or strategies for pursuing the most pressing of these capability building needs.

The research element of the study, then, enquired into what a group of current senior leaders who had occupied their leadership roles for one to two years identified as their most significant issues and challenges in leadership, how they defined sound leadership and how they best learn as leaders. The latter included these leaders describing their experience of undertaking a development exercise designed to assist them reflect on their practice as leaders. The insights gained from this sample of senior leaders involved in the qualitative research study contributed to three of the seven papers which comprise the study. The remaining four papers were developed from the literature. It is anticipated that all of the papers presented in this PhD by Publication make a contribution to thinking and practice on executive and organisational leadership issues within universities. This contribution is reflected independently in each of the seven papers of the study (see Chapter 3) and in the summary provided in Chapter 4.

Research Study

Research Problem Investigated

The principal research question was as follows: *What are the key elements informing effective executive and organisational leadership development for universities in a changing operating environment?* This question was divided into seven subquestions which gave rise to the papers which comprise the doctoral study. Each of these sub-questions is introduced later in the chapter. The study, while focused on universities, aimed to be relevant to other education/knowledge organisations interested in considering an integrated approach to organisation development incorporating succession leadership development. Hence, it is argued that the findings from the literature review and empirical research, while

referring mostly to the university environment, may offer principles and approaches to other organisations outside education/knowledge organisations.

Three arguments derived from the literature review underpinned the study as informing principles for the investigation on leadership development in contemporary universities. The first argument was that for leadership preparation to be relevant it must form an integral part of organisational development (Byham, 2002; Kesler, 2002; Wellins & Byham, 2001). In other words, it is argued, the notion of leadership development should not stand alone, but be conceptualised as integral to strategic thinking, planning and practice within the organisation as a whole. The second argument was that consideration of executive leadership development strategies for universities should take cognizance of the complex environment in which university leaders now work. The third argument was that attention to leadership preparation is particularly needful at the present time when accelerated age-related attrition in universities is anticipated, and that this offers an ideal opportunity to re-examine appropriate executive and organisational leadership development elements and perspectives. The significance of the study is outlined next.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant because the Australian tertiary environment is experiencing ongoing change which may call for different capability sets from those which served before. These capabilities may include bringing staff through overlapping periods of uncertainty (Barnett, 2004), managing administrative activities more efficiently in light of increased monitoring and reporting requirements (Hanna, 2003), and mobilising and supporting staff in pursuit of

strategic aims in a climate of reduced resources (Bradley Review, 2008; Cohen, 2004; Shattock, 2003). Changing external factors also influence how universities operate and hence have extant implications for leadership development. An added dimension is that currently universities are facing large-scale attrition due to the “baby boomer” generation exiting the workforce in large numbers. This creates a two-fold opportunity to be prepared, *and* to re-think how organisational and leadership development might be leveraged most effectively.

The contention that universities have “moved from a position dominated by features of the collegium and bureaucracy to one closer to the corporation or enterprise” (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999, p. 12) suggests a somewhat conflicting blend of accountabilities for academic leaders, along with expectations that “the higher education sector be more relevant to national economic and social priorities” (Meek & Wood, 1997, p. 3). Reports of expanding workloads and associated stress in universities worldwide were noted (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998; Kinman, 1998; Sapstead, 2004; Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Dua & Hapuararchchi, 2002), raising issues of work/life balance. Furthermore, universities worldwide have been required to embrace a more applied, community-connected, partnering ethos in a climate of decreased government funding (Bradley Review, 2008; Cohen, 2004), together with increased expectations of government for universities to collaborate with the professions and enterprise (Cohen, 2004). The Bradley Review (2008) asserts that strictures represented by reduced resources have impaired universities' capacity to make their utmost contribution to society. The Review states also that “[t]he higher education system needs to be much more broadly engaged with the end-users of research and knowledge application” (p. 5).

The situation of increased complexity is reflected globally, with moderate attention being paid to development initiatives. For example, in the United Kingdom, Middlehurst (2007) notes: “[s]ince the late 1980s and early 1990s, initiatives in management and leadership have spread, albeit unevenly, across higher education in the United Kingdom” (p.45). Middlehurst (2007) notes: “[h]owever, the research base has not grown commensurately...[b]y 2000, it was clear that higher education still lagged behind other sectors (such as health, industry, or local government) in its attention to management and leadership development and research on the running of the business” (p. 45). Middlehurst (2007) observes that the scenario is by no means limited to the United Kingdom, and that leadership development, particularly the ability to lead through change, is required widely.

Hanna (2003) echoes a resounding contextual theme for the significance for the current study - that higher education institutions must change – and indeed are changing – to meet future needs, *and* that they will need to address a number of strategic challenges as they “transform themselves to meet the demands of an increasingly complex and dynamic environment” (p. 26). The current study examined some contextual factors influencing the nature of university work, and how these changes affect leadership and hence leadership development in universities. Jacobzone, Cambois, Chaplain and Robine (1998) note that Australia has one of the world’s most rapidly ageing populations, with about a quarter of the population being aged 65 and over within the next 50 years. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) predicts that within the next ten years the population aged over 65 years will be growing at an annual rate of four per cent, considerably

faster than total population growth, with over twenty per cent of the population over the age of 65 years by 2021. University demographics Australia-wide might be assumed to reflect these demographic trends. This suggests a pressing need for organisations to conduct workforce planning audits and engage in workforce planning and succession leadership development.

The study explored how higher education leaders, particularly academic leaders, might equip themselves to lead within continual change and to manage the competing tensions and accountabilities for both core academic and business functions. This includes exploring the mix of skills and abilities needed to lead and manage accountably in contemporary higher education. Given the implications of age-related attrition anticipated in the sector (Bradley Review, 2008; Jacobzone et al., 1998), how to retain valuable knowledge from longer serving members of staff while moving forward to embrace new paradigms of engagement and collaboration becomes a dual remit worthy of attention. The changes create vital opportunities for universities to consider succession leadership development and how they will prepare an appropriately skilled senior leadership workforce in a changed and changing environment (Kur & Bunning, 2002).

Investigating the type of leadership development most suitable for the changing senior leadership role, the study explored the literature on the key issues impacting leadership development in the sector, taking into account levels of complexity, ambiguity and change. As part of this process, it was considered timely and useful to explore what leaders themselves identify as the key issues for the higher education environment currently and, hence, for themselves as leaders;

also to explore how leaders best learn, and what leaders see as effective leadership. The current study deployed both a significant literature review and participant research to explore a gap in the literature on succession leadership development in universities to investigate what might be an appropriate and integrated approach to executive and organisational leadership development, taking multiple elements and perspectives into account.

A number of writers and researchers have published work on succession planning and leadership development in the corporate sector but investigations have suggested a relative dearth of published work on these issues in the tertiary leadership environment, thus underscoring a need to explore this area more fully. Discussing the corporate sector, Wellins and Byham (2001) make the link between succession planning and leadership development, proposing succession planning as a talent identification system paired with a formal, ongoing program for leadership development. This definition was adopted as a first premise for the study. Wellins and Byham (2001) suggest that such an approach builds critical bench strength internally to foster the preservation of talent and the continuity of corporate culture. To what extent, then, are strategic succession leadership processes practiced?

Caudron (1996) cites a United States survey in which only 22 percent of over 500 people surveyed believed that their organisation had in place a well-developed management succession system. Wellins and Byham (2001) report a study of corporations in the United States which found that some 40 percent of organisations rated their approach to talent identification and leadership development as low or very low. The study surveyed managers, non-managers

and human resource executives in fifty-two organisations. Wellins and Byham (2001) conclude that recruiting leadership talent from outside the company is no longer a viable option for many organisations and that the solution is succession planning based on identifying and developing talent within the organisation. Byham (2002), Clutterbuck (2004), Kesler (2002) and Wondra (2009) suggest similarly.

It is claimed that there is merit in taking an integrated, whole-of-organisation approach to executive and organisational leadership development, including succession development, in higher education at this time. This includes identifying contextual elements relating to staff such as, for example, the typically short tenure of young graduates in specialisations yielding attrition in key roles (Taylor, 2001), identifying people who potentially could fill and perform credibly in senior roles, and providing those people with accelerated development opportunities (Boyatzis, Stubbs & Taylor, 2002). Caudron (1996) recommends taking an integrated approach to organisational development, arguing that in an era where individuals readily move in and out of organisations, successful organisations do not view succession planning as executive replacement but as leadership development. Evidence suggested, in fact, that such an approach attracts high-performing staff (Caudron, 1996; Wellins & Byham, 2001). Overall, it has been argued (see Avolio, Bass & Yung, 1999; Buss, 2001; Lamond, 2001; Rao & Rao, 2005; Schein, 1997, 2003) that investing most in the people of the organisation and ostensibly valuing the strengths that individual staff members have to offer, pays dividends for organisations (Drew & Bensley, 2001; Undung & De Guzman, 2009; Wondra, 2009). These contextual factors coupled with the relative dearth of succession leadership development literature and research in the

university field, and the anticipated erosion of the current senior leadership complement in universities over the next few years, gave rise to the overall research problem to be investigated.

Context and Rationale for the Study

The context for the study was recognising significant change in the way in which universities operate, and acknowledging that such changes affect the way in which current and future leaders might best be developed and supported. As noted, some elements of the context for the study, from the literature, acknowledged a leadership environment characterised by complexity, a need to balance academic and business accountabilities and tensions, increased partnering with external agencies in industry and the professions, increased workloads, and differences in the way in which people seek to contribute to organisations (Taylor, 2001). A need to meld a highly aged-differentiated, changing workforce also was noted. The context and rationale for the study are tied initially to an acknowledgement of changing influences briefly summarised below.

Competing pressures have served to make universities increasingly complex organisations (Middlehurst, 2007; Ramsden, 1998a, 1998b). Over the past decade, the effects of globalisation (Currie, 1998), wider access to higher education, diversification in sources of knowledge and emphasis on vocational knowledge have dramatically changed the landscape of tertiary education. As was noted earlier in this chapter, the higher education sector has experienced increased complexity, accountability and monitoring. In fact, in recent decades, it is said, higher education institutions around the world have faced increasing complexity due to a range of external social, economic and political pressures. Kezar (in Kezar & Eckel, 2004) identifies three significant changes to the higher education

environment that are making governance more problematic: diverse environmental issues such as accountability and competition, retiring faculty staff and more diverse faculty appointments (in terms of background and age, for example), and the need to respond efficiently to shorter decision time frames. The differences between treating universities and businesses and managing universities in a business-like way, as discussed by Gayle et al. (2003), represent implicit tensions which need to be managed.

However, the rationale for the study submits that there is more to development than knowing the context in which leaders are operating. Part of the study touches on the wider strategic context of the role that universities may play for community good (Ranasinghe, 2001). It was noted that universities fulfil a key role in local and global communities to engage in knowledge creation and dissemination through research and teaching, but at the same time they must operate as successful corporations able to withstand scrutiny in financial management practice, administrative reporting and in relation to accreditation requirements in relevant disciplines. It is incumbent upon universities to operate with an ethical governance platform, mindful of the kind of cultures that they are creating (Knight & Trowler, 2001; Martin, 1992; Schein, 2003; Undung & De Guzman, 2009).

Part of the rationale for the study was evidence that identifying and nurturing genuine leaders can make all the difference between success and failure for organisations (Buss, 2001). Wondra (2009) recommends developing a systematic approach to talent and succession management to have in place a “consistent, positive flow of talent necessary to support success” (p. 1). Ramsden (1998a)

describes leadership as “a practical everyday process supporting, managing, developing and inspiring academic colleagues” (p. 4), adding that leadership has to do with how people relate to each other (1998a). Adair (2005), Miller (2006) and others refer to the importance of inspirational leadership. These serve as useful early definitions in a study concerning leadership. Authors such as Boyatzis et al. (2002), Kane, Crawford and Grant (1999), Kesler (2002), Leibman, Bruer and Maki (1996), Parcell and Bligh (2000), Rothwell (2002), Walker (1998) and Wellins and Byham (2001) argue various perspectives concerning the type of leadership development that will build readiness for future senior positions. These authors argue that appropriate development is critical for knowledge retention and talent management (Wondra, 2009). Most emphasise paying attention to increasing levels of productive engagement in multiple ways as fundamental to most development strategies. Hanna (2003) sets the tone for the findings of the study that a combination of strategic and operational and human-centred attributes and capabilities is needed, arguing that the fast pace of change in the university environment demands leaders who are adaptable and able to problem-solve. Authors such as Coaldrake and Stedman (1998), Kinman (1998), Kesler (2002) and Sapstead (2004) argue that development strategies are needed to provide appropriately for an ageing workforce while bringing on new leaders. It was noted that Kesler (2002) supports talent management and succession leadership development, with “feeder groups” built along the leadership pipeline as vital preparation for knowledge organisations.

The rationale for the study included a perceived need to discuss and offer creative and innovative ways in which to build appropriately prepared cohorts to take on leadership roles within higher education. The timeliness of the study was

reinforced by an argument that insufficient work is being done in Australia in this area because of the relatively low priority accorded to people leadership issues, and a tendency to focus on the short term (Kane et al., 1999).

Parcell and Bligh (2000), commenting on Ramsden's (1998a) similar views in *Learning to Lead in Higher Education*, note that effective leaders look to future preparation at organisational and individual levels, with a clear vision as to where they are going and what they want to achieve. Parcell and Bligh (2000) argue that more work is needed to focus on human resource and organisational preparation and development issues. They refer to work undertaken by Calman and Simpson (2000) in the United Kingdom and of Klinge (2000) in Sweden in the medical education leadership field investigating how leaders of the future may be developed and nurtured. Parcell and Bligh (2000) report Klinge's (2000) findings that while it is apparent that everyone involved in health care education, for example, has a responsibility for leadership, for many this role has not been sufficiently recognised. This observation strikes a familiar chord in this study.

Hence, the study acknowledges that the development and preparation of leaders involves addressing the individual leader in his/her interpersonal relationship with others, and by exploring the attributes that are required to foster high quality engagement. The overall rationale for the study, then, is a perceived, timely need to elevate succession leadership development issues for scrutiny in a strategic, concerted way, and to contribute to the understanding of what constitutes effective organisational development and leadership behaviour as part of integrated organisational practice for the tertiary education sector.

Research Subquestions and Papers

The broad research question was addressed by considering a number of subquestions resulting in papers completed during the course of the study. Each of the subquestions investigated a particular aspect of the overarching research question and contributed to an informed and integrated approach to executive and organisational development in universities. The study resulted in four literature based papers (papers 1, 2, 3 and 7) and three research based papers (papers 4, 5 and 6). These papers/manuscripts appear in Chapter 3. The subquestions of the study addressed by each of the papers are discussed next in turn.

The subquestion addressed in Paper 1 was: *What are the key elements involved in balancing academic advancement with business effectiveness for contemporary university leaders?* The research subquestion explores the contextual environment in which university leaders are operating. The paper has been published as follows: Drew, G. (2006). Balancing academic advancement with business effectiveness? – The dual role for senior university leaders. *The International Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Organisational Change*, 6 (4), 117-125. This paper examines the landscape of the tertiary education environment and identifies contextual issues which would influence effective organisational and relevant succession leadership development. The paper notes the complex role of academic and business accountabilities for today's senior leaders in higher education. It identifies a number of key challenges for organisational development from the literature and suggests possible strategies to meet those challenges. The analysis identifies a need to approach leadership development from a systemic organisational development perspective.

The subquestion addressed in Paper 2 was: *What does it take to build an ethical, sound organisational culture, and what is the chief executive officer and executive team's role in building sound organisational culture?* The paper has been published as follows: Drew (2009). Leadership and organisational culture: Can the CEO and executive leadership teams in bureaucratic organisations influence organisational culture? *Academic Leadership OnLine Journal* 7(1), 1-8. The paper recognises the need for leadership capacity to engender a sound organisational culture of engagement around a changing strategic and operational agenda. It explores the influence that the chief executive officers and leadership teams may have upon building positive organisational culture albeit in bureaucratic organisations such as universities.

The subquestion addressed in Paper 3 was: *How might organisations increase consultation and engagement around strategic change?* The paper has been published as follows: Drew (2008). An Artful Learning Framework for organisations. *Journal of Management & Organization* 14, 504-520. The paper acknowledges substantial evidence that ongoing change is a critical capability for senior leaders in the higher education environment. The word “artful” is used here to argue that overly instrumental forms of managing change, where emphasis is placed more on structure than on the people, are unlikely to succeed (Wheatley, 2003; Kerr & Darso, 2007) whereas “artful” learning strategies are those which set out to understand the whole of an issue, as exploring a broad range of factors may provide important insights into understanding how and why change is best effected (Wheatley, 2003). This paper, then, puts forward an Artful Learning Framework as a suite of strategies supporting a genuine, reflective consultative process designed to help perceive issues in their wholeness, and to promote

reflection, awareness, personal/professional growth and quality outcomes (London, 2002).

The subquestion addressed in Paper 4 was: *What are the main challenges for the changing tertiary sector and, hence, for individual leaders?* This research paper is entitled: “Issues and challenges in higher education leadership: Engaging for change”. The paper is in press to *Australian Educational Researcher*. It reports the responses of a group of university leaders regarding the main challenges facing them in the tertiary environment of the next five years.

The subquestion addressed in Paper 5 was: *How do leaders learn and what constitutes effective leadership?* This jointly authored paper, equally contributed to by the three authors, has been published as follows: Drew, G., Ehrich, L.C. & Hansford, B.C. (2008). An exploration of university leaders’ perceptions of leadership and learning. *Leading & Managing* 14(2), 1-18. For the empirical part of the study reported in this paper, views of research participants were sought on what characteristics of leaders, or conditions created by leaders they considered to be effective; how these emergent leaders “like to be led” and, in their experience how do, or did, they best learn to be leaders. The paper reports the views of a sample of new leaders in the university environment on what characteristics of leaders or conditions created by leaders foster and inspire their best work and what they would identify as their most significant leadership learning event, experience or activity.

The subquestion addressed in Paper 6 was: *How effective is 360 degree feedback surveying using the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) for assisting individual*

development for current and future leaders? The relevant paper has been published: Drew, G. (2009). A “360” view for individual leadership development. *Journal of Management Development* 28(7), 581-592. This paper reports the views of a sample of new leaders’ experience undertaking the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP), a 360 degree feedback instrument, for developmental purposes. These leaders had occupied their current leadership roles for one to three years. The QLP was researched and developed by the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and was launched as an instrument fully automated for responding and reporting in 2000. It has been used since that time by leaders and managers at QUT and at more than twenty-five education and knowledge organisations in Australia and overseas. The researched factors of the QLP cluster under the themes of Staff Motivation and Involvement, Strategic and Operational Management, Service/Client Focus and Community Outreach and (where applicable to the ratee’s role) Academic Leadership (Drew & Kerr, 2003; Drew, 2006).

The subquestion addressed in Paper 7 was: *What constitutes “real” power and influence in leadership?* The paper was submitted to the *Journal of Leadership Studies*. The paper, entitled: “Enabling or ‘real’ power and influence in leadership”, takes a creative approach. It examines some principles on this theme from the leadership literature and illustrates those principles from a reading of character depictions in J.R.Tolkien’s (1966) trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*. This part of the study recognises that use of power (or authority) and influence are critical components in leadership. It considers, respectively, power and influence as a dominating, coercive force and power and influence that engenders volitional engagement, seeing these considerations as relevant to questions of leadership.

The interest of the paper is how power and influence might be conceptualised and enacted most effectively in the leadership relationship.

An eighth paper, jointly authored by Drew and Ehrich, was written during the period this PhD by Publication was examined. It is entitled “A model of organisational leadership development for universities: Elements and practices”. It currently is under review with the *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*. This paper introduces a model, called the Lantern model, which became the basis of the theoretical framework for the study.

Research Participants

The research study sought the views of new leaders, typically having held their senior leadership roles for one to four years, at one university in Queensland, Australia. The research participants were eighteen beneficiaries of a “by invitation” succession leadership development program entitled “Leading in the New Era” (LINE) held over three years (2004-2006) at the same Australian university. Individuals taking part in the program were nominated by their dean or head of division to attend the program. The Vice-Chancellor signed off on nominations to the program. It is believed that these program participants were a fitting sample of new senior university leaders to whom to put the invitation to take part in the research study. A copy of the letter which invited program participants to be interviewed for the research study, the letter of consent by which participants registered their interest to take part in research interviews, and further information about the research design that governed the three research papers can be found in Appendices 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

In summary, this chapter introduced the research problem to be investigated, outlined the significance of the study, issues of context and rationale for the study, and introduced how research participants were drawn forward for the study. The next chapter provides a comprehensive literature review. The seven papers comprising the doctoral study then follow as Chapter 3. A discussion and summary chapter (Chapter 4) draws together the essence of the study and its findings.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

Background

The literature review presented in this chapter responds to the overarching research question which asked: *What are the key elements informing effective executive and organisational leadership development for universities in a changing operating environment?* The literature review presented here addresses the research question and the related subquestions set out in Chapter 1. A model entitled the “Lantern” model – An Illuminated Model for Organisational Leadership Development - was created as an outcome of addressing the overarching research question via the literature review. The model is used as an organiser for this chapter and is the theoretical framework for the study (see Figure 1).

The Lantern model was developed as a result of examining the literature (i.e. generic management literature as well as the literature in the higher education field) for guidance in addressing the research question to discover the most important aspects which university leaders might take into account in planning appropriate executive and organisational leadership development. Insights gleaned from some of the generic leadership and management literature are used in this study for two main reasons. Firstly, there is a dearth of writing regarding leadership and management in the higher education field (Middlehurst, 2007); and secondly, it is argued that there are common issues and challenges facing leaders and managers across a variety of contexts. For example, the interpersonal and relational aspects of leadership that foster engagement with others might be

expected to apply in all staff-leader relationships, irrespective of context. With this said, however, it is understood that the university sector does have some distinctive differences. Middlehurst (2007), for example, argues the distinctiveness of the university sector. He reports research conducted by way of evaluating the Adair leadership courses where “respondents drew attention to the distinctiveness of universities as organizations as well as the receptiveness or otherwise of their institutions toward more executive styles of management” (pp. 49, 50). Distinctiveness might be suggested around issues of learning and research, and perhaps to notions of “service” and differentiated accountability drivers for different sectors; however, there seems to be little empirical research to identify the similarities and differences between leading in universities and elsewhere. It is not the intent of this study to identify such differences but, as suggested later in this document, testing the Lantern model in public and private sector environments may well be a useful framework for exploring what the distinctive differences might be.

While the model has been designed for the university environment, it may have relevance to other settings since it depicts an integrated, whole-of-organisation approach to organisational leadership development, planning and practice. The model depicts three key identified dimensions of leadership development. These are the “transpersonal” (strategic organisational) dimension covering aspects of the organisation’s contextual environment), the “interpersonal” dimension covering interpersonal engagement and collaboration, and the “intrapersonal” dimension covering self-awareness and reflective capacity. This chapter argues that succession leadership development should build an appreciation of each of

these dimensions to embrace the multiple leadership challenges identified in the study.

In this chapter, the research subquestions that grew out of the overarching research question are addressed in the discussion that interrogates various aspects of the key elements of leadership development. However, it is in the chapter that follows this one that each of the research subquestions is addressed in full. The next part of this chapter explains each of the components of the model illustrated in Figure 1.

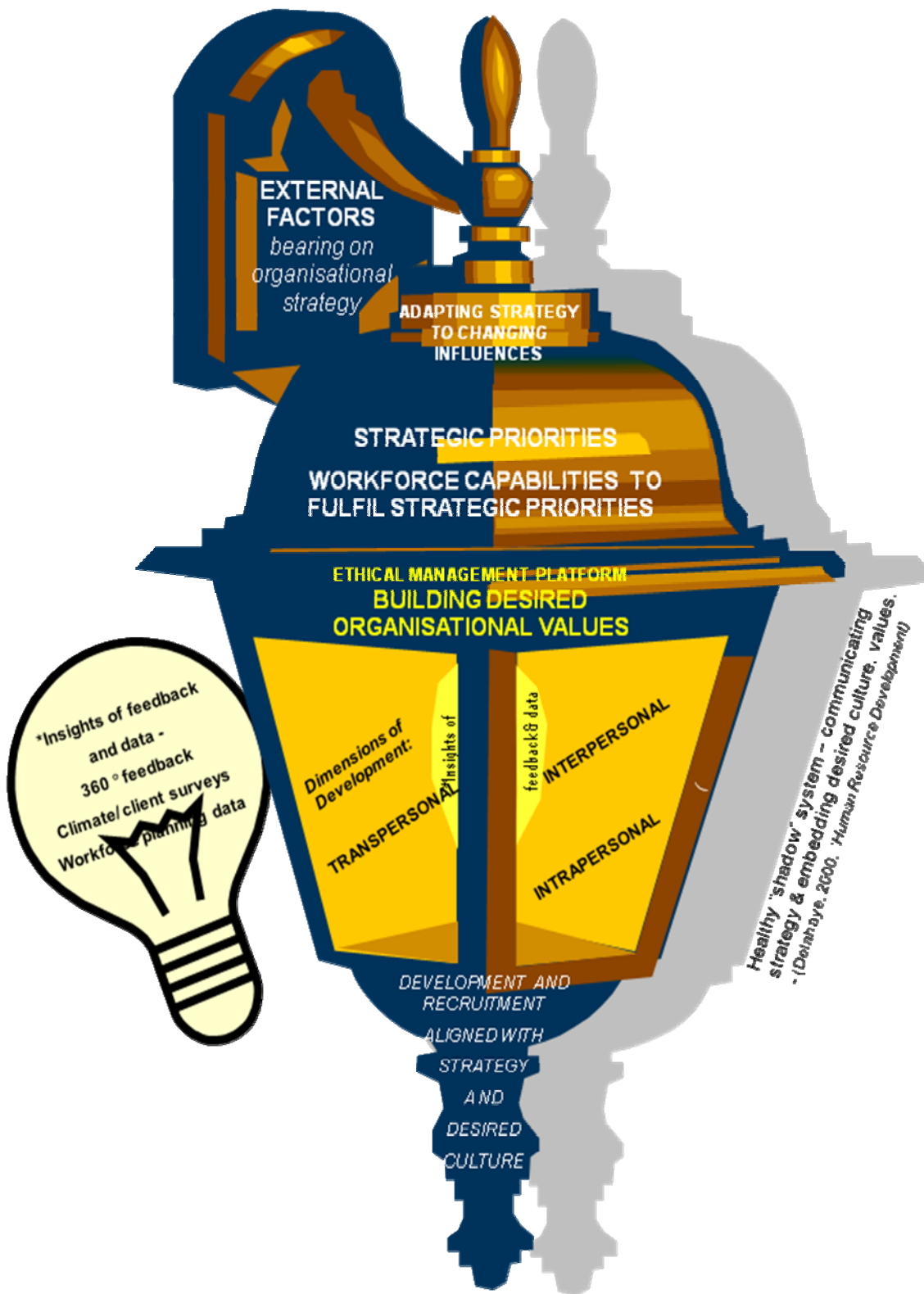


Figure 1: "Lantern" model – an Illuminated Model of Organisational Leadership Development

The Lantern – An Illuminated Model for Organisational Leadership Development

The Lantern model (Figure 1), is based on a proposition that organisational goal achievement is dependent upon clarity of vision and strategy, and upon fostering the key capabilities which help the organisation meet its vision and goals. The notion is one of ensuring an illuminated environment, well-informed by data and feedback, including feedback on leadership behaviours, in order to inform future practice. A traditional lantern image was chosen as a metaphor for the model, depicting the essential nature of organisational development and succession planning to spotlight the organisational environment, externally and internally, to import relevant information and to identify and build the capabilities that will assist the realisation of goals. Part of the illumination effect is to recognise the corpus of knowledge that exists within the organisation, identify knowledge gaps, and ensure the organisation's capability to synthesise existing and new knowledge to operate effectively in changing contexts and conditions. Assimilation of past and present is said to be the "central task of education" (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler and Tipton, 1991, p. 177). It is argued in this chapter that the model, while devised for the university environment, has wider application to other education and knowledge organisations.

The Lantern model consists of eight component parts as follows:

- external factors bearing on organisational strategy;
- adapting strategy to changing influences;
- strategic priorities;
- workforce capabilities to fulfil strategic priorities;
- ethical management platform building desired organisational culture;

- insights from feedback and data;
- dimensions of development:
 - transpersonal;
 - interpersonal;
 - intrapersonal;
- development and recruitment aligned with strategy and desired culture.

The seven papers of the study fit within the three “dimensions of development” revealed to be necessary in the literature review undertaken for the study. The papers reflect all elements of the Lantern model and cluster under the three dimensions of development as follows:

transpersonal dimension – Papers 1, 2 and 3;

interpersonal dimension – Papers 4 and 5;

intrapersonal dimension – Papers 6 and 7.

The Lantern model informing organisational leadership development proposes that leadership development occurs as a whole-of-organisation approach to organisational development in cognizance of the multiple external influences affecting the organisation’s operation. It represents alignment of leadership development and recruitment practices with strategic goals and with the ethical values and capabilities identified as critical to achieving those goals. The model thus depicts an aligned approach to recruitment and development, with the organisational landscape illuminated by important relevant feedback and data for continuous improvement. The model offers an organising framework for

organisational development supporting leadership development at the three dimensions mentioned above. Overall, it recognises the importance of flexibility, innovation and adaptability to change (James, 2002a, James 2002b) and focuses on strategy, processes and people (Avolio et al., 1999; Buss, 2001; Rao & Rao, 2005; Schein, 1997; Schein, 2003). The elements of the model are discussed in turn.

External Factors Bearing on Organisational Strategy

This first part of the model reflects the critical connecting point of the organisation with its external environment, with a need to gain updated information and data on external factors bearing on strategy and operations. The notion is one of scanning the environment for factors that might influence organisational priorities. This part of the model reflects a conceptual argument that organisational leaders should have in place ways and means for their organisations and organisational areas to be well connected to the external stakeholders of their environment. This helps to ensure that organisational leaders and, hence, staff are aware of changing external influences which may bear upon the strategic direction that they wish to take. A number of writers (e.g. Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998; Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999; Cohen, 2004; Meek & Wood, 1997; Middlehurst, 2007; Ramsden, 1998a, 1998b; Rothwell, 2002) have identified significant changes in the university environment in recent years affecting governance, funding, strategy, teaching and research. For these authors, sound strategic and operational decision-making is predicated upon maintaining a sound knowledge of current and anticipated changes in the external operating environment in order to prepare for the effects of change. This part of the model acknowledges the changing contexts in which universities operate, and it relates to

leadership because leaders must have a system in place to import and monitor evolving strategic contextual information that bears upon the work of the organisation (Horder, 2000).

The changing context of universities' operating landscape is well documented in the literature. Rothwell (2002) emphasises clarifying early the desired results of the succession planning effort. Authors writing of the university leadership context assert the importance of university leaders being able to help their people engage in change (Stiles, 2004). Coaldrake and Stedman (1998) note that over the centuries, universities have shown themselves to be extremely durable institutions capable of adapting to changing circumstances while maintaining their traditional ideals. Yet the pace of change over the past ten years in many countries has been rapid and this poses challenges for leaders assisting staff to deal with overlapping and sometimes apparently conflicting mandates affecting teaching, research, service and governance. Universities have to make more effective use of their budgets, raise money from industry and the professions and link more with external parties to carry out core business (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998; Rochford, 2006), while the traditional individualistic values of academics remain highly informative to university culture (Middlehurst, 1993; Stiles, 2004). The notion of research for the sake of advancing knowledge and understanding may not sit easily with the more pecuniary considerations of commercialisation, secrecy agreements, direct application of knowledge and financial viability. The tensions situate university leadership environments somewhat uniquely. The somewhat competing themes invoke interesting questions concerning what constitutes appropriate leadership development.

For example, expectations of university management that senior staff will implement strategy and vision may well conflict with the realities of reduced authority at the local level for the senior manager, and with the values of academic autonomy and academic quality (Stiles, 2004). Some audits held in the university sector have provided information useful to universities. The Lantern model suggests that university leaders connect with important, relevant information sources to ensure they remain in touch with key audiences, and foster a quality of leadership and organisational readiness to adjust practice where necessary. Gaining and acting upon useful feedback and data are crucial to the model; data gathering practices must be grounded, relevant and worth the effort rather than perfunctory in nature.

Audits

Quality and other audits in universities have attempted to assess organisational effectiveness to the extent that, it is claimed, the advent of an increased “audit culture” has itself eroded the time of academic managers to carry out core essential work (Cohen, 2004). Typically, audits of the “quality movement” responded to the inherent challenges of embracing new paradigms for leadership in the late 1990s. For example, of the experience of New Zealand universities responding to changes suggested out of the quality movement, Mead, Morgan and Heath (1999) investigated whether the quality movement had become so sophisticated that it had outpaced academics’ ability to respond. One response by the University of Otago was to attempt an innovative program of skill and attribute development in an effort to meet the challenges of change deriving from a quality audit. Reporting on the initiative following the audit, the University

acknowledged that the success of the initiative depended on the extent to which participants practised effective “people” skills in the day to day interactions of their roles.

Audits in the form of contemporary research studies have investigated the key issues and challenges for leaders such as the work of Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008). These provide information which may inform practice such as appropriate leadership development strategies in universities. The notion is one of mitigating organisational insularity continually to seek a wider global, strategic perspective. The literature suggests that university leaders need to be aware of the kinds of skills and abilities that the organisation needs to develop and import if universities are to meet strategic and operational objectives.

Demand for New Skills for Leaders

Opportunities and threats posed by a rapidly changing internal and external environment demand a more diverse set of leadership and management skills than previously has been the case (Marshall, 2007; Rochford, 2006). Kotter (2002) cautions: “[i]n an age of turbulence, when you handle [change] really well, you win. Handle it poorly, and it can ... cost a great deal of money, and cause a lot of pain” (p. 2). James (2002b) recommends constantly monitoring to update strategy to take account of non-linear, unpredictable developments. It might be interpolated that for universities, a clash of worlds occurs with increased need for innovation and risk-taking supported by adequate risk management (Shattock, 2003), while accountabilities for academic work and administrative activity compete for academics’ time (Drew, 2006; Marshall, Adams, Cameron & Sullivan, 2000; Schein, 1997). Another matter on which an external perspective

may be important is that of entrepreneurship – how far to extend entrepreneurship within the university setting and how to find the balance around innovation and risk management, for example (Stiles, 2004). Universities frequently liaise with external parties in entrepreneurial effort, and some of the issues relating to research development such as excessive time spent acquiring funds, time-consuming accountabilities for management of funds and the like may sit uncomfortably with academics.

The literature to date lacks rigorous empirical studies about entrepreneurship in the university environment according to Moon (1999) who defines three dimensions of managerial entrepreneurship in public and private organisations. These can be summarised as product-based (enhancing customer satisfaction); process-based (reducing the level of red tape); and behaviour-based (promoting the propensity for risk-taking). The changing environment for universities suggests that universities will need to develop in their people a willingness to experiment with new ways of conducting research, teaching and administrative workloads (Bradley Review, 2008). Writers across multiple sectors suggest that a spirit of experimentation and innovation is an essential capability if organisations are to reinvigorate themselves in resource-restricted times with new, effective and more streamlined approaches (Carnegie, 2002; Gyskiewicz, 1999). Shattock (2003), commenting on United Kingdom universities, acknowledges a need for greater alignment between innovative approaches, in technology applications in particular, and the strategic process improvement needs of universities.

It has been argued in this section that the recurrent message for executive and organisational development is that university leaders face more complex roles of

leadership and management than before, calling for university leaders to be aware of changes mooted by government, the professions and industry in carrying out core business of research and teaching. Leader adaptability and an ability to engage people in a rapidly changing environment appear to take centre stage as priorities. Kotter (2007) suggests, in fact, that the ability to lead through change is the ultimate test of a leader. It is apparent that universities need to take an innovative approach to process efficiency in a climate of reduced funding and increased monitoring and reporting for universities, to be aware of change which might affect strategy and operations and to take action and adjust where needed. This leads to the second part of the model which is the need for universities to be able to adapt to changing influences.

Adapting Strategy to Changing Influences

The component of the Lantern model, “adapting strategy to changing influences”, refers to the notion that universities need to build change capability in their leadership workforce if they are to mobilise and engage their people in change agenda when needed. The key argument presented here is that the degree of mobilisation and engagement likely to be required is unlikely to occur capriciously but through the significant and successful effort of leaders to outline the reason for change and seek the involvement of organisational members to work differently where required.

Barnett (2004) emphasises the need for responsiveness to change in order for organisations to succeed in volatile environments. He and others argue that universities typically navigating significant change need to build adaptive capabilities in leaders and staff members alike. The ability of leaders to respond to

changing external influences and to articulate rationale for change to staff emerge as important development priorities (Hamlin & Davies, 1996). Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008), referring to their significant study of leadership challenges and issues in higher education, write of the need to assist academic leaders in “making sense of the continuously and rapidly changing context” (p. 27) in which they operate. They state: “What emerges is how important it is for academic leaders to be able to deal with change” (p. 27). This part of the model acknowledges that if people in organisations are to be expected to adapt to change, leaders need to be able and prepared to consult readily with those involved in change, provide rationale for change and assist engagement in change, and that this entails putting in place not only a structure but a learning environment which asks deeper questions in order to mine richer, more sustainable solutions. In summary, this part of the model recognises that the organisation might be well aware of external issues bearing on strategy but should be assessing and building capability amongst its staff to work artfully, flexibly, and differently if need be, towards achieving changing strategic priorities.

Strategic Priorities

The positioning of “strategic priorities” close to the top of the Lantern model reflects the informing role of strategic vision to core business (Snyder et al., 2007). Under the model, strategic vision and priorities are communicated from the top of the organisation through effective communication and an effective supervisory process (Hanna, 2003; Oliver, 2001). Snyder et al. (2007), studying the academic management environment, argue for supportive institutional strategies which dissolve boundaries to value overlapping connection points.

It was acknowledged that a whole-of-organisation approach is somewhat fraught in universities where there is a conflation of separate disciplines and ideological positions potentially challenging the concept of a sense of common strategic vision (Bellah et al., 1991). It was inferred from the literature that higher education organisations which clearly state and reinforce their strategic vision may be better placed to rally people together with a sense of overall unity and forward movement. This is consistent with a proposition that “leaders are responsible for the creation of a vision, and the vision provides the basic energy source for moving the organisation toward the future” (Tichy & Devanna, 1986, p. 146). Navigating change in accordance with changing strategic themes is an important element of leadership.

Communication may remove the feeling of fear or uncertainty that may surround a mooted change, may help people see the reason for change and hence navigate transition more effectively (Collins, 2001; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Delahaye, 2000; Dunphy & Stace, 1995; Hanna, 2003; Healy, Ehrich, Hansford & Stewart, 2001; Parry, 1996; Sauer, 2002; Tornow & London, 1998). It is said that in more participative organisational climates demonstrating clarity on vision and goals and trust within teams, navigating strategic change is more likely to be successful (Berquist, 1993; Kotter, 1990; Kotter, 2002; Kotter, 2007; Lamond, 2001; Marshall et al., 2000; Marshall & Lowther, 1997). Just as adaptive capabilities are essential to acting upon external influences for change, strategic vision is an empty concept apart from seeking to align workforce capabilities with strategic vision. The principle of integrating capability development with strategy is discussed next.

Workforce Capabilities to Fulfil Strategic Priorities

This part of the model argues the need for universities to ensure they are identifying and fostering a set of workforce capabilities that are deemed critical to achieving strategic priorities. It appears that opportunities and threats posed by a rapidly changing internal and external environment in universities require an increasingly diverse range of leadership and management skills and behaviours (Hanna, 2003; Marshall, 2007). Various authors posit views and findings as to some of the generic core capabilities that are deemed to be critical to leading and managing in universities. A number of writers in the higher education field (see Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999; Knight & Holen, 1985; Locke, 2007; Lucas, 1995; Marshall, 2007; Ramsden, 1998a, 1998b) argue that collaboration and innovation are vital acquisitions for both academic and general staff.

Ability to adapt to change is another (Barnett, 2004; Cohen, 2004; Drew & Bensley, 2001; Drew, 2006; Marshall, 2007; Pratt, Margaritis & Coy, 1999; Taylor, 2001). Writers outside the university sector such as Argyris & Schon (1996), Avolio et al. (1999), Byrne & Davis (1998); Pratt, Margaritis & Coy, (1999) maintain that effective communication and the ability to engage and influence others are vital acquisitions in any environment. Parry's (1999) work synthesising leadership research conducted through the mid-1990s in Australia and New Zealand identified themes including the issue of leader development and the importance of continuous learning in leadership. A number of authors agree that continuous learning should pervade system applications including, most importantly, technology development and evaluation (Carnegie, 2002; Drew,

2006) and that such systems should look beyond reliance upon, simply, transmission of relevant information to highlight the proactive, reflective, self-regulated learner approach (Snyder et al., 2007).

The link between knowledge and system development and self-awareness capabilities in leadership is well made. Accordingly, the Lantern model sees personal effectiveness for engagement, trust-building and partnering as underpinning capability development for organisations, suggesting that the “social capital” intangibles of goodwill, trust and integrity give traction to any worthwhile model of succession leadership development.

Research by Marshall and Lowther (1997) found that affective interpersonal leadership qualities such as trust and communication were crucial factors in building amenable organisational culture capable of achieving collective goals. Offering a suite of capabilities deemed desirable in the education/knowledge sector is the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) 360 degree leadership survey which produces 360 degree feedback for leaders from staff, peers and supervisors for development purposes. The item/question set of the QLP is the result of research undertaken to identify a relevant set of key capabilities for leaders in education and knowledge environments. Factors of the QLP cluster under Staff Motivation and Involvement, Strategic and Operational Management, Client/Service Focus and Community Outreach and (where applicable) Academic Leadership (Drew, 2006, p. 119).

This part of the Lantern model, in summary, recommends identifying and then pursuing continuous improvement against a set of capabilities which help meet

strategic objectives and ideally cover strategic and operational and human centred behaviours. This part of the model recommends building critical mass in desired capabilities and values through feedback processes (McCarthy & Garavan, 2001) such as the QLP. The importance of organisational values is emphasised in the next part of the model which suggests that strategic priorities and workforce capabilities be underpinned by an ethical management platform which attends to issues such as organisational culture and ethical dealing.

Ethical Management Platform Building Desired Organisational Culture

Underpinning both strategic priorities and workforce capabilities is the need for an ethical management platform. This refers to creating mindfulness concerning the type of behaviours that will build desired organisational culture.

Organisational culture builds, inevitably, around the way in which the business of the organisation is carried out. It was noted that accountability for fair and equitable governance, financial management, ethical decision-making and risk management forms part of the remit of new complexity for educational leaders (Cooper, 1998; Gayle et al., 2003). The typical background of academics tends not to have prepared new academic leaders for the vast range of accountability items forming part of contemporary governance. These roles require access to specialist information relating to sound governance including the more subtle issues of culture, formed through the tacit practices of people within the organisation as they interact with each other (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Delahaye, 2000; Locke, 2007). Implicit issues of respect, trust and ethical dealing are said to be pivotal to the realisation of strategic goals (Cranston, Ehrich & Kimber, 2004, 2006; Singh & Manser, 2007; Undung & De Guzman, 2009). In the Lantern model, an ethical management platform proposes that the organisation examine

the extent to which codes and policies relating to ideal behaviour are observable in practice. The next part of the model considers the critical issue of aligning stated and “lived” behaviours.

***Healthy Shadow System Communicating Strategy and Embedding Desired
Culture, Values***

Seeking to increase synergy between espoused and actual behaviours within an organisation is critical to the Lantern model, consistent with Delahaye’s (2000) argument that there are two basic systems of the organisation – the “legitimate” and “shadow” systems (pp. 396, 21). The Lantern model fosters closer alignment between the “legitimate” system (the statements embedded in the organisation’s codes, policies and procedures as to how the organisation should operate) and the “shadow” system (representing the extent to which desired culture and values are embedded in practice) (Delahaye, 2000). Ethical considerations are said to form part of leader responsibility (Barnett, 2004; Kanungo, 1992; Parry, 1999; Schein, 1997). As offered by Delahaye (2000), the “legitimate system is responsible for the *intended* or *deliberate* strategy of the organisation” (p. 88), while the “shadow system” focuses on domains of learning and learning transfer. While “the shadow system cannot operate unless there is a solid and secure legitimate system” (p. 22), the “shadow system allows the organisation to continually evolve...by exploring options and generating ingenious alternatives” (p. 21), “establish[ing] long-term benefits for the organisation” (p. 278). It is the latter which feeds knowledge sharing, and indeed the “knowledge storage process that is important to the management of knowledge capital” (p. 278).

Accordingly, the Lantern model suggests that an ethical platform must be supported by the “reality check” of continually assessing and improving the consonance between codified aspirations and actual practice in organisations. In a sense, the culture or “spirit” of an organisation becomes a narrative which tacitly is “read” and interpreted as “text” by organisational members and stakeholders (Brown & McMillan, 1991; Wondra, 2009). This part of the model has emphasised that organisations are dependent on people to enact strategy and continuously build the capabilities that support strategy, and to improve alignment between espoused and demonstrable values.

Part of attending to values, for some authors, means attending to balance in work and life. Pratt, Margaritis and Coy (1999) report a study which offered ideas for those seeking to improve research and publications performance in university faculties. That study identified the important managerial decisions made to transform a faculty from being undergraduate teaching dominated in the late 1980s to one with a strong research profile by the mid-1990s. The persistent application of desired principles (beliefs, attitudes and values) by the organisation’s leaders were said to bring about desired change in organisational culture. Commentators in both Australian and United Kingdom settings reporting ubiquitously high workloads, stress and increased need for counselling (Kinman, 1998; Sapstead, 2004) also covertly emphasise the need to pursue balance. A study across seventeen Australian universities found “alarming and increasing level of stress amongst university staff” (Winefield et al., 2002, p. 95), while in the United States, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, problems lay with insufficient funding, work overloads and poor management practice (Winefield et al., 2002). It is suggested here that organisations paying attention to such issues

create a cleaner, more direct pathway for change to be enacted and for individual and corporate goals to be reached.

Insights from Feedback and Data

This part of the model, Insights from feedback and data, suggests consciously developing an organisational landscape that is well illuminated by relevant feedback, data and information that is important to core business. According to James (2002b), the days of the stable, long-term forecast are over, and it is prudent to take account regularly of changes in the organisation's external environment. Hence, universities are better placed to adjust, where needed, to change when they are able to gain quantitative and qualitative information on issues affecting core and support business. It is contended that this information will be of value only as it is critically analysed and communicated by the organisation's executives.

Feedback is said to be vital generally to the leader's assessing and developing performance as it encourages reflective thinking and continuous learning.

Heuristic tools such as 360 degree feedback leadership surveys are recommended for the purpose of fostering reflective thinking and action (Bland & Ruffin, 1992; Fedor, Bettenhausen & Davis, 1999; Fox, 1992; Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997; London, 2002; Lucas, 1995; Maier (Ed.), 1970; Rao & Rao, 2005). It is important that the feedback survey questions are relevant so that capabilities that are salient to the organisation's effective operation are being monitored and potentially improved over time. Use of 360 degree feedback tools in the sector has increased over recent years as universities have embraced a wider span of leadership challenges (Scott et al., 2008). According to Scott et al. (2008), academic leaders

are handling and responding to changing contexts and complexity in a variety of ways, and part of that picture is the leader examining his/her own interpersonal effectiveness through feedback and other reflective processes.

Anderson and Herr (1999, p. 16) report the view that promoting critical reflection “reorients, focuses, and energizes [organisational] participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it”. Thus, the intent of this part of the Lantern model is that leaders gain feedback on their leadership performance in order to develop in ways deemed relevant by staff, clients, supervisor and other stakeholders. Many authors claimed that feedback tools assist critical reflection for continuous improvement. Some authors such as London (2002) caution that 360 degree feedback processes must be handled with sensitivity and care to ensure a constructive learning outcome for ratees, especially where the results reveal some unexpected scores or comments. It is acknowledged that not all 360 degree feedback processes are successful, and this study explores what some of the difference-making elements might be to help ensure success. More work needs to be done in this area to gain further empirical data on 360 degree feedback processes and how they may best be used for developmental purposes. Many authors claimed that well-facilitated feedback tools assist critical reflection for continuous improvement and may inform development in a more targeted way (Atwater, Brett & Charles, 2007; Bass, 1985; Knight & Holen, 1985; Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997; McCarthy & Garavan, 2001; Peiperl, 2001; Seibert, 1999; Tornow & London, 1998; Yukl, 1989).

One caveat for success, as has been suggested, is the relevancy and “fit” of the 360 degree feedback questions to particular settings. In terms of ensuring a

relevant set of questions to the university environment, Scott et al. (2008) observe that a number of studies, “including a small number from Australia (e.g. Ramsden, 1998[a]; Drew, 2006), shed light on the specific qualities deemed as important and necessary for leaders now and in the future” (p. 15). Scott et al. (2008) note the Quality Leadership Profile 360 degree leadership survey instrument as offering domains of focus and development in higher education. The design of the QLP acknowledges that organisational systems and processes will only be as effective as the quality of the relationships that operate around the system, process or structure (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Brown, 2001; Jordan, 1999).

Some form of systematic development evaluation is deemed important at corporate as well as individual level “so that the organisation can monitor when desired targets are reached” (De Simone, Werner & Harris, 2002, p. 167). Similarly, Rao and Rao (2005) argue that evaluation of leadership practice through use of 360 degree feedback surveys and other mechanisms should link with succession planning. Indeed, the literature recommends that gaining data on practice and on various key organisational targets is vital to organisations remaining relevant, capable of achieving strategic objectives and capable of change and improvement.

For example, Jacobzone et al. (1998) and Kesler (2002) assert that having sound data on workforce demographics is essential to plan strategically for the future, including ensuring the organisation’s ability to fill key roles and safeguard valuable organisational knowledge in times of accelerated attrition. Hence, client surveys are commended as a useful way of gaining perceptions on issues affecting operating performance including, importantly, teaching. Similarly, climate

surveys usefully may capture staff opinions in order to improve the organisational environment to make it as conducive as possible to achieving individual and corporate goals. The Lantern model proposes that, thus illuminated by data, the organisation and its people are best placed to take control of perceptions concerning their operations in order to adjust, adapt and improve. Again, an important caveat for all feedback initiatives is that perceived success of the data gathering process will vest in respondents seeing some evidence that ratees are taking action where useful, to make use of the feedback received.

Overall, illuminating the organisation with a range of data helps organisational leaders to judge strategic and operational matters in an enlightened way. In terms of succession planning, Rothwell (2002) and others emphasise conducting a workforce planning audit linked to strategic priorities to assess the organisation's access to suitable staff to fill anticipated gaps in the workforce. For example, the organisation may be losing a high percentage of staff in leadership roles through age-related attrition; may be losing a number of star performers; may wish to increase its numbers of women in more senior positions, its number of early career researchers, or its complement of Indigenous staff.

In summary, this part of the model aims to engender a spirit of curiosity and enquiry about the organisational environment by seeking and acting, where appropriate, on the views of the organisation's staff, clients and stakeholders. It is proposed that this part of the model is vital to leadership development as in more enlightened organisations leaders are able to make decisions based on evidence and data rather than in an "ad hoc" manner. In summarising this part of the model, the emphasis is on achieving clarity. It is said that open, rather than closed,

environments tend better to support leaders in understanding and communicating knowledge about purpose and processes, and in acknowledging and valuing people (Rao & Rao, 2005).

The study turns to the literature for guidance on what appears to be essential dimensions of leadership development to be covered to foster people engagement in organisations. Overall, a number of authors (see, for example, Rao and Rao, 2005; Schein, 1997; Schein, 2003) argue that there are three separate but overlapping dimensions for an informed approach to organisational and leadership development. Those dimensions can be conceptualised as follows: (a) strategic organisational development; (b) effective interpersonal engagement around effective processes; and (c) personal reflective capacity and self-awareness. These three dimensions termed, respectively, “transpersonal”, “interpersonal” and “intrapersonal”, emerged as a useful framework for generic leadership development. These dimensions reflect the item and factor structure of the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP), the 360 degree leadership survey referred to previously. The alignment is of interest as the QLP was researched in and for senior leadership development in education/knowledge spheres (Drew, 2006; Drew & Kerr, 2003).

The key capabilities relevant to leadership and management in the sector revealed by research to develop the QLP, (being Staff Motivation & Involvement; Strategic and Operational Management; Client Service; Community Outreach and, where relevant, Academic Leadership), are somewhat similar to the findings of Scott et al. (2008) concerning key capabilities relevant to leading and managing in the sector. According to the Carrick study reported by Scott et al. (2008, p. 72), these

capabilities include: Empathising, Influencing; Self-regulation and Self-organisation; Flexibility and Responsiveness (similar to QLP items/questions under “Staff Motivation and Involvement”); Diagnosis; Decisiveness; Strategy; Knowledge of organisational operations (similar to QLP items/questions under “Strategic and Operational Management”); and Commitment to Learning and Teaching (similar to QLP items/questions under “Academic Leadership”). Whilst it is not the intent of this paper to explore the nexus between the university sector and any other sector in terms of capability development, Middlehurst (2007), for example, notes that leadership in the university sector has some distinctive features. Middlehurst (2007) posits a number of distinctive features including “[t]he difficulties of managing change in universities where strong democratic and antimanageial traditions existed”; secondly, “[t]he problem of managing highly individualistic academics with no strong sense of corporate identity to department or university”, and thirdly “the need for a level of understanding of management concepts and the freedom to exercise degrees of control and influence in order to exercise effective leadership” (p. 50). These examples might be said to have both organisation-wide and individual implications in considering university leadership practice and development.

The three dimensions of leadership development which evidenced themselves through the literature and research examined - “transpersonal”, “interpersonal” and “intrapersonal” – are next discussed in turn. The three dimensions are discussed in the context of the research subquestions relating to each dimension.

Dimensions of Development – “Transpersonal” Dimension (Strategic Organisational)

This next section covers the “transpersonal” (strategic organisational) dimension of development identified in the literature review. With the prefix “trans” meaning “across” or “beyond”, the term “transpersonal” recognises the wider strategic issues which tend to affect organisational strategy and operations. For the purposes of this discussion, the “transpersonal” dimension of leadership covers knowledge of, and engagement with, the external environment, and organisation-wide issues such as organisational culture and how the organisation handles change. It is argued here that balancing academic advancement and business effectiveness reflects a pressing need for academic leaders to service new and growing accountabilities for sound governance (increased reporting, monitoring, challenging fiscal management) while delivering on knowledge development and knowledge transfer in the contemporary economy. The term, “transpersonal” recognises that as organisations engage *across* their various units and *beyond* to the outside world, they are dependent upon people to forge relationships and productively to engage. Hence, it recognises the human-centred attributes as core attributes which inevitably permeate all aspects of undertaking core and support business in higher education.

The first section below covers a number of wider strategic contextual elements under the “transpersonal” dimension. These elements reflect the three research subquestions of this study, arising from the literature review, pertaining to the “transpersonal” dimension. Those research subquestions are as follows: (1) What are the issues involved in balancing academic advancement with business effectiveness? (2) What does it take to build an ethical, positive organisational

culture and what is the CEO and executive team's role in this? (3) How might organisations increase consultation and engagement around strategic change? The first of these subquestions explores some of the key themes in balancing academic advancement with business effectiveness. Some issues relating to these complexities are explored in this section.

What are the Issues Involved in Balancing Academic Advancement with Business Effectiveness?

The role of senior leadership has changed over time with the increased and more complex demands of academic leadership and business accountability such as those that attest to sound governance (Anderson & Herr, 1999; Barnett, 2004; Brown, 2001; Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998; Cohen, 2004; Drew, 2006; Mead et al., 1999; Parcell & Bligh, 2000; Pratt, Margaritis & Coy, 1999 and others). Some years ago, Ramsden (1998b) wrote: “[u]niversities face an almost certain future of relentless variation in a more austere climate. Change in the environment – mass higher education, knowledge growth, reduced public funding, increased emphasis on employment skills, pressure for more accountability have been reflected in fundamental internal changes” (p. 347). At that time, Meek and Wood (1997) observed: “Questions of efficiency and effectiveness are prominent on higher education reform agendas everywhere along with the additional imperatives that the higher education sector be more relevant to national economic and social priorities” (p. 3). For instance, Coaldrake and Stedman (1999) stated that universities had “moved from a position dominated by features of the collegium and bureaucracy to one closer to the corporation or enterprise” (p.12). From the start of the new millennium, these influences were predicted to spell change in the way universities undertook their work of research, teaching

and service, administration and governance. The need for universities to connect well with their external environment appears to have increased since that time (Cohen, 2004; Stiles, 2004; Whitchurch, 2006). Hanna (2003) and others report that change is ubiquitous as universities struggle to “transform themselves to meet the demands of an increasingly complex and dynamic environment” (Hanna, 2003, p. 26).

However, these changes do not seem to have foregrounded the need for rethinking appropriate leader preparation and development. Middlehurst (2007) notes of the United Kingdom university landscape that “[t]he practice of leadership, governance, and management was not always held in high esteem within the sector or by some stakeholders from the lay community and government” (p. 56). Yet more recently, the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) was established in the United Kingdom to support leaders and fund empirical research to assess leadership development needs (Middlehurst, 2007). This move underscores a need to re-assess leadership preparation in light of a more complex set of leadership and management challenges, and to take action to address development needs. It also reinforces the importance, timeliness and relevance of the current study whose focus lies in identifying and understanding the key elements informing effective leadership development in universities.

Increased administrative reporting and accreditation requirements appear to see universities globally caught between the worlds of “academe” and “business”. A number of dualities influence the preparation of leaders to embrace both academic and business accountability functions in the way they lead and manage. These may result in a changed capability set required for contemporary university

leaders. Certainly, scrutinising current workforce resources would seem to be critical in order to assess aspects such as change capability, particularly given the increased erosion from the leadership ranks which might be anticipated with accelerated age-related attrition.

Dualities to be managed include managing innovation and risk, research and commercialisation, maintaining quality whilst handling increased administration, to name a few. Finding balance around technology and the human factor involved in system improvement and technology application is cited also by numerous authors concerning a contemporary academic environment reported globally as increasingly time poor (Kinman, 1998; Sapstead, 2004; Winefield et al., 2002). Managing innovation and risk is acknowledged as another imperative for universities, in that universities today evidently require a similar suite of governance and risk management strategies to those of their corporate neighbours. In fact, a perceived lack of focus on risk management and innovation has serious implications for how organisations, at least in Australia, weather the storms of globalisation and, perhaps, recession, according to Carnegie (2002) and Gryskiewicz (1999). In a more complex governance environment than before, typically, today's vice-chancellor or university president is answerable for performance quality to the university senate or council which in turn has stringent responsibilities under legislation for governance.

However, falling to an overly litigious, bureaucratic culture in order to manage these accountability requirements is unlikely to serve the organisation well.

Indeed, micromanagement resulting from past crises tends to serve organisational culture and the organisation poorly (Trakman, 2007), while, it is said, an overly

instrumental pattern of management which fails to recognise the contribution of employees “cripples the workers by disabling them” (Kanungo, 1992, p. 415). Carnegie (2002), Drew and Bensley (2001) and others claim that, particularly in time-poor and/or resource-restricted environments, care should be taken that technological systems and governance processes are efficient, that they are not unduly burdensome, and that they are convergent with social needs and change.

Another duality to be balanced is that of research and commercialisation. In the Australian setting, Coaldrake and Stedman (1998) stated: “[u]niversities are exposed to risk to the extent that they wish to expand their activities into...commercial fields, yet remain bound by practices that inhibit their flexibility” (pp. 56, 57). Cohen (2004) agrees that “post-modernism changed universities forever – from quasi-autonomous institutions of learning to fully fledged consumer enterprises” (p. 9). Cohen (2004) notes attempts to “steer the university into positive... engagement with its wider economic environment” (p. 9), with expectations upon universities to be “more relevant to national economic and social priorities” (Meek & Wood, 1997, p. 3). The increased number of research and development centres over the past ten years might be said to bear witness to increased expectations upon universities to link with other organisations to undertake research and development (Stiles, 2004).

Aggregate data of the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) 360 degree leadership survey is also revealing on this point (Drew, 2006). QLP aggregate data, representing the aggregate scores of respondents to the QLP since 2000 for academic managers nationally, reveal highest scores in the area of Community Outreach (Drew, 2006; Drew & Kerr, 2003). The data were drawn from academic

staff users of the instrument at Head of Department/School and above in participating universities in Australia and New Zealand. That the highest scores of the QLP of 4.28 (1-5 scale, 5 being the highest) occur in the factor of Community Outreach (Drew, 2006, pp. 122) signals perhaps the increased effort that academic leaders take to connect with their local and global communities, including government and industry, to undertake core work.

Furthermore, of interest in the wider context of academic leadership, the factors of the QLP 360 degree leadership survey under “Academic Leadership” revealed the second highest scores on national aggregate results of the QLP (Drew, 2006; Drew & Kerr, 2003). This suggests that, in the perceptions of raters across participating universities in Australia and New Zealand, academic leaders are “doing more with less” but are not “doing less” as they undertake their work priorities. Despite time taken to secure funding, gain and maintain external linkages and manage increased reporting and monitoring requirements, academic leaders are perceived to be working harder to preserve rigor in core academic practice. Authors comment on expanding academic workloads in universities (Kinman, 1998, Winefield et al., 2002 and others) and this, too, has implications for the development and support of leaders. The high QLP scores noted in “Academic Leadership” no doubt reflect academics’ dedication in pursuing academic quality, despite time paucity.

Furthermore, the issues discussed are seen to be part of the “balancing” role for academic leaders, and have implications for organisational and leadership development. It appears that academic leaders are encountering increased pressure to create efficiencies while maintaining quality, manage risk and

innovation, pursue research and research application, and to apply technology in a manner that is convergent with human needs (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Carnegie, 2002), whilst also preserving a balance between core academic work and the more pecuniary interests relating to income generation, commercial venture, and monitoring and reporting requirements. It is proposed, then, that, just as academic leaders are serving a more diverse and demanding client base than ever before, the changed paradigm on multiple fronts has implications for the preparation of future leaders and the recruitment, support and development of current university leaders.

It is noted that in order to balance competing requirements and changing accountabilities, tertiary leaders need to be hearers and learners. Ramsden (1998b) suggests that heads of academic departments are expected to be “all-rounders who combine aspects of management and leadership in relation to both *people* and *tasks*”, and that “at the heart of the combination is the leader’s own capacity to learn” (pp. 365-7). Ramsden believes that providing supportive development for those in senior academic leadership roles is vital and that these challenges “have important implications for the training of future generations of academic managers at every level” (p. 367). Published paper 1 (Drew, 2006), entitled “Balancing academic advancement with business effectiveness? – The dual role for senior university leaders”, scans the issues more fully and suggests action strategies for leading within the complexity of the academic environment to help meet and address the issues noted.

In summary, it was identified that executive leadership development is a necessary arm of succession planning for organisations; and that such planning should include

developing capabilities to address the large-scale change brought about by greater complexity in the academic leadership role. It was evident that the wider accountabilities for academic leadership require a broad range of skills, knowledge and personal capabilities on the part of university leaders to work effectively across the organisation and beyond the organisation's borders. This suggested that at "transpersonal" level, organisational leadership development should include a strong mandate for change leadership linked to creation of desired organisational culture. Two key suggested needs emerged from the literature: first, fostering ethical, positive organisational culture (reflected in the ethical management platform: building desired organisational values of the Lantern model) and, second, developing an artful, learning-focused way of engaging organisational members in change (reflected in the element of the model referring to the ability to adapt to changing influences). These two perceived needs, as subquestions, are addressed in turn.

What Does it Take to Build an Ethical, Positive Organisational Culture and What is the CEO and Executive Team's Role in This?

As noted in the literature (see Locke, 2007; Schein, 2003; Sporn, 1999; Wheatley, 2003; Whitchurch, 2006), a major challenge for universities as bureaucratic organisations is to develop a sound organisational culture capable of spawning high achievement. It is argued that this has challenging organisational cultural implications for universities typically called upon to deal with complexity and change while melding a potentially age-polarised, diverse workforce (Drew, 2006; Hanna, 2003; Ramsden, 1998a, 1998b; Shattock, 2003; Stiles, 2004). It is said that, irrespective of standards that might be inscribed in codes or mission statements, culture develops according to actual behaviours practised (Delahaye, 2000, Locke, 2007, Schein, 1997). According to Dunphy and Stace (1995), culture consists of

“values and artefacts that together express and reinforce a unity of spirit forged through those who share a community of fate” (p. 187). It is suggested that culture will be created either purposely by consciously embedding desired practices at all levels, or it will occur in haphazard, capricious fashion based on behaviours which are experienced within the organisation. It would seem to be incumbent on organisational leaders to articulate and model the claims of the organisation’s codes and mission statements about how the organisation should operate (Pratt, Margaritis & Coy, 1999).

It is argued that in complex, time-poor environments there is little time to waste on unproductive management practices, and that executive leaders have a major role to play in setting the tone for the decision-making and other behavioural practices that will be experienced predominantly in the organisation. Delahaye (2000) argues that effecting cultural change depends on fostering trust, respect and the like, as markers of a healthy “shadow” system (p. 21). Similarly, Wheatley (2003) recommends recognising the myriad factors, including human factors, inevitably in play in organisational life, bearing on organisational culture (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Schein (2003) and others argue that “top down” influence plays a significant role in the formation of organisational culture. Some of the reasons why organisational leaders might well pay attention to organisational culture are explored here.

First, it is said, pursuing a positive organisational culture plays a significant role in achievement of goals because it has to do with attracting and rewarding high quality staff. For example, Whitchurch (2006), examining changing identities in professional administrators and managers in higher education in the United Kingdom, observed that “multi-professionals”, as middle management

professionals operating in the “project domain”, repudiate boundaries and hierarchies and “place as much, if not more, emphasis on the cultures of their institutions as on management structures” (p. 168). High quality workers, it is said, like to spend their time in organisations which allow them to contribute fully their skills and develop new capabilities (Taylor, 2001).

Second, engaging people in strategy is better able to prosper within amenable organisational cultures. There appears to be acceptance in the literature that sound organisational culture forms through fostering sound relationships *and* sound processes, and that this dual emphasis promotes organic stability and supports achievement of goals (Drew & Bensley, 2001; Lewis & Slade, 2000; Luzader, 2001; Pick, 2003). Proctor-Thomson (2003) argues that organisational culture inevitably is a function of interpersonal relationships *and* of systems and procedures, and that each has a different but complementary impact influencing goal achievement.

Third, as noted previously, building sound, ethical organisational culture best equips the organisation to deal with change (Brown, 2001; Cranston et al., 2004; Delahaye, 2000). It is said that, ideally, organisations need a stronger, sustainable investment in positive culture creation, where, in fact, “governing bodies..serve as the agents of change” (Trakman, 2007, p. 4). As Sporn (1999) suggests, it takes culturally sensitive leaders to mobilise people of an organisation in cultural change. According to McCaffery (2004), the capacity of leaders to engage the commitment and abilities of staff in organisational processes, including change agenda, depends upon leaders’ understanding of, and sensitivity to, the tacit aspects of organisational culture. How, then, does organisational culture develop?

It is argued that organisational culture forms through the behaviours that staff members demonstrate as they interact with each in the course of organisational activity (Bass, 1990; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Locke, 2007; Schein, 1997; Wheatley, 2003). However, importantly, there is some evidence that the chief executive officer and the executive team are most able to influence organisational culture. Latham (2003) and Meadows (1999) suggest that the imprimatur of the chief executive officer and management team is critical to reinforcing desired behaviours within the organisational community. Studies show that such imprimatur is pivotal to the success of ventures designed to promote a positive culture of engagement. For example, Maurer, Mitchell and Barbeite (2002) found that feedback processes were more effective when organisational support and senior level imprimatur existed for the initiative. School principals and leadership teams were found to be crucial to the effectiveness of schools (Singh & Manser, 2007; Wallace & Hall, 1994). Schein (2003) looks to the top executive strata to provide “top-down” insight and action – for example, to diagnose “old cultures”, see the need for change and/or improved practice, and “to start a change process towards their acceptance” (p. 444). It is said that every human group sooner or later develops rules and norms for how they will operate (Schein, 1997). Much is written about the importance of an organisation having clear strategic values (Hanna, 2003; Oliver, 2001), and of the human factor in realising organisational initiatives (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Locke, 2007; Shattock, 2003), but in terms of establishing and embedding human values within the organisation, it would seem that the role of the senior executive officer is critical. It is said that the values and behaviours that are modelled “from the top” (Locke, 2007) are most influential to the patterns which form within the institution, and that cynicism tends to arise when

super-ordinate goals are viewed as nothing more than empty slogans (Latham, 2003). What, then, is the role of the CEO and executive team in supporting organisational culture development? Some matters for potential consideration by leaders desiring to address those tacit rules and norms are discussed briefly.

First, the culture conscious CEO may choose to attend to issues of disaggregation versus unity. It is argued that the extent to which academic disciplines and administrative support areas work together (Whitchurch, 2006), and the degree to which organisational units are interconnected or isolated from each other (Schein, (1997), affects organisational culture. Just as the capacity for disagreements around sacrosanct knowledge bases tends to divide (Rein, 1983), working to linkages rather than separatism tends to unite (Szekeres, 2006).

Second, attention might be paid as much to “being” (how people act) as to knowledge-reliance (what people know). It is argued that knowledge itself is too malleable to serve as a point of absolute reliance and that a broader, culture conscious mandate is required around the notion of “being” (Barnett, 2004).

Leaders fostering a balance between epistemological (knowledge-based) and ontological (“way of being” or values-based) approaches is supported also by Bellah et al. (1991) who recommend that higher education institutions “recover an enlarged paradigm of knowledge which recognises the value of science but acknowledges that other ways of knowing have equal dignity” (p. 177). It is alleged that, post-war, in United States universities at least, “the interplay of knowledge and values became redefined as the central business of the university” (Guillemin & Horowitz, 1983, p. 96). A return to affirming the role of leadership in forging sound values of a positive organisational culture is noteworthy. Indeed, authors imply that

effective leadership in some form invests not only in knowledge (discipline specialties or information; even information on leadership itself), but in reinforcing the ethical and cultural considerations of engaging effectively with others (Carlopio, Andrewartha & Armstrong, 2001; Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997; Parry, 1996).

Third, the CEO attending to building a positive culture might attend to promoting workplace initiatives and behaviours promoting wellness. For example, in one government department in Australia, agency staff are rewarded and acknowledged by the senior executive team for best practice contributions to projects fostering sound organisational culture. In this case, the measuring of success includes factors such as quality of staff safety, wellness, recognition and valuing for contributions made (Meadows, 1999). The effect of positive emotions in the workplace is argued by Fredrickson (2003) who asserts that attending to such elements impacts productivity and strategic and operational effectiveness. Further, the benefit, to themselves and others, where leaders actively promote a positive organisational climate is supported by writers such Wondra (2009) and Undung and De Guzman (2009) in terms of the enabling effects of positive, empathetic leadership.

Kofodimos (1993) suggests that leaders who take an outward-looking, holistic approach are more likely to be happy and effective in their work roles and they enjoy a more balanced, strategic vision of how success is reached.

Fourth, the personal/professional characteristics of CEOs of organisations appear to be influential. The research of Collins (2001) may be salient to the relevant subquestion, *What does it take to build a positive, ethical organisational culture?* Collins (2001) reports a major United States study on the CEOs of organisations

which had shifted from good performance to great performance and had sustained it. Collins's (2001) research revealed that a particular culture generating from the highest level of the organisation had a profound effect upon the organisation. His finding that the CEOs of highest performing organisations examined in the study, termed "Level 5" leaders, shared what Collins (2001) terms, "a paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will" (p. 39). Also pivotal in the "Good to Great" leadership findings reported by Collins (2001) is that these highly effective leaders attended to developing consistency in leadership patterns which promoted a rigorous "Culture of Discipline" (p. 200) within the organisation; not unlike the findings of Scott et al. (2008) on the importance of self-organisation and self-regulation in leadership. Arnold (2005), discussing Collins's findings, points out that Collins was interested in *sustained* greatness, further echoing the importance of the leader attending to consistency in demonstrating positive leadership patterns for sustainability. Furthermore, without taking away from the importance of leadership as a shared activity, Collins's (2001) study revealed that the leaders of organisations performing outstandingly worked in partnership with others to build an empowering climate geared to the success of all. Collins (2001) adds that the data were convincing, and that the finding was an empirical one, not an ideological one. The study would appear to demonstrate the influence that a CEO can exert on the culture of an organisation.

The fifth, and related, area of emphasis for the culture building leader is that of supportive leadership and credible influence (Drew & Bensley, 2001), noted in the reported importance of leaders attending to self-organisation including follow-through (Scott et al., 2008). Similarly the notion aligns with the idea of building predictability in patterns operation as proposed by Wheatley (2003), reported by

Collins (2001) and emphasised by Arnold (2005) above. The message is that reliability and consistency in patterns of operation on the part of the leader engenders credibility and that this plays a significant role in fostering high performance.

Lastly, attending to supportive leadership is said to be vital for leaders seeking to promote an amenable organisational culture. Collins and Porras (2003) suggest that great organisations achieve outstanding results because of a disposition which leaders primarily and persistently created. Schein (1997) emphasises the value of executive roles providing support for positive behaviour within complex situations. Schein (1997) argues that “leaders may not have the answer but they provide temporary stability and emotional reassurance while the answer is being worked out [and] if the world is increasingly changing, such anxiety might be perpetual, requiring learning leaders to assume a perpetual supportive role” (p. 375). A study of Rafferty and Neale (2004) observed that supportive characteristics were “top of mind” to individuals when commenting on their leaders’ leadership and management capabilities. A fuller scan of the issues pertinent to this subquestion appears in published paper 2 (Drew, 2009), entitled “Leadership and organisational culture: Can the CEO and executive teams in bureaucratic organisations influence organisational culture?”

In summary, the themes in the literature concerning this subquestion reinforce the value of executive leaders providing support for a positive organisational culture, and of using the influence of their roles to build predictability concerning a “common set of assumptions” about how the organisation should operate (Wheatley, 2003). In terms of the role of the chief executive officer and executive

team, leaders who best “model the way” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) attend as much to *how* they operate as to *what they know*. With distributed leadership models and potentially entrenched practices of bureaucracies, the challenge for leaders to affect organisational culture positively in universities is acknowledged.

Nevertheless, the value of executive leaders using their influence to reinforce positive patterns of behaviour for sound organisational culture resonates in the literature studied. The subquestion that is addressed next reflects the link between fostering amenable organisational culture and successfully navigating change within organisations. In this regard, given the complexity and changing nature of the university leadership environment, it is argued that an artful, learning-centred approach is required.

How might Organisations Increase Consultation and Engagement Around Strategic Change?

A recurring theme in the discussion thus far is that the context in which universities operate has changed and continues to change, giving rise to a reported need to enhance change capability in university leadership. Given the widespread reporting of change leadership as an imperative in organisations, the intent of this particular research subquestion is to explore how people in organisations might most readily engage in strategic change. The message that emerges is that a sense of ownership is needed if people are to embrace change willingly, and that this involves work at the outset to build a learning scaffold of understanding concerning the change issue in an environment of knowledge-sharing, participation and involvement. In order to embrace organisational change, it is said, people of the organisation must be able to

gain a sense of the coherent whole (Wheatley, 2003). The next subquestion addresses establishing potential ownership of change.

Establishing “ownership” of change. The notion of organisational members gaining “ownership” of a change agenda affecting them emerges as a critical element in organisational change. It is argued that embracing change is about learning, and that respectful, successful approaches to navigating change begin with providing opportunities for teams to learn the rationale for change, the context for the change, and to promote self-learning, individually and as a group, to develop their adaptive capabilities to embrace change. Limerick and Cunningham (1993) suggest that collaboration in learning is essential if a group is to experience optimum operating success in goal achievement. Harvey (1988) cautions that honest communication for groups expected to embrace change is essential to avoid the minefields of misunderstanding which result when group members fail to communicate with each other and, indeed, “embark on excursions which no group members actually want [or apprehend]” (p. 15). The latter is described as the “Abilene Paradox” (Harvey, 1988). Rather, writers on this subject recommend a measured, connected and communicative approach to change. This involves outlining the rationale for change and the stages by which a change project will be reached (Wysocki, Beck & Crane, 2000) with clearly agreed process goals (Cathcart & Samovar, 1984).

In terms of process goals, it is said that a robust, trustful environment fostered by the leader provides a place for teams to achieve goals and to flourish through periods of accelerated change (Kerr, 2006; Kotter, 2007; Longden, 2006). Painter (1992), Hamlyn and Davies (1996) and Carnegie (2002) suggest that change-adept organisations are marked by the ability of their leaders to engage and mobilise others

to respond to new initiatives. In organisations experiencing high staff movement with age-related attrition, such as in universities, the leader's ability to engage teams effectively through transition is said to be vital (Brown, 2001; Byrne, 2001; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Dunphy & Stace, 1995; Hanna, 2003; Healy et al., 2001; Kotter, 2002, 2007; Marshall & Lowther, 1997; Moss Kanter, 1997; Parry, 1996; Sauer, 2002; Tornow & London, 1998; and others).

The argument emerges that if people within organisations are consulted respectfully in a change initiative concerning them, then greater understanding and ownership of the issues may ensue (Carlopio et al., 2001; Nohria, Joyce & Roberson, 2003).

Hence, whether the catalyst for change comes from the executive or middle management, inspirational communication should occur through the ranks (Carnegie, 2002; Hamlin & Davies, 1996; Painter, 1992). Whether leadership is roving or fixed in nature, leadership must be available to the team in some form (Sinclair, 1998). In terms of the context of higher education organisations, higher education leaders are continually required to seek to engage staff in change agenda of different kinds in an increasingly competitive, complex environment (Hanna, 2003; Pick, 2003; Shattock, 2003; Stiles, 2004). Barnett's (2004) call for leaders to embrace a more ontological approach to leadership which considers the human dimension in approaching change would seem to have great merit in this context.

For example, rather than relying on knowledge transfer alone to enlist people in a change agenda, the successful change agent may seek actively to foster engagement in change by involving people to contribute from their perspective on relevant issues, asking those involved in the change for their input to change design and implementation, and promoting dialogue ahead of time about potential pitfalls,

implications and effects of the change. Communication, consultation and cogent rationale for change are vital to effecting successful change leadership in the university environment with, typically, strong investment in academic autonomy and commitment to disciplines (Middlehurst, 2007; Stiles, 2004). In an enhanced change process based on genuine consultation and participation, members may become “conduits of critical information from elsewhere in the organisation” (Heenan & Bennis, 2003, p. 153), may “serve as sounding boards, counselors, confessors, and pressure valves” (Heenan & Bennis, 2003, p. 153), and actively may assist the adoption of change. It is said that highly successful change processes are marked by increased “participation collaboration and persuasion” (Moss Kanter, 1997, p. 108). What, then, might be an artful approach to leveraging quality consultation and participation in organisational change? An “artful” approach is said to be a learning-centred approach which is concerned with transformation and growth (Kerr & Darso, 2007). It seeks to view issues in their wholeness (Wheatley, 2003) and invests in improving the quality of process. These authors posit that part of building capacity to embrace change lies in an approach which fosters personal learning including a willingness to be challenged and to think differently. It is said that real learning involves preparedness to be unsettled (that is, to question preconceived notions and habitual behaviours), to be creative, and to brook a wider span of possible options in organisational life (Gryskiewicz, 1999). There would seem to be merit, then, in underpinning change with a high quality participative learning process geared to maximising participation (or at least, representative participation) of those affected by the change. In such an environment, preconceived notions might be explored and the difficult questions broached in an atmosphere of connection and shared understanding.

An artful approach to enhancing consultation and engagement. As some literature sources argue (see Kerr, 2006 and Maturana & Varela, 1980, 1987), change, perturbation and disturbance, in fact, may spawn creativity as precursors to learning, action, and improved practice. The prospect of constructing an artful, reflective consultative process for navigating change to leverage shared understanding emerged. Some principles in regard to artful learning concepts are suggested.

As stated above, Kerr and Darso (2007) suggest the notion of “being artful” in this context as having to do with transforming self through profound learning experiences which extend human consciousness, as opposed to more instrumental forms of management. The latter part of the statement offers the telling difference between an “artful” learning approach and a more instrumental approach. It might be interpreted from the above authors that the former approach attends to learning, questioning and, potentially, continuous improvement, while the latter tends to confine attention to a functional process or structure. While it is accepted that merely examining one’s thought processes and learning strategies may not necessarily result in change, it is argued that there is merit in “helping people to keep upgrading their metacognitive awareness and to reflect more rigorously” (Knight & Trowler, 2001) in order to achieve richer, more sustainable outcomes. These accord with a further argument that when high levels of engagement are critical to the success of an initiative (Moss Kanter, 1997), providing a systematic process for reflection indeed should be a precursor to navigating a change or other strategic or operational improvement (London, 2002). Thus, “learning organisation” principles and strategies focused on reflecting on process, in order to refine and improve process and outcome, are argued to be vital (Drew, 2006; London, 2002;

Rao & Rao, 2005; Thach, 2002). Three key value principles for leveraging understanding of key issues in a change process are discussed.

First, there appears to be merit in suspending superficial questions and easy answers for a more rigorous exploration of issues relating to a change process. Gaining understanding ahead of time on issues that are likely to be problematic may forestall problems later. Strategic questioning and dialogue are said to be a powerful means deliberately to explore wider options for problem-solving (Peavey, 1994), as they help gain an appreciation of the full corpus of an issue rather than addressing an issue out of one's own perspective and bias. Asking deeper, more strategic questions may challenge assumptions of both speaker and listener (Peavey, 1994), and indeed increase opportunities for active listening (Mackay, 1994) to explore and to prepare for a change initiative more thoroughly.

A second key principle for enacting "artful learning" strategies for a change process is so that issues may be apprehended in their "wholeness" rather than in a fragmented way (Wheatley, 2003). Gaining understanding of the perspective of "other" in key organisational areas affected by major change is vital (Carlopio et al., 2001). Seeing issues in their wholeness may be the specific focus of exercises such as role exchange within the organisation, where feasible. These mechanisms, while helping to gain the perspective of "other", potentially "force into the open aspects of culture or point of view in relation to the change that may not have been previously recognized" (Schein, 2003, p. 440). As Bawden (1998) suggests, "if we are to change the way we do things in the world about us, we first need to change the way we see things" (p. 39). It is acknowledged that the vision may be partial, but by "trading places" with someone in another related key role in respect of the change

process, “people are able to identify pieces that need to change [and] later these specifics can be worked into a cohesive whole” (Peavey, 1994, pp. 100-101).

The third principle is to break down barriers, build points of connection and communication which may last beyond the change process and inform future organisational endeavour. Forming a cross-functional team as a point of representative consultation for a change leadership exercise may be valuable in navigating strategic change (Marshall, 2007). Moreover, leveraging participation in the context of a guided learning process is said to have even greater value (London, 2002). The aim is to enhance individual and collective learning. This, according to London (2002), is a vital part of making any joint venture work. Overall, the notion is one of forming a “living laboratory” for a change process, acknowledging that even as solutions are being worked out, further change typically occurs (Barnett, 2004). In a guided learning framework, participants may gain greater awareness of “self” and “other”; may learn tolerance of ambiguity, active listening, appreciation of difference and other capabilities useful for further application within the organisation.

According to London (2002), cross-organisational understanding and learning depend on effective communication, and if group members drawn from a range of areas affected by the change initiative inter-relate at an early stage, there is a better chance that understanding and engagement will occur. Value is enhanced if the group process builds in expectations consciously to improve the quality of process and outcome through reflecting on action. Indeed, the learning process, and the ability to “learn faster...[are said to be] the only sustainable source of competitive advantage” (Starkey 1996, p. 14). This accords with Kerr’s (2006) proposition that

the skills, capacities and capabilities required of people in organisations include the need “to be reflective, to engage with change, to be comfortable with ambiguity, to have standards, to understand the key questions that need to be asked in any situation, to be conscientious about..people and what they want, and to ask about values and trust” (p. 2).

A fourth key principle which emerges is the usefulness of in-built and ongoing evaluation throughout the span of such a cross-organisational mixed group to aid continuous improvement (Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001). For example, Tyson (1998) suggests that an evaluation component may consist of “Scanning, Questioning, Reflection, Discussion, Observation” (p. 208). At an individual and group level a critical self-evaluation process may monitor and build individual “authenticity” associated with the notion of “know[ing] oneself, to be consistent with oneself, and to have a positive and strength-based orientation toward one’s development and the development of others” (Avolio, 2005, p.194). In fact, it is said, all work, whether research, teaching, art, business or other, is best undertaken with a deliberate orientation towards questioning assumptions and capturing learning (Darso, 2004). Barker, Wahlers & Watson (2001) note the interdependency of task/achievement and process/learning goals to useful outcomes *and* the value of evaluation for improvement. A built-in, self-critiquing evaluation system within a consultation process, as suggested, enables self-monitoring and improvement “in situ” as well as evaluation of the whole process at the close (Tyson, 1998).

It is well documented that situated learning and review exercises may provide a focus for navigating multiple organisational challenges, and, as a by-product, are valuable for taking forward further learning (Barker et al., 2001). As Smith and

O'Neill (2003) propose, "action learning" of this type seeks to "throw a net around slippery experiences, and capture them as learning" (p.64). Miller (2003) offers that given complexities of people and organisations, it is not surprising that organisations are seeking new ways of building capacities for their people to learn and re-learn so that artful organisational events engender critical reflection and catalyse learning and improvement (Kerr, 2006). This has implications for leadership, particularly in regard to motivating and empowering others to succeed. As De Pree (2003) poses, "artful leaders...can decide to be primarily concerned with leaving assets to their institutional heirs or they can go beyond that and...leave a legacy..that takes into account the more difficult, qualitative side of life, one which provides greater meaning, more challenge, and more joy in the lives of those whom leaders enable" (p. 66).

In summary, there would appear to be significant merit in establishing participative, consultative processes which foster ownership for those involved in change processes, and which promote learning and understanding. It is argued that, rather than paying "lip service" to consultation, engaging people in honest dialogue in a setting where the process of consultation itself is being monitored as a learning exercise promotes a richer result. "Shared vision", Parry (1996) asserts, is "a powerful tool for achieving extraordinary results" (p. 47). Addressing this subquestion of the study suggested that participatory, artful learning approaches to consultation for change deliberately may challenge prejudices and habitual thinking, and hence may explore issues more thoroughly for more sustainable outcomes (De Simone et al., 2002).

Exploring this subquestion resulted in developing an Artful Learning Framework as a suite of strategies aimed at leveraging a personal learning approach to engaging with others in change, applicable to other settings within the organisation. These strategies – “Provocateur” which probes for better solutions with strategic questioning; “Trading Places” with role exchange to apprehend different perspectives first-hand; and a self-critiquing consultative Mixed Group aimed at raising participation, attending to both quality of process *and* of outcome - are depicted in the “Model of Artful Learning in Change”, Figure 2. Depicted as a “gathering wave”, the model depicts drawing back to pause, gather, reflect and engage.

The model and the strategies of the Artful Learning Framework, drawn from the literature review, posit that learning should be ongoing, and that dealing with change is as much about equipping oneself with flexibility *for* change, given that change might be expected to be ongoing rather than fixed in time. Paper 3 (Drew, 2008) “An Artful Learning Framework for organisations” has been published in the *Journal of Management & Organization*, 14 (2008). This paper expands on the issues that are discussed here. The paper argues that, as for any worthwhile organisational initiative, the extent to which the initiative is seen to be supported by the senior executive predicates the level of staff engagement in the activity and, overall, the success of the activity (Maurer, Mitchell & Barbeite, 2002). This observation, given the scale of ongoing change being experienced in the sector (Bradley Review, 2008; Scott, Coates & Anderson, 2008), has vital implications for the type of development required for leaders in today’s universities. See Figure 2: Model of Artful Learning in Change.

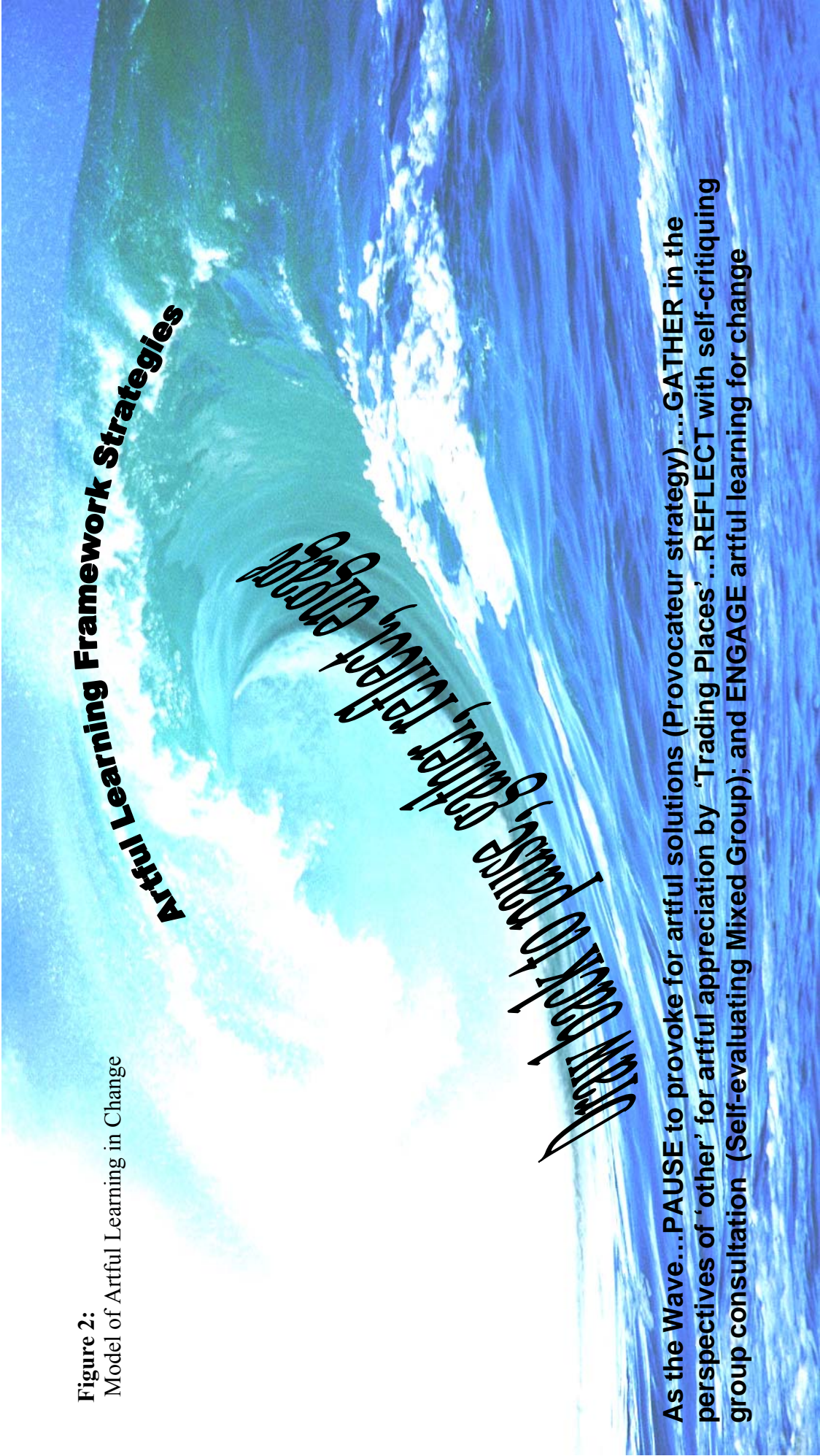


Figure 2:
Model of Artful Learning in Change

Artful Learning Framework Strategies

Pause to pause, gather, reflect, engage

As the Wave... PAUSE to provoke for artful solutions (Provocateur strategy)... GATHER in the perspectives of 'other' for artful appreciation by 'Trading Places'... REFLECT with self-critiquing group consultation (Self-evaluating Mixed Group); and ENGAGE artful learning for change

The three subquestions addressed in this “transpersonal” dimension have explored issues of executive leadership in balancing competing interests and the increasing external and internal accountabilities of complex academic leadership roles, and the challenges inherent in moulding amenable, positive organisational culture and in navigating change. This section of the discussion has considered issues relating to leadership at the wider strategic organisational level. It is acknowledged that the human dimension resides in all organisational activity. With this in mind, the discussion now turns to the “interpersonal” dimension of leadership, with particular reference to the university sector.

Dimensions of Development – “Interpersonal” Dimension (Engagement and Collaboration)

This part of the literature review explores what evidence-based research and the literature have to say about “interpersonal” effectiveness in leadership. In keeping with the overall research question of this study, this section argues that interpersonal effectiveness is central to most if not all aspects of leadership and management. It is argued that a well-functioning organisation requires, above all, sound engagement that is evident in decision-making, strategic and operational communication and in everyday interactions which ideally involve inspiring and mobilising staff. Issues of engagement and collaboration are found to be pivotal to leadership effectiveness, as noted in discussion of two research subquestions below: *What are the main challenges for the changing tertiary sector and, hence, for individual leaders?* and *How do leaders learn and what constitutes effective leadership?* The discussion on each of these subquestions underscores that today’s more complex university environment demands strong strategic leadership in order to meet the challenges faced, and that interpersonal engagement is critical to meeting those challenges.

What are the Main Challenges for the Changing Tertiary Sector and, hence, for Individual Leaders?

It is argued that issues and challenges associated with the complex role of university leadership call for strong interpersonal effectiveness (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998, 1999; Mead et al., 1999; Wong & Cummings, 2009, and others). The need for sound interpersonal capability is evident in a number of ways. With increased calls for collaboration, the formation of alliances to gain funds and undertake research and development are commonplace (Cohen, 2004; Mead et al., 1999; Stiles, 2004; Whitchurch, 2006). Cross-organisational partnerships are increasingly occurring in teaching and administrative work to share information on essential services for students, streamline activities, reduce overheads and pursue innovation (Hanna, 2003; Stiles, 2004; Yelder & Codling, 2004). A challenge for academic leaders is the differentiated ways in which students engage with the university, prompting the design of more flexible teaching and learning arrangements (Cooper, 2002; Longden, 2006; Snyder et al., 2007; Szekeres, 2006).

Tensions exist between delivering on sound principles of pedagogy and research *and* the necessity to create efficiencies in a global environment of mass education (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999; Harvey, 1995; Meek & Wood, 1997; Pratt & Poole, 1999; Ramsden, 1998a, 1998b; Szekeres, 2006). It is said, downward pressure from efficiency gains every year by government results in larger classes and reduced contact time and affects how academics engage with students (Longden, 2006). This calls for an open, communicative and trustful environment in which to work through change and complexity. Indeed, there are mixed views on the role of the university in society (Rochford, 2006), giving rise to discussions on the challenging ethical

considerations of the education leadership role. Buss (2001) sums up a recurrent theme that the leader needs to be able to rally people together, motivate, execute strategic decisions and inspire trust; the very antithesis of the “command-and-control” management style; and that this entails interpersonal capability. Personal credibility arises as a significant factor in inspiring trust in order to be effective interpersonally (Cranston et al., 2004; Dempster and Berry, 2003). Indeed, Wong and Cummings (2009) found that “leader supportiveness would increase staff trust in management through their perceptions of support within the workgroup” (p. 10).

The research study undertaken in the Australian tertiary leadership sector as a joint project between the University of Western Sydney and the Australian Council of Educational Research (Scott, Coates & Anderson, 2008) provides a valuable snapshot of what current academic leaders cite as their greatest challenges. Scott et al. (2008) identified from academic leaders surveyed in Australian universities that relationship-building qualities of engagement and trust (empathy, influencing, flexibility, responsiveness) are potent capabilities that are required to meet the challenges of contemporary higher education leadership roles. The implication is that rallying people together involves a “people centred”, participative, communicative approach for best results.

An earlier study, in respect of the Australian tertiary leadership sector (Lamond 2001), surveyed 523 Australian managers and found that a more strategic approach to management development focusing on interpersonal “people” skills was required to navigate large-scale change and other challenges anticipated at the time (Lamond, 2001). Further clues on identified perceived key issues and challenges for university leaders emerge from selected foci for particular

development in the university context. Boyatzis et al. (2002) identified the following as critical elements of a succession leadership development strategy: Ensuring strategic integration; assessing the current situation (for example through collection of workforce planning data and climate surveys); planning and undertaking development; and incorporating opportunities for feedback and regular review (such as the use of 360 degree feedback surveys). As many writers argue, almost all facets of leadership and management involve the ability to engage effectively with others (Anderson & Herr, 1999; De Simone et al., 2002; Field & Ford, 1995; Gee, 1991; Hamlin & Davies, 1996; Hansford, Tennant & Ehrich, 2002; Kotter, 1990; Moss Kanter, 1997; Sapstead, 2004; Stiles, 2004).

In summary, it is argued that organisational and sector knowledge, and competency managing budgets, strategy development and operations are crucial, but these need to be augmented by interpersonal capabilities to rally and inspire people. It is acknowledged that sound interpersonal engagement is increasingly important in the university's dealings with students, external partners, staff, colleagues and stakeholders, and that the ability personally to reflect on one's behaviours as a leader is fundamental to carrying out the leadership role in higher education. Furthermore, today's leaders must be flexible, and be able to foster flexibility and change capability in staff. These points are outlined further in a research paper (Paper 4, Drew) in press to *Australian Educational Researcher*. The discussion next turns to explore how leaders learn and what is meant by effective leadership, particularly in the university leadership context.

How do Leaders Learn and What Constitutes Effective Leadership?

What does the literature say about how leaders learn and about what constitutes effective leadership? Broadly, it appears that leaders best learn through interpersonal mechanisms fostering greater self-awareness, and that observations and interactions at an interpersonal level assist leaders develop their practice. It also appears that effective leadership involves a combination of human centred behaviours and attributes and the more instrumental competencies to do with organisational knowledge and relevant functional skills, and that interpersonal effectiveness is fundamental to all of these.

The exploration, from the literature and empirical research, forms the substance of Paper 5 published in *Leading & Managing* (Drew et al., 2008). This subquestion is addressed in the following four parts below, each part bearing relevance to sound interpersonal relations: How do leaders learn? What constitutes effective leadership? The third and fourth parts consider interpersonal relations involved in maintaining alliances, and interpersonal relations involved in effecting technology application. The rationale for the two latter parts relates to findings that leaders in the higher education environment need to equip themselves to manage partnerships and alliances effectively, and to take account of the human dimensions in managing technology application. Firstly, how do leaders learn?

How do leaders learn? Significantly, leaders learn in the course of interactions with others, especially if they take responsibility for their own learning by adopting a reflective approach to assessing their practice. It is noted that some organisations including universities foster these capacities through a variety of measures. As Brown (2001) puts it, organisations may build dynamic leadership capacities “deep within the organisation” by “paying greater attention to people and process” and

“consciously practicing the principles of effective leadership” (pp. 312-323). The concept appears to align with Adair’s Action-Centred Leadership Model focusing on goal achievement and development of the individual and the team (Middlehurst, 2007) and with the view of Wick and Leon (1993) that quality leadership learning in organisations is assisted when steps are taken systematically to help ensure that “learning permeates the processes used throughout the organization” (p. 126). In a learning environment focusing on both process and people, individuals tend to respect differences and personality factors as they interact with each other in the course of the organisation’s business (Berr, Church & Waclawski, 2000). Berr et al. (2000) note the increasing prevalence of executive coaching and the use of personality assessments to assist personal leadership learning in the workplace.

Constructs for leadership development programs recommend a similar blend in assisting understanding of self; understanding of transformational leadership; establishing and maintaining relationships; leading teams; leading strategic planning and change; and connecting through community (Filan & Seagren, 2003); building authenticity through reflective relationships with others, focusing on trustworthiness, genuineness and ethics (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997); and building an inclusive culture through effective teamwork (Johnston & Caldwell, 2001; Senge, 1990). While the discussion recognises that there is no clear best way to develop leaders (Blackler & Kennedy, 2004), universities, in response to leadership needs, have established a number of formal means of support for new staff and new leadership staff including induction programs, targeted training programs, leadership development programs and formal mentoring programs.

Of these, leadership development programs and mentoring are often cited as approaches to develop leaders. Such programs reflect a particular view of what is meant by leadership (Ehrich & Hansford, 2006) – itself, a complex topic. Types of programs range from more traditional academic formal approaches (Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001) to experiential approaches (Hornyak & Page, 2004) aimed at assisting learners to reflect upon and evaluate their experiences and reach new understandings (Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001), and/or helping learners to take risks, be innovative, develop skills of collaboration, manage conflict and use diversity (Kaagan, 1999). Mentoring as a learning activity appears to play a role in many organisations (Hansford, Tennent & Ehrich, 2003) to gain access to and benefit from others’ knowledge and experience, and/or to orient new leaders or members to the culture of an organisation (Bochner, 1996). The mentoring relationships may be structured or simply may evolve due to mutual interests or desire of a party or parties to work together (Clutterbuck, 2004). In many educational settings mentoring is used to provide encouragement or career support (Kram, 1985).

Continuous self-learning is posited by some writers as fundamental to a sound developmental strategy; for example, providing focused development for teams using challenging team experiences including “stretch” assignments (Boyatzis et al., 2002). Development strategies cited include debriefing conversations to elicit insight from both difficult and positive experiences, using reflective journals to capture individual and team learning, and posing different scenarios with open ended questions to prepare a team in ongoing critical thinking and action (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Gryskiewicz, 1999). Writing of the “learning organisation”, Byrne (2001) argues the benefits of an organisation of motivated and loyal individuals,

devoted to principles of continuous learning and of knowledge-sharing, where leaders are developed and supported in keeping with desired culture and goals (Brown, 2001). This notion is supported by a study which found that creating a leadership environment based on valuing, relationship building, honest feedback and discussion promoted the conditions within the organisation to effect learning and growth (Healy et al., 2001). In short, it is argued, leadership learning which does not include reflection upon interpersonal effectiveness but focuses upon skills and knowledge alone is inadequate.

While surrounding people with the right resources is critical (Jordan, 1999), leadership learning tends mostly to occur “on the job”, particularly in an environment of effective leadership role modelling aimed at motivating and inspiring staff while satisfying higher strategic needs (Adair, 2005; Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1988; Burns, 1978), stimulating and encouraging thinking, bringing out high performance in staff, empowering staff and enabling others to act (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). These are all said to be important ways in which leaders learn. It may be summarised that education organisations seeking to operate as learning organisations (Senge, 1990) pay attention to building such capabilities as an inclusive culture that supports on-job learning, genuine collaboration and effective team work (Johnston & Caldwell, 2001). Enquiring into how leaders learn is necessarily linked with thinking and enquiry on what constitutes effective leadership. This is briefly discussed next.

What constitutes effective leadership? It is argued that effective communication and other aspects of sound interpersonal engagement play a significant role in leadership effectiveness. Writing on this theme in respect of the academic leadership role,

authors suggest a breadth of capabilities that have to do with effectively interacting with others. A blend of human centred attributes and knowledge concerning the more instrumental dimensions of managing budgets and systems is proposed by a number of authors (see Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Drew, 2006; Mead et al., 1999; Middlehurst, 2007; Ramsden, 1998b; Scott et al., 2008). For example, for Ramsden (1998b), the key dimensions of the academic leadership role are motivating and inspiring staff, bringing about high performance in colleagues, credible leadership that stimulates and encourages thinking, leading from behind as well as from the front, and facilitating the work of others.

Researching the development needs of New Zealand universities, Mead et al. (1999) report the work of one New Zealand university which found that opportunities and threats posed by a rapidly changing internal and external environment required that the traditional characteristics of a good Head of (academic) Department, namely scholarship and academic leadership, be augmented by attributes such as vision, leadership, strategic planning, staff management and organisational skills. Indeed, it is said, the increasing burden on management and leadership is such that university management is being strengthened “through cascading management and leadership responsibilities and roles across different levels of the institution” (Middlehurst, 2007, p. 50). This distributes the leadership function and, concomitantly, the need for awareness of what leadership effectiveness means at all levels of the organisation.

The notion of a blend of human centred behaviours and the more instrumental capability dimensions recurs as a theme in the literature, as does the notion that effective interpersonal interaction is critical to carrying out all dimensions of

responsibility effectively. Leadership behaviour theory which emerged in the 1950s held that effective leadership comprised two factors: structure and consideration (Bales & Slater, 1955); a construct which emphasised the importance of interpersonal relationships with followers (“consideration”) and task oriented behaviour (“structure”). Central to both sets of effective leadership practices is the need for leadership oriented skills (i.e. interpersonal skills that inspire, motivate and support staff) and managerial skills (i.e. strategic planning and change and meeting expectations and outcomes). As Kotter (1990) states, leadership and management are complementary and equally necessary.

Since the 1980s a parallel set of leadership theories emerged, understood in the context of the wider public management movement agenda that impacted upon publicly funded institutions such as universities. One set revisited scientific and rational models of management (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997) which take a planned and systematic approach to decision making (Collons, 1982; Hyndman & Eden, 2001); an approach which holds that strategy may be arrived at through systemised forms of planning. The other set focused on human centred models or theories of leadership, including, for example, moral leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992), authentic leadership (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997) and servant leadership (Greenleaf 1977). Both types of models - human centred models and rational models - focus on different dimensions and requirements of leadership.

Other studies, for example Pounder (2001) and Scott et al. (2008), agree that a similar blend of capabilities is required for effective leadership. These authors assert that a leadership approach which draws upon elements of a transformational and transactional approach to leadership is required in leading universities. A more

comprehensive scan of this subquestion appears in Paper 5 (Drew, Ehrich & Hansford, 2008), *Leading & Managing*. Effective partnering in the contemporary university environment emerges as a point of particular emphasis, given the increased need to build working partnerships with industry, commerce, government, other educational institutions in carrying out core and support work (Klinge, 2000; Scott et al., 2008; Stiles, 2004). Authors including Carless (2001), Marshall and Lowther (1997), Middlehurst (2007) and Stiles (2004) argue the importance of establishing a participative culture in higher education organisations. A major aspect of strategic interpersonal relations critical to the success of ventures in higher education, thus, is the ability to build and maintaining alliances. This aspect is given attention next.

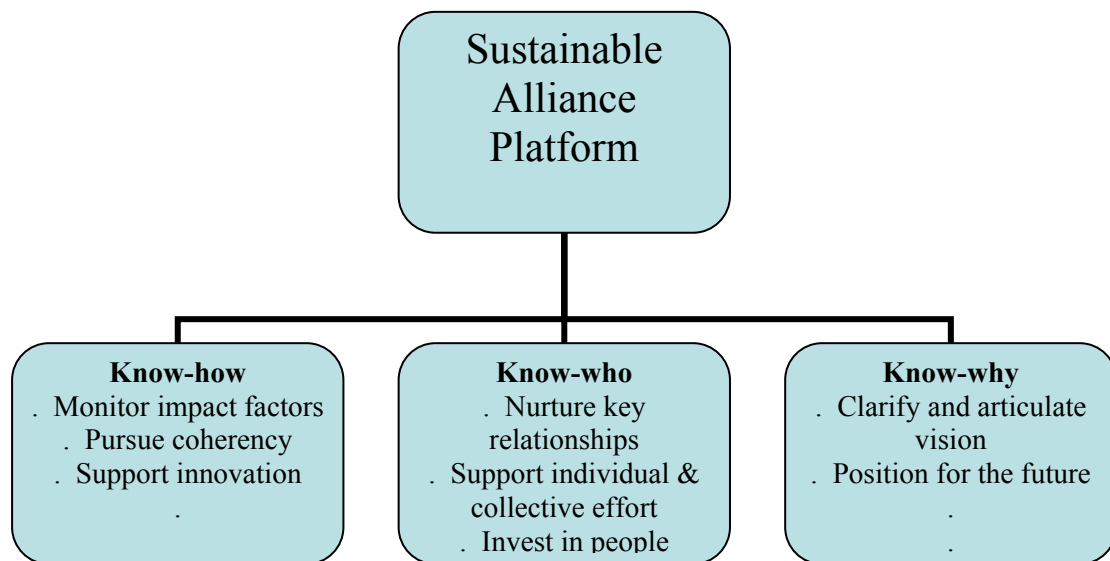
Interpersonal relations in maintaining alliances

According to authors such as Middlehurst (2007), partnering with others is a strategic necessity in contemporary university work. This may include drawing on practice in other sectors, learning from international experience, and creating cross-sector networks to recruit staff with diverse expertise and experience (Middlehurst, 2007). Barber (1984), Painter (1992), Davis and Lansbury (1996), Elster (1998), Stiles (2004), Wendling (1997) and others note, however, the challenges of forming effective alliances, and they recommend an inclusive, participative approach to consultation, development of vision, decision-making and handling disagreement and conflict as vital to sustainability. Given the proliferation of research centres and the critical nature of interpersonal engagement to the success of such ventures, some principles for establishing and maintaining effective alliances in universities are outlined below. For the purpose of capturing the findings, the principles identified are grouped under Taylor's (2001) identification of "know-how", "know-who" and

“know-why” competencies for successful alliances. These are depicted in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Sustainable Alliance Platform



As suggested by Taylor (2001) and others, leaders of research alliances should monitor impact factors, pursue coherency, support innovation and nurture interpersonal relationships as an essential “know-how”. Similar to attributes noted in what constitutes effective leadership, Yuill (1985) recommends that leadership in alliance contexts requires careful assessment of external and internal influences that might affect operation. Fostering a sense of unity from genuine consultation and participation is vital if an alliance is to pull together as an entity (Davis & Lansbury, 1996), as, it is argued, fragmentation weakens the capacity of the alliance to respond to changing circumstances (Beedham, 1996). As Szekeres (2006) argues, innovation, the mandate of many alliances, occurs where people

repudiate the boundaries that artificially separate them and operate from a partnering frame of reference.

Indeed, one of the main challenges for alliances is said to be the challenge for engagement presented by bringing together people from “different worlds” (Stiles, 2004), but it is also potentially the strongest value proposition of an alliance if all members work together productively. For example, Stiles (2004) argues that every effort should be taken to help alliance members to understand the inevitably varying perspectives from their “different worlds” and to contribute out of their different banks of experience and knowledge. Under effective leadership in such settings, competing tensions and styles should become opportunities to capitalise upon difference in a way that fosters innovation and richer outcomes (De Simone et al., 2002).

In terms of supporting innovation, resource-restricted environments demand creative use of resources *and* high-order interpersonal ability in order to problem solve and to achieve goals (James, 2002a, 2002b; Moon, 1999). As noted, for research and development alliances large or small, long term or short term, this entails looking beyond functional boundaries to explore interdisciplinary research, enhance pedagogy and technological application (Snyder et al., 2007). As noted by Coaldrake and Stedman (1999), “[a] trend towards more entrepreneurial styles of university operation has major implications for university culture and policy, and for academic staffing policy in particular” (p. 12). In terms of “know-how” for leading productive alliances, improving the long-term effectiveness, competitiveness and dynamics of alliances in domestic and international contexts may involve significant innovation in business processes which demands

creativity and effective interpersonal behaviour (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Gryskiewicz, 1999; James, 2002a). The above were seen to be significant aspects of “Know-how” for effective partnerships, whilst the three aspects involved in the “Know-who” element of the model, next discussed, are: Nurture key relationships; Support individual and collective effort, and Invest in people.

In terms of “know-who” elements, according to Carlopio et al. (2001), building “multifaceted relationships among team members” is vital to creating “an advanced, high-performing quality culture” (p. 491, 495). The “know-who” element focuses on the people of the alliance. Dyer (1977) reports, “teams are collections of people who must rely upon group collaboration if each member is to experience the optimum of success and goal achievement” (Limerick & Cunnington, 1993, p. 118). Furthermore, Bland and Ruffin (1992) and Klinge (2000) specifically refer to the need for more affective, relationship- and trust-building leadership qualities in reaching objectives within education and research. How is an ideal level of people engagement attempted?

Small but important symbols such as providing “formal and informal recognition” may be observed to build a positive climate of goodwill (Holpp, 1993). Nurturing key relationships for a positive work climate (Fredrickson, 2003) is an important priority, as is safeguarding high levels of trust, autonomy and consistent resource supply (Schein, 2003; Stiles, 2004). Ability to engender a responsible risk-taking culture is another (Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2003). It is said that positive leaders are catalysts for progress and improvement and tend to attract other positive people to their organisations; a concept that is in stark relief to attempting to lead by coercion (Hoffer, 1992). Seeking and maximising diversity, rallying people

from diverse backgrounds in pursuit of common goals, is vital (Yielder & Codling, 2004).

It is argued that fostering an environment which supports individual and collective effort has purchase and relevance in all academic environments. Of the academic environment, it is said, the traditional individualistic values of academics remain important in academic culture (Middlehurst, 1993; Middlehurst, 2007; Stiles, 2004). It is perhaps not surprising that, as put by Limerick and Cunnington (1993), those wishing to contribute at a significant level in partnerships typically are “empowered by knowledge and driven by values” (p. 123). As noted earlier in this discussion, the level of integration and interdependencies that are needed for contemporary alliances requires leadership that goes beyond the more basic transactional styles (focusing perhaps on structure, rules and regulations) to the more intellectually stimulating “transformational” styles focusing more on people and relationships (Avolio et al., 1999).

Studies put forward by Butler, Cantrell, Flick and Randall (1999) and others, for example Habermas (1979) and Carless (2001), noted also the efficacy of inclusive, consultative, “transformational” leadership behaviours in inspiring a sense of collective vision, characterised by trust, job satisfaction, cross- or inter-organisational consistency, loyalty, discretion, openness and integrity. Through such “transformational” leader behaviours, it is said, individuals become inspired to transcend their own interests and become committed to achieving the leader’s vision for the organisation (Carless, 2001).

It appears that the importance of relationship-building to effectively leading alliances cannot be underestimated (Knight & Holen, 1985; Lucas, 1995; Stiles, 2004). This includes the importance of building a positive work climate if teams are to function optimally (Fredrickson, 2003; Marshall & Lowther, 1997) and in which individuals' divergent views may be expressed freely (Gee, 1991). In this regard, an alliance may model, and indeed constitute a new frame of reference for seeing and understanding people and organisations. This may involve addressing potentially outdated assumptions and attitudes (Sarros, Tanewski, Winter, Santora & Densten, 2002).

In respect of alliance leadership, turning to the "know-why" element, achieving logical coherency between systems and strategy is highlighted. It is said that a participative approach to generating vision for the alliance tends to unify action as members pursue strategic goals which they understand and accept as meaningful (Byrne & Davis, 1998). Thus, the "know-why" element considers the purpose of the alliance. It concerns clarifying vision and strategy, and positioning for the future. For example, the research of Nohria et al. (2003) into 200 companies found that it mattered little whether organisations centralised or decentralised their business as long as organisations paid attention to simplifying their key messages, structure, operations and communication (Nohria et al., 2003, p. 43). Moreover, Barber (1984), Painter (1992), Davis and Lansbury (1996), Elster (1998) and Wendling (1997) all recommend that alliances clarify early their strategic vision and decision-making principles concerning key goals. Communication is critical. Effective leaders of alliances communicate regularly, apprising members of changes as the alliance evolves to ensure that clarity of purpose guides action (Hanna, 2003; McLagan & Nell, 1995). Pursuing coherency also involves

devising systems coherently to accord with strategic objectives rather than allowing available technology, a historical structure or embedded practice to drive organisational activity (Snyder et al., 2007).

In summary, alliances are critical sites where effective leadership, built on engendering outstanding team performance, may be modelled. The “know-who” element recognises the fact that the people of an alliance, as for any organisation, are key, and links with the “know-how” element to foster the essential knowledge bases and values of the alliance. These link, in turn, with the “know-why” element in insisting upon clarity about the purpose of the alliance, and upon how best to establish productive working relationships with key parties.

As such, leadership goals and outcomes for alliances should centre on cultivating sound interpersonal ability integrated with sound, streamlined processes (Avolio et al., 1999; Schein, 1997); relevant knowledge, intellectual competence and technical skills (Avolio et al., 1999; Bass, 1990; Peiperl, 2001; Tornow & London, 1998), a positive work climate (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Fredrickson, 2003; Nohria et al., 2003; Wong & Cummings, 2009) and clear rationale to drive strategic action (Habermas, 1979; Marshall, 2007). If sound interpersonal communication, including provision of a clear rationale to drive action, is critical to the effective functioning of alliances, it is also critical to gaining co-operation around all facets of technology application within university and research alliances (Shattock, 2004; Snyder et al., 2007). A short discussion of interpersonal relations in technology application follows

Interpersonal relations in effecting technology application

The importance of interpersonal relations to the effectiveness of the full range of systems and procedures in universities has been noted in the discussion so far. A brief inspection of the importance of the human element in technology application is perhaps repaid in an environment where this somewhat covert dimension of technology application may receive scant attention. Snyder et al. (2007) investigated three domains of practice, the educational, the technological and the organizational across five different types of Australian universities. The research interrogated the connections between information and communication technologies' (ICTs') use and change processes in Australian higher education. The research revealed that in academic/management partnerships, the articulation and communication of compatible (while not necessarily identical) goals and values (inevitably associated with the human dimension) were critical, and merited the further attention of leaders. The research found that the most effective use of ICTs occurs when harmony exists between educational and organisational objectives (Snyder et al., 2007), reflecting earlier research conducted in the Australian university sector on the interface between academics and administrators.

While information technology, for example, offers enormous benefits and infinite possibilities, the challenge for leaders in Australian universities, as for United Kingdom universities, is to achieve technology systems which cohere with strategic organisational themes and desired culture, and which recognise the human factors surrounding technology application (Carnegie, 2002). Drew and Bensley (2001) suggest that, in universities, "the need for open channels of communication and modelled corporate values [for technology application] has

probably never been so compelling” (p. 67), and so, concomitantly, “the importance of trust...in the people whose hands unbridled technical capacity lies...” (p. 67). This has significant implications for leadership.

Implementing new technology may need to be carried out in different, more efficient ways, sometimes giving people time out in a new environment in order to explore new methods before fully integrating the new technology (Carlopio et al., 2001). Technology then should be applied consistently, integrated with strategy, in convergence with human needs (Carnegie, 2002; Snyder et al., 2007).

According to Shattock (2003), achieving disaggregated but integrated systems with regard to information technology is still far from a typical situation in the United Kingdom universities, for example (pp. 95-96). Ideally, under effective leadership every event, interaction, and technology application becomes potentially an integrated and reciprocal framework for learning - the hallmark of the “learning organisation” as defined by Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1997) and others in the post-1990s literature.

In summary, the capabilities discussed in relation to the “Interpersonal” dimension of leadership emerge as being critical to creating a change-adept, innovative, client-focused and community-engaged leadership bench in universities. It has been argued here that interpersonal capabilities are essential for team development (De Simone et al., 2002; Horder, 2000; Marshall & Lowther, 1997; Kotter, 2007; Wong & Cummings, 2009), increasing collective “ownership” of organisational strategic agenda (Holpp, 1993; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Marshall, 2007), for reinforcing recognition of individual effort as well as collective partnering (Renz & Greg, 2000), and for applying technology in cognizance of strategy and people (Carnegie,

2002; Drew and Bensley, 2001; Snyder et al. 2007). Seeking to enhance effective interpersonal engagement ideally becomes a driver for leaders to examine their attitudes, behaviours and practices to see where gaps or blind spots might lie in order continuously to improve practice. This brings the discussion to the “intrapersonal” dimension of leadership. A body of literature suggests that development, if it is to be successful, begins with the individual as a reflective thinker and action-taker. The following section considers leadership learning at the “intrapersonal” level of self-awareness. The “intrapersonal” dimension refers to building the individual capabilities of leaders to reflect on and develop their leadership capabilities, and their robustness in order to succeed in complex environments including that of higher education leadership.

Dimensions of Development – “Intrapersonal” Dimension (Self-awareness; Reflective Capacity)

This section of the literature review explores what evidence-based research and the literature has to say about “intrapersonal” effectiveness in leadership. It discusses the role of the individual as leader, inevitably in relationship with others, and the “intrapersonal” considerations of self-awareness. An expanded definition of what is meant by the “intrapersonal” dimension of leadership is assisted by Bhindi and Duignan (1997) who argue that understanding of self is a critical feature of authentic leadership and that authenticity refers to discovering the self through relationships with others and has a focus on trustworthiness, genuineness, and ethics. Barnett (2004) offers that the way forward for the “self” lies in having personal confidence to operate in environments that are characterised by uncertainty; a pedagogy which Barnett (2004) describes as “knowing what the next step is, and

having the confidence and commitment to take it” (p. 257). The discussion here is assisted by examining two research subquestions which consider the “intrapersonal” dimension of leadership as follows: *how effective is 360 degree feedback surveying for assisting individual development for current and future leaders?* and *what constitutes real power and influence in leadership?* The findings on these subquestions are discussed in turn below.

How Effective is 360 Degree Feedback Surveying for Assisting Individual Development for Current and Future Leaders?

The subquestion enquires into the perceived effectiveness of 360 degree feedback applications for developmental purposes. The exploration is expanded upon in published Paper 6: Drew, G. (2009). A “360” view for individual leadership development. *Journal of Management Development*, 28(7), 581-592. This paper also presents findings on empirical research reporting how a group of participants engaged with a 360 degree leadership survey process to gain 360 degree perceptions on their leadership using the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP). There is clear general agreement in the literature that leadership development initiatives are important at individual level so that individual leaders, and hence, organisations, better may monitor and assess progress along the lines of capabilities deemed necessary to achieving strategic goals (De Simone et al., 2002). It is argued that one’s confidence in leadership may be increased by becoming aware of the perceptions of others on one’s leadership behaviours (London, 2002), and that having the opportunity to act on those perceptions may build robustness and enhanced capability in leadership. At the same time, Atwater, Waldman, Atwater and Cartier (2000), London (2002), Rao and Rao (2005) and others confirm that great care should be taken with 360 feedback processes because of the sensitivities

involved in supervisor, staff and peers providing feedback. The way in which individuals receive their feedback, ensuring that the process is a constructive one, is critical. It is argued that sound facilitation including preparation for the 360 degree feedback process, and well-conducted feedback interviews where the results are interpreted and discussed are vital to the success of these ventures for productive learning (London, 2002).

Drew (2006), London (2002), McCarthy and Garavan (2001), Rao and Rao (2005) and others argue that the 360 degree feedback process, when carried out effectively and constructively, assists individual development and helps leaders to determine when desired learning goals are being reached. The effectiveness of heuristic tools such as 360 degree leadership surveys are commended by Avolio (2005); Avolio et al. (1999), Bass (1997), Lepsinger and Lucia (1997), London (2002), Smither, London, Reilly, Flautt, Vargas and Kucine (2004) to leverage leadership strength and identify areas for personal/professional growth, and by Seibert (1999) and others to identify key factors for individuals' on-the-job success. London (2002), Peiperl (2001) and Rao and Rao (2005) argue the efficacy of 360 degree feedback to aid reflective practice, said to be a vital capability in leadership (Avolio, 2005; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Indeed, investing in well-facilitated tools such as 360 degree leadership surveys is said to be one of the best ways to promote reflection on leadership behaviours, and this tends to have a positive effect on on-job learning (Seibert, 1999; Tornow & London, 1998).

Avolio (2005) offers a commentary on the art of reflection: “[t]o be an effective leader means to reflect, deeply reflect, on events that surround oneself that have reference to how you see your own behavior and actions influencing others” (p. 94).

To reflect, Avolio (2005) suggests, means “to know oneself, to be consistent with one self, and to have a positive and strength-based orientation toward one’s development and the development of others” (p. 194). According to Smither, London, Vasilopoulos, Reilly, Millsap and Salvermini (1995), Reilly, Smither and Vasilopoulos (1996) and other workers in the field, 360 degree feedback surveying importantly assists participants to reflect on perceptions from a variety of observers of their work to improve self-monitoring. A reported idealised goal of 360 degree feedback is that leaders who are high self-monitors can then adjust their behaviour once having become aware of the impact of their behaviour on others (Avolio, 2005). It follows, perhaps not surprisingly, that, in 360 degree feedback exercises, the perceptions of staff represent the most critical dimension.

Some research reveals that, whether a feedback exercise invoked multi-source feedback or upward feedback only, the feedback from staff is the most important dimension to be gathered, in the view of ratees. One study by Brutus, London and Martineau (1999) revealed that ratees listen most to feedback from people whom they supervise. The study, covering data from 2,163 managers, showed that multi-source feedback contributed to the selection of developmental goals, and that subordinate ratings, compared to ratings from other sources, were most influential in the setting of goals. That staff, in turn, appreciate supportive and inspiring modes of leadership from their supervisors is suggested in a study by Rafferty and Neale (2004) who carried out a Leximancer-based analysis of open ended comments made by respondents to the Quality Leadership Profile 360 degree leadership survey. The analysis of the comments of raters, a large proportion being staff of the various ratees, suggested the importance of supportive forms of leadership. That this dimension was most often commented upon in the open ended section of the QLP

demonstrates, in effect, the influential role that leaders play, potentially, in the personal learning and professional growth of others, to open doors of opportunity, show empathy, share knowledge and so on. A number of suggested caveats for effective use of 360 degree feedback initiatives are discussed below.

First, there needs to be an understanding that reflective practice has value. In that regard, a study undertaken at the University of Otago found that opportunities and threats posed by a rapidly changing internal and external environment required that the traditional characteristics of a good head of department, namely scholarship and academic leadership, be augmented by additional attributes such as vision, leadership, strategic planning, staff management and organisational skills (Mead et al., 1999). The authors (Mead et al., 1999) stated that while the program approach was innovative, there could be no guarantee that effective leaders would emerge from it, given that competent leadership also depends upon the ability to exercise an array of personal qualities. The authors found that reflective capabilities associated with self-awareness were pivotal to leaders' success, and that they were more likely to act upon their feedback if they believed that the organisation placed value on the reflective practice exercise.

Second, the 360 degree feedback process may be effective if the goal of the activity is that in "learn[ing] how others perceive them" (Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997, p. 22), leaders discover and are assisted to act upon the specific skills they need to develop, or which behaviours that they might adjust or modify in order to be more effective). Change, it seems, is possible. Dominick, Reilly and McGourty (1997), researching 360 degree feedback practice, concluded that the exposure that the participants receive to the behaviours, as articulated in a relevant set of survey questions, by

completing the feedback instrument on themselves and others, itself results in change.

Third, the role of a supportive organisational environment is argued to be critical to the success of 360 degree feedback ventures (Maurer, Mitchell & Barbeite, 2002). A study involving 5,335 ratees in a large, global organisation were followed up after engaging in a multi-source feedback process to determine whether the ratee had shared the feedback and whether this appeared to have positive impact (Smither et al., 2004). Smither et al. (2004) found a very small though statistically significant proportion of variance in improvement occurred over time. Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill and Stride (2007) examined a sample of 45 managers and 308 staff members of a health care organisation receiving an upward feedback report and a short workshop (rather than individual conversations) to facilitate interpretation. The study found that managers lack insight into the impact of their behaviour (which in itself suggests the usefulness of gaining feedback) but that the upward feedback program had small overall positive effect. This possibly suggests that, given the individual nature of providing and receiving feedback, individual conversations with a skilled facilitator are most appropriate in interpreting the feedback and promoting insight and action. The link between 360 degree feedback and development action appears to have been relatively little researched (Maurer et al., 2002); however, it appears that the context in which the 360 degree feedback process is implemented and delivered is critical. Two particular aspects of recommended institutional support for 360 degree feedback processes are discussed briefly.

The first aspect is whether the organisation appears to value and reward the behaviours reflected in the survey. Reilly, Smither and Vasilopoulos (1996)

addressed this question in a study of 92 managers during four iterations of an upward feedback program over 2.5 years. The study found that managers whose performance was perceived by subordinates as low improved between the first and second iteration of the program and sustained that improvement two years later. The study found that rewarding and top-down modelling of desired behaviours appeared to be the most important factor leveraging improvement. Dominick, Reilly and McGourty (1997) concurred that people will be more motivated to develop the behaviours that they perceive are valued and rewarded.

The second aspect relates to the notion of empowerment for learning through organisational support provided for the 360 degree feedback process (Maurer et al., 2002). Evidence suggests that organisational executives can empower themselves and their people to become continuous learners through use of multi-source feedback processes (London, 2002); however, it matters how the 360 degree feedback process is contextualised and introduced, how it links to other performance assessment mechanisms, how the results are transmitted to participants, and whether mechanisms are in place to support learning and follow-through assistance (London, 2002). Snyder et al. (2007), referring to the higher education leadership environment, assert the importance of supportive institutional strategies to ensure appropriate integration of a 360 degree feedback mechanism, while Lewis and Slade (2000) claim that the interviews to discuss the results of the 360 degree survey process should inspire self-motivation to learn, focus on relationship-building, create shared meaning and mutual understanding and help formulate useful development strategies.

Further studies reveal that professional conversations are an excellent strategy for promoting change in individuals who engage willingly in them (Healy et al., 2001). Sound conversational interactions are claimed to promote listening and openness to attend to others' views (Mackay, 1994; Petress, 1999) and thus may improve "on-job" performance (Seibert, 1999; Tornow & London, 1998). In the context of feedback interviews following a 360 degree survey process, questioning may help uncover "assumptions underlying ... beliefs and behaviors" (Brookfield, 1987, p. 13) and thus promote new understandings. Moreover, it is recommended that, following the 360 degree feedback process, ratees communicate back to staff members on how they intend to use the feedback for development (London, 2002, p. 144, 149-154). The feedback conversation ideally builds self-efficacy in the ratee (Bandura, 1982). Self-efficacy relates to an individual's self-belief that he/she is able to effect behavioural change (Maurer et al., 2002).

In this vein, Greene (2005), Kerr (2004), Palus and Horth (2002) and Mintzberg (2004) discuss the value of creating spaces for insight, artful learning and action for the enhancement of practice. At the organisational level, consistent with the findings of McCarthy and Garavan (2001), there are potential benefits in 360 degree feedback exercises which raise consciousness concerning positive behaviours as individuals answer the survey questions on themselves and others. Such processes may create a degree of openness which works to improve organisational behaviour and culture (Bland & Ruffin, 1992; Cotton, 1993; Fedor et al., 1999; Fox, 1992; Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997; Lucas, 1995; Peiperl, 2001; Ramsden 1998a; Yukl, 1989). That university leaders can improve their self-awareness on a range of capabilities across their academic and administrative leadership roles by using reflective tools is

suggested in the upward tracking scores of the QLP 360 degree leadership survey overall (Drew, 2006).

As Klinge (2000) claims, there is a relationship between leadership and the achievement of educational excellence, and, it is argued, 360 degree feedback, teamed with institutional support for development, enhances the opportunity for leaders to build greater self-awareness and insight. It appears that there is room to establish further empirical correlation between 360 degree feedback implementation and outcomes for leader development in universities; however, there seems more than adequate evidence that increasing leaders' opportunities to engage in reflective practice has merit so that the limited time available to leaders to engage in development in time-poor environments may be targeted most directly to perceived needs.

As is argued in this study, paradoxically, such reflective leaders, in suspending their own assumptions and willingly gaining feedback from others, position themselves positively as robust, strong leaders demonstrating the humility of listening. Thus they stand to make greatest gains for themselves and their teams, as asserted by Collins (2001), London (2002), Knight and Trowler (2001) and others. With respect to 360 degree feedback applications, it might be concluded that the humility involved in asking others for their views puts the leader in charge of his or her development and, in a sense, of the perceptions of others in order to adjust and improve practice where useful to do so. It is suggested here that strong leaders are those who demonstrate the humility of listening and thus may more readily engage in reflective processes (Avolio, 2005). In turn, in demonstrating their learning attitudes to others, such leaders may have powerful influence as role models.

It is contended that how leaders view, and handle, power and influence lies perhaps at the heart of personal values within (for the purposes of this study) the “intrapersonal” dimension of leadership. It would appear that what constitutes effective use of the authority of one’s position (in other words, the power of that position) has been little explored, but may be said to be fundamental to one’s approach to leadership. The final subquestion of the study seeks to explore briefly notions of power and influence in leadership. Brief recourse to mythopoeic literature is made as a way of conceptualising certain principles which emerge. The insightfulness of myth and story to inspect matters of the human condition is argued by Filmer (1992a, 1992b), Lakowski (2002), Manganiello (1992) and others. Drawing from these and other authors, a somewhat creative approach is used to address the final subquestion of the study, taking note of the paradoxical elements that reside in exploring: *What constitutes “real” power and influence in leadership?*

What Constitutes “Real” Power and Influence in Leadership?

The blending and countering function of opposite concepts, the unique strength of paradox, has been argued as an interesting and insightful element in examining aspects of the human condition, including issues of power and influence (Drew, 1995; Erwin, 1988; Lakowski, 2002). In keeping with the “intrapersonal” dimension of the study in which this subquestion arises, it is proposed that a consideration of real or genuine power and influence in leadership can be addressed only at a personal level of leadership. Adair (2005) implies that there is no single way to lead effectively; that context and situation play a large part in how leadership is enacted; but that leadership is best understood at a personal level. Leaders must know themselves and be clear about what they are aiming to achieve in order to be

effective (Miller, 2006). It is argued that considerations of power and influence from the leader perspective inevitably have to do with the leader's personal approach and motivation as a leader, the leader's goals and ability to empathise, and so forth. Investigations on human qualities of caring, empathy and humaneness by Undung and De Guzman (2009) suggest that empathy "creates and maintains a sound and dynamic interpersonal milieu" (p. 1). Instructive to the theme also is Wondra's (2009) reference to the uniqueness of individual contribution in the "special gifts of knowledge, skills and personal characteristics that individuals bring to organisations" (p. 1). Helpful also to the discussion is the observation of Avolio and Gardner (2005), paraphrased this way by Wong and Cummings (2009): "emerging from theoretical discussions on the moral and ethical foundations of leadership is a focus on distilling the core elements of positive approaches to leadership" (p.7), resulting in the concept of "authentic leadership".

Overall, an argument emerges that effective leadership that influences for good is not founded on coercion but on the willing involvement of others (Drew & Bensley, 2001; Scott et al., 2008; Wheatley, 2003). McIntyre (1994) suggests that, paradoxically, there are those in human society who get their own way and those who do not; however, McIntyre states, the problem is that "the powerful – are not necessarily harder working, more intelligent or more admirable than the rest [rather that] the exact opposite is often the case" (pp. 4, 5). In asking what constitutes real power and influence in leadership, Drew (1995) offers that "resisting the usurpation of overt power demonstrates strength and creates greater possibilities for achievement and personal freedom, while wielding power for selfish ends correlates with ultimate weakness and enslavement" (p. 13). The proposition correlates with

the notion of empowerment as a touchstone of leadership, identified and discussed earlier in this chapter.

In relation to the notion of empowerment, it is proposed that genuine leaders with a positive approach to achieving shared goals tend to focus on others and the goal at hand rather than on themselves (Undung & De Guzman, 2009). Drew and Bensley (2001) acknowledge this point when they describe enabling, empowering leaders as being able to “take others to *their* own places of independent and unique capability and critique, operating on a platform that is not endlessly upheld in a spirit of frustration and exhaustion” (p. 65). The evocation is that the influence of self-interested, coercive power is temporary (in that it may be based on the tenured authority of the sinecure role by which the authority is exerted) and perhaps it is hollow as it may have little to do with personal credibility attracting the genuine engagement of others. This gives rise to the notion that, essentially, power which denies self-interest is “real” power in its portent for useful and lasting worthwhile result, and is characterised by the notion of empowerment; enabling others to act (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

As a means of exploring what constitutes positive or “real” power and influence in leadership, illustrative material reflecting some emergent principles is drawn from some character depictions and motifs in J.R. Tolkien’s (1966) epic trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings (LoTR)*. It is in Paper 7 that the final sub-question, focused on real power drawing upon insights from Tolkien, is addressed. The approach taken to explore this subquestion was to develop a conceptual paper on some markers of “real” power and influence in leadership by deferring to a range of authors, and drawing upon illustrative imagery from Tolkien’s trilogy. Of the latter process,

authorial subjectivity is acknowledged in selecting particular imagery and, indeed, in reading the text of Tolkien, as any other text, a particular way. In that regard, Barr (1973) asserts that “[a] poem, or a work of art, is not to be judged on the basis of what the author intended, but on the basis of what [the author] produced” and that “any literary appreciation implies, or induces, or is related to, a general view of the world, a way of understanding life” (pp. 32-33). With those caveats, a reading of Tolkien (1966) suggests a central theme that somewhat reverses the conventional power paradigm – that of “the downward submission of the greatest” to become as servants – as the place of genuine authority, influence and credibility (Erwin, 1988, pp. 55-57).

Some of the polarities in tension in relation to power and influence in the leadership role are outlined in Paper 7 (Drew, submitted to the *Journal of Leadership Studies*). Some of the motifs outlined bear relevance to work noted earlier in this chapter suggesting that leaders who are interested in the personal/professional growth of themselves and others position themselves and their organisations best to achieve goals and to handle complexity, ambiguity and change. As Collins (2001) expresses, empowering leaders are ambitious but they are ambitiously committed to excellence of overall achievement rather than personally for themselves. Some hallmarks or markers of enabling or “real” power and influence emerge from the literature.

First, a hallmark or marker of “real” power and influence in leadership is the credibility of a leader who serves in commitment to the goal and to the persons with whom the goal will be achieved. It is said that leaders who serve and empower, who put the interests of the goal before their own interests, are credible leaders capable of earning respect (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Erwin (1988) provides a clue to one

aspect of how the power paradigm readily functions. Erwin (1988) writes:

“Someone who is at the top of the pyramid of authority..[may be] isolated from reality; those below that leader no longer give complete honesty [and] “[t]he only means by which the person at the top can be assured of honesty and truthfulness...is to...lay aside..[his/her] power and authority and approach [others] as a servant” (Erwin, 1988, pp. 56-57). An implicit argument follows that if a leader and his/her mission is perceived to be credible, the leader is more likely volitionally to enlist others. Sinclair (1998) writes of this conceptual, personal “transaction” effect in genuine leadership. “Leadership”, writes Sinclair (1998), “is always a transaction, by which a group of people recognize in someone something they have come to understand as leadership. That understanding may be strength, toughness, purpose, or, more rarely, generosity and nurture” (p. 34). Gaining the volitional engagement of others appears to characterise leadership credibility (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Credibility, which is said to be the dynamic currency of leadership (Leavy, 2003), is reminiscent of the Greek word for “power” - “exousia”, which means “derived or conferred ‘authority’, the warrant or right to do something” (Douglas, 1970, p.1017). The need for self-aware leaders, ideally, to reflect on how they influence others and on how they are influenced by others is captured by McWilliam, Lather and Morgan (undated) who propose: “Each of us thinks and knows and believes and acts within fields of influences. Those influences also work on us and work within us, maybe in ways we’re not always aware of” (p. 19). The point is for those in leadership positions to be conscious of how they exercise the authority that is theirs by virtue of their role.

It is suggested that a heavily rule-bound approach tends to serve the instrumentalities of a system rather than people. The system may centre in on itself, producing powerlessness, where community members as “subordinated subjects” become, in fact, victims of an institution meant to serve them (Fiske, 1989, p. 58). Trakman (2007) notes the phenomenon where perceived impending crises relating to governance prompt governing bodies to institute exaggerated litigious changes resulting in micromanagement which, in fact, protracts poor governance practice. The futility of leading by coercion is implied throughout Tolkien’s (1966) trilogy which illustrates an assertion of Peck (1990) that “coercive tactics” will do more to “create than ameliorate havoc” (p. 271), and for all its apparent success, coercive power displays a hollowness which tends to leave little of value behind and tends to demonstrate meagre genuine influence. In Tolkien’s trilogy (1966), the results of an obsessive bid to dominate is depicted most in the enervated figure of Gollum whose struggle to retain self-serving power represented by the Ring has robbed him of his personhood and, with it, the ability to choose. The marks that he bears are the marks of fatigue and defeat. On the other hand, in the trilogy, the service qualities in various characters such as Samwise, the helpmeet of Frodo who is charged with the responsibility to destroy the Ring, are those begetting achievement and victory.

The second, related marker captures an underpinning premise that enabling or “real” power and influence in leadership, in a sense “dies to self” so that purposes greater than those of self-interest might be achieved. The behaviour of Frodo and Sam is metonymic of a rigorous culture. These questing characters in the trilogy, Frodo and Samwise, know dejection, deflection from task and the defection of co-workers; they know disappointment in themselves and each other; but their focus essentially is not primarily on themselves but upon their mission. They openly share knowledge and

strategy, and they support each other and the fellow-travellers who join them at various stages of their journey. It might be said, the questing characters mitigated the stress of the challenges that beset them by remaining persistently within the “flow” of their mission, held by the “balance” of shared goals and by the “oars” of their “core values” (Chopra, 2006, pp. 5-95). The motif suggests a disciplined “patterning” which formed as individuals met and dealt with setback. The motif, for leaders, suggests that the consistent “walk” or appropriate “way of being” sets an inspirational, disciplined pattern which may galvanise in others courage in navigating change and handling complexity, rather than depending on circumstances to be favourable or, indeed, stable.

A related point is that genuine power and influence is interested in the growth of self and others. A partnering, empowering framework where the leader leads notionally from within the group, or from behind the group (Ramsden, 1998b) is said to build more trustful organisational cultures, fostering growth in others (Ramsden, 1998b; Schein, 2003; Wheatley, 2003). In Tolkien’s (1966) trilogy, the “helpmeet” character, Samwise, suggests a progression of the “self” and a progression in leadership. The sense is that other-centredness leads to greatness, while self-centredness narrows and stultifies. Lakowski (2002) notes that at the start of the *LoTR* story there has been little to challenge and try this character, Sam, who seems sure of himself and somewhat proud, but that the more Sam is challenged the more he learns and grows, the more humility he demonstrates and the more effectual he becomes. Lakowski (2002) notes that Sam’s effectiveness begins at this point of growth, and that such effectiveness is marked by humility, strength, and greatness in achieving the goal. Another character, Saruman, believing himself to be great, seizes

power, succumbs to self-interest, and loses by his own hand the greatness that he once had (Head, 2007).

A critical value demonstrated in the partnership of the two main characters, Frodo and Sam, is that of humility and fierce resolve (characteristics of “Level 5” leaders noted by Collins, 2001). These two characters experience both joy and trial, surmount difficulty and succeed in their quest. Sam’s character demonstrates a quality of enabling power and influence, taking charge when the Ringbearer (Frodo) falters, combining encouragement with action, in order that the Ringbearer retain his sense of mission. As Filmer (1992b) offers, concerning Tolkien’s (1966) motifs, “all readers might be encouraged to hope that they might share....the qualities of Pity, Mercy, Humility and endurance which contribute to the success of the quest” (p. 31). The findings of Collins (2001) on effective leadership reveal the paradoxical combination of humility and strong professional will to be the most enabling principle in successful leadership.

The powerful combination was discovered to be the critical and differentiating marker in leaders at the helm of organisations demonstrating triple bottom-line success against rigorous criteria, in Collins’s (2001) large-scale study. The United States-based research study examined chief executive officers of organisations which had reached outstanding and sustained success on a range of rigorous criteria. A key element in Collins’s (2001) findings on outstanding leaders was that they were action-takers; they engendered a rigorous environment and they possessed uniquely this paradoxical combination of humility and strong professional will to see matters accomplished. It is posited that “real” power and influence is evident when the leader stands alongside others as a credible, enabling influence, supporting

others, and taking positive action within uncertain circumstances to reach the objectives pursued (Barnett, 2004; Collins, 2001). It would be a mistake to judge such a culture as “soft” or uncritical. The type of enabling leadership described here is seen as denoting strength rather than weakness. In fact, vigor, resolution and action emerge from the literature as bywords of the third marker of “real” power and influence in leadership, and these are discussed next.

The third suggested marker of what constitutes enabling or “real” power and influence eschews “soft” approaches in favour of a rigorous culture of discipline which takes action towards the goal in view (Collins, 2001; Lulofs & Cahn, 2000; Scott et al., 2008). This marker has to do with the ability to be organised, which includes following through with action where appropriate. It might be suggested that enabling or “real” power and influence on the part of a leader may be experienced by followers in terms of a disciplined patterning which forms as the leader and members deal with conflict and meet and resolve setbacks (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000). Such patterning, argues Barnett (2004), forms through addressing “ontological” [way of being] factors and acknowledging these to be as vital to success as epistemological [knowledge-based] factors in human activity.

Within a culture of discipline, it is said, ideally, people of the organisation have a framework for operating according to strategy and values; hence they are able to take consistent steps towards a goal and volitionally act in a manner which serves that goal (Collins; 2001; Schein, 2003). Collins (2001) asserts: “Fill the culture with self-disciplined people who are willing to go to extreme lengths to fulfil their responsibilities” (Collins, 2001, p. 124). Schein (2003) points to positive behaviours which form a “common set of assumptions...forged by clear and consistent

messages as the group encounters and survives its own crises” (p. 438). Scott et al. (2008) identify self-regulation and self-organisation (in other words, having self-control and an ability to be organised) as key required capabilities for leadership in universities. These authors suggest in common the importance of rigor, self-discipline, personal robustness and consistency in leadership.

It is argued that leadership is one of the most potentially potent, effectual types of relationships that exist in human experience, and that effective leaders use benevolent influence to navigate turbulence and create positive and productive environments (Fredrickson, 2003; Greenleaf, 1977; Gyskiewicz, 1999).

Manganiello (1992, pp. 5-14) locates Tolkien’s (1966) coined word, “eucatastrophe” with a perception of wholeness through joy which is the richer for trial and sorrow. As Peck (1990) puts it, the agony of community [that is, people moving out of isolation to forge relationships] is actually greater, “but so is the joy” (p. 105). So it is with teams, where the potential for divergent opinion leading to conflict is greater than working in isolation, but greater, too, is the potential for benefit. Much, it has been argued, depends upon the way in which divergent perspectives are harnessed and handled; and in turn, this largely depends upon the style and behaviours modelled and fostered by the leader. Drew and Bensley (2001) suggest that, for leaders, “real ‘power’” vests in “ostensibly valuing and truly ‘engaging’ staff in the advancement of organizational goals, in sharing knowledge capital appropriately and freely, and in exploring flexible work modes and practices that maximize efficiency while recognizing staff members as ‘whole persons’” (p. 68).

The overall motif that emerges is that “genuine power that influences society for good serves not self but *others*, and therein lies genuine, authoritative influence”

(Drew, 1995, p. 15). From Tolkien (1966), the effectiveness of enabling or “real” power and influence is illustrated, by juxtaposition, in the demise of the Shire. Here, the questing characters, at length, having succeeded in their quest to rid the world, as it were, of self-serving power in despatching the Ring at Mount Doom, return to find their once peaceful Shire in disarray, with dispirited inhabitants oppressed in a rule-bound, litigious culture, and with those in charge intent on wielding power in small matters. The depiction is that the community is so caught up in its petty battles that it is unaware that a greater strategic battle had been fought and won. Kanungo (1992) suggests the futility of an overly instrumental pattern of management. Parry (1999) reports that although monitoring/ controlling is a valid management function, Australian followers perceive their leaders to be ineffective when using monitoring and controlling behaviour, favouring a more supportive, rewarding, collegial environment.

Pertinent to the subquestion “What constitutes ‘real’ power and influence in leadership?”, a listening attitude, valuing fairness, and demonstrating humility in responding to others are prized generally in the leadership role, while empowerment, suggests Kanungo (1992), is an ethical imperative for organisations. Studies in the United Kingdom found, in fact, that the downfall of a number of the United Kingdom’s universities has been a combination of ineffective management information and communication processes, and a highly “top-down” management style (Scott, 2003, pp. 170-173); a style which tends to forget “balance” as it denies viewing workers as “whole persons” (Drew & Bensley, 2001).

The motifs offer an overall picture that “genuine power that influences society for good serves not self but *others*, and..therein lies genuine, authoritative influence”

(Drew, 1995, p. 15). Accordingly, as has been suggested, a leader that is focused on the wider good partners with others to achieve goals and “brooks contingency plans for his or her succession, sharing knowledge and empowering, educating, and affirming others...” (Drew & Bensley, 2001, p. 63). As Bischof (1970) suggests, to be effective, a leader needs to have an expanded view of the world - a much larger world than the world of “self” – in order to be “fully functioning” or “individuated” or “authentically oneself” (p. 95). Adair (2005) and Wong and Cummings (2009) point to the effectuality of empathy and inspirational forms of leadership.

In summary, the “intrapersonal” dimension of leadership emerges as the often all-too-silent foundational element for leader development. Consistent with the findings of McCarthy and Garavan (2001), and others, interventions to aid personal reflection, questioning and growth are critical in the contemporary fast-paced university leadership arena. It is argued that mindfulness (self-awareness) on a range of issues canvassed in this chapter is critical to embracing a holistic leadership development approach (Fedor et al., 1999; Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997; Lucas, 1995; Peiperl, 2001; Rao & Rao, 2005 and others).

Institutional support to build self-efficacy for those undertaking developmental initiatives (Maurer et al., 2002) emerges as critical to creating an organisational atmosphere where self-development, including mechanisms to build self-awareness in leadership, is regarded as “not a luxury” but a “strategic necessity” (Fulmer, Gibbs & Goldsmith, 2000, pp. 49-59). Indeed, Maor (2000) views the tendency for organisations to reduce their budgets at the level of development as a curious contradiction in light of significant data on the importance of building leadership talent in universities (Hanna, 2003; Scott et al. 2008). Rather, individual leadership

development may be reconceptualised as a priority so that the “inner work of intense personal development”, as Brown (2001) puts it, plays out in “the outer work of leadership in action” (pp. 312-313).

This completes the explanation of the three dimensions of development identified in the Lantern model. These dimensions have been suggested as important in pursuing sound executive and organisational leadership in universities. As has been suggested, a key principle of the Lantern model is its integrated approach to organisational leadership development. An organisation is said to perform better when elements integrate with each other (Morgan, 1997). The model has been described as offering an integrated approach to organisational leadership development aimed at harnessing knowledge concerning the university’s interface with its external operating environment. Development is aimed at fostering that knowledge, building adaptive capacity for changing needs, and growing within the organisation those capabilities identified as supporting the achievement of strategic goals and desired organisational culture. The discussion has reflected the intent of the illuminated model to shed light on the organisational landscape with important operating information such as feedback from stakeholders, and data on leadership practice for the purposes of continuously improving leadership capacity. The final part of the Lantern model reflects an integrated approach, in turn, to recruitment and development so that these two key organisational processes also work in harmony to support building of critical mass around the capabilities and values identified as being most critical to corporate goal achievement and values. This part, in a sense, undergirds all activity, noting the admonition of Collins (2001), Jordan (1999), Rao and Rao (2005) and others concerning the importance of having in place the right people as the organisation’s most valuable resource.

Development and Recruitment Aligned with Strategy and Desired Culture

The last part of the Lantern model briefly discussed reflects an argument that aligning development and recruitment has powerful, if somewhat covert implications for embedding desired culture, strategy and values in university leadership. It is argued that valuable mutual reinforcement is lost when the functions of recruitment and development operate in relative isolation within organisations. Rather, it is argued, the two functions should cohere as driven by the same set of strategic goals and desired culture and values. Ranasinghe (2001) suggests that universities emphasise values as a unifying force for universities' development and recruitment practices.

An aspect related both to recruitment and values is that of the important function of orientation for new staff. Some studies report that new leaders feel isolated in new roles (Daresh, 2006; Ramsden, 1998a, 1998b). This part of the Lantern model simply acknowledges the importance of the organisation recruiting people whose values align with desired culture, and who are capable and motivated to work with the strategic goals of the organisation. This part of the model also recognises that organisational and leadership development should integrate demonstrably with the organisation's codes, policies and mission, and ideally should be fostered "from the top" of the organisation. The next section summarises the literature review.

Summary of the Literature Review

The “Lantern”, an Illuminated Model for Organisational Leadership

Development, provides a conceptual framework for the study and is one of the study’s original contributions. The model reflects identification of a number of elements as suggested imperatives for organisational leaders. These imperatives relate, overall, to gaining clarity on the organisation’s wider strategic operating environment including changes in external factors which may influence strategy, and on the capacity of the organisation to adapt and respond flexibly to change. Imperatives related also to ensuring clarity on the capabilities and values that best will support the organisation’s achieving its goals, and consistently developing and recruiting people to those capabilities and values within the organisation. In support of capacity building, three broad foci as dimensions of organisational and leadership development, namely “transpersonal”, “interpersonal” and “intrapersonal” dimensions, were identified. In terms of the Lantern model’s proposition that the organisational environment be well lit by relevant data and information, that data might include capturing the perceptions of clients on the organisation’s services, and the perceptions of staff and others on issues of organisational culture and on individual leadership practice in order to foster continuous improvement.

Thus, the model endorses aligning development *and* recruitment strategies so that each part works towards building consistently the capabilities and values identified as best supporting achievement of strategic goals. The aim here is to engender an integrated, thought-through approach to recruitment and development so that these areas work in partnership, furnished with a “common set of assumptions” about how the organisation should operate (Wheatley, 2003).

Within the “transpersonal”, “interpersonal” and “intrapersonal” rubric, seven subquestions, all relating to various parts of the Lantern model, interrogate the key literature informing the model. At “transpersonal” level, key issues involve balancing academic advancement and business effectiveness, recognising the complex and potentially competing challenges that are part of contemporary academic leadership in universities (reflected in the first subquestion of the study). Here, a number of dualities emerge for particular consideration; for example, managing innovation and risk, research and commercialisation, maintaining quality and the demands of an increased administrative burden (Kinman, 1998; Sapstead, 2004; Stiles, 2004; Winefield et al., 2002), to name a few.

Many writers, for example Hanna (2003), Longden (2006), Marshall (2007), Pick (2003) and Shattock (2003), agree that it is timely for universities to focus on building effective change leadership, and sound organisational culture, in order to navigate complexity and adapt successfully to changing needs (Hanna, 2003; Longden, 2006; Pick, 2003; Shattock, 2003; Stiles, 2004). Two further subquestions exploring these issues enquire into the role of the chief executive officer (CEO) and senior executive team in potentially influencing organisational culture, with particular relevance to the university environment. Further, an artful learning framework designed to leverage consultation, participation and engagement in organisational change is proposed.

With regard to the culture-building CEO, it is argued that it is part of the leadership mandate to attempt to lead in a manner which supports espoused organisational values and, by extension, desired culture. It is argued that the CEO

and executive team hold the most sway in forming tacit understandings about accepted behaviours by demonstrating by their actions the behaviours that are rewarded and discouraged within the organisation. It is conceded that the CEO's influence in universities, as for bureaucratic organisations broadly with their typically hierarchical structures and distributed leadership models, is a fraught concept. However, it is argued, to dismiss the positive culture-building CEO's influence is to dismiss the most potentially potent locus for communicating key messages about "how things are done" in the organisation. It is argued that the key messages which form incrementally as organisational members meet and resolve crises are formative to understandings about accepted practice. Leadership development that considers building desired culture is widely recommended for universities by a range of authors (see Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998; Gayle et al., 2003; Ramsden, 1998a, 1998b; Schein, 1997; Shattock, 2003).

The literature suggests that ability to lead through change, is a critical capability within university leadership (Hanna, 2003; Marshall, 2007; Middlehurst, 2007; Pick, 2003; Shattock, 2003; Stiles, 2004). It would appear that leading successfully through change is, in fact, an art. What might an artful approach to engaging and motivating people entail? Firstly, what is meant by "being artful" in organisational contexts? Kerr and Darso (2007) argue that the notion of being artful has to do with transforming self through profound learning experiences which extend human consciousness, as opposed to more instrumental forms of management. The point at issue is to explore what distinguishes an artful change process from a purely instrumental one. Answers may have to do with how people are mobilised and involved; the extent of communication; and whether there is an opportunity for reflective learning to take place. Accordingly, a number of

strategies are suggested as capable of building learning into a “real time” consultative mixed-group process aimed at engendering engagement in change. The mixed group approach seeks to integrate self-knowledge and growth with task accomplishment and thereby to invest in a richer outcome with good questions testing held assumptions and habitual thinking on issues (De Simone et al., 2002; Peavey, 1994).

At “interpersonal” level, the main challenges facing the tertiary sector are explored. In the relevant subquestion exploring these issues and challenges, a number of interesting tensions are revealed; for example, delivering on sound principles of pedagogy and research, and the necessity to create efficiencies in a global environment of mass education (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999; Szekeres, 2006); the differentiated ways in which students engage with the university, demanding more flexible arrangements for teaching (Cooper, 2002; Longden, 2006; Snyder et al., 2007); and an almost ubiquitous need to partner in order to gain resources to fund research and to undertake myriad elements of core and support university work (Cohen, 2004; Mead et al., 1999; Stiles, 2004; Whitchurch, 2006). Managing these challenges clearly calls for strong interpersonal skills on the part of leaders in communicating organisational and sector knowledge, exercising management functions, and engaging others in strategic and operational activities. In turn, the study explores how leaders best learn the skills required to be leaders, and what is deemed to constitute effective leadership, particularly in university contexts, as explored by two further subquestions under the “interpersonal” dimension of development.

In relation to how leaders learn, on-job learning based on interactions with credible others seems to be important. Formal and unstructured mentoring mechanisms and other individual development strategies may provide spaces for reflection. The organisation is seen to play a role to foster on-job learning, with a range of formal and/or informal approaches for leadership learning advocated by such authors as Filan and Seagren (2003), London (2002), Pounder (2001) and Scott et al. (2008). Maurer et al. (2002) and others emphasise the importance of organisational support for development initiatives to build the “self-efficacy” needed to proceed with learning and action to improve practice. According to Parry (1996), values-based personal qualities such as continuous learning, confidence, respect for others, values clarification, willingness to look, listen and continuously learn new ways of doing things are critical for effective leadership. Parcell and Bligh (2000) call upon extensive studies of business organisations to posit a move away from autocratic to a more democratic style of leadership using genuine personal influence; ability to vary one’s leadership style for different situations; a collective approach to decision-making; more focus on process than task; and motivation through co-operation rather than competition.

In terms of what constitutes effective leadership, a blend of human centred attributes and the more functional capabilities of management is required; each set requiring strong interpersonal skills (see Giroux, 2005; Poole, 2004; Pratt & Poole, 1999). The preponderance of research centres and alliances demonstrates a growing need for the ability to partner and engage effectively with a range of parties within universities and externally. The research study of Scott et al. (2008) suggests that capabilities to be developed should span human centred attributes of empathy, self-regulation and self-organisation and the more instrumental aspects

of organisational knowledge, competency managing budgets and strategy and the like. Both sets of capabilities are said to be required equally (Scott et al., 2008).

Building and sustaining alliances is deemed to require particular attention, according to some authors (see Carless, 2001; Marshall & Lowther, 1997; Painter, 1992; Stiles, 2004). Suggested elements of an “alliance platform” for building and sustaining alliances (Nohria et al., 2003; Wendling, 1997 and others) are identified. These elements group under Taylor’s (2001) competencies for successful alliances, namely “know-how”, “know-who” and “know-why” competencies. Components of these three competency sets are: monitoring impact factors, pursuing coherency, supporting innovation (“know-how”); nurturing key relationships, supporting individual and collective effort, investing in people (“know-who”); and clarifying and articulating vision, positioning for the future (“know-why”). Dual commitment to both relationships and structure is a key finding of this section.

A brief examination of the interpersonal element in technology application acknowledges the perceived need for vigilance in this area on the part of leaders. Referring to the international university environment, Shattock (2004), for example, admits that achieving disaggregated but integrated systems with regard to information technology is far from realised in the United Kingdom. In respect of the Australian setting, the research of Snyder et al. (2007) reveals that in academic/management partnerships, the articulation and communication of compatible goals and values, inevitably associated with the human dimension, are critical. It would appear that the most effective use of information and communication technology occurs when harmony exists between educational and

organisational objectives (Snyder et al., 2007). This reflects the integrated approach to organisational and leadership development that is argued here. The intent is that through organisational processes, decision-making, day to day interactions and specific development strategies, the organisation builds towards strengthening sound strategic contextual understanding and effective interpersonal engagement and self-awareness, articulated in the Lantern model.

Turning finally to the “intrapersonal” (self-awareness) dimension of leadership, it follows that a means of increasing self-awareness in leadership practice merits the investment of resources and time, given the pivotal role that leaders may play in motivating and inspiring staff, demonstrating strategic and operational effectiveness, client focus and external representation to local and global communities. It is noted that use of reflective tools such as 360 degree feedback surveys assists leaders to identify what behaviours are perceived to be effective, and where they might make adjustments to improve their effectiveness. Some caveats for pursuing effective 360 degree feedback processes are offered, including ensuring quality implementation, facilitation and follow through for the 360 degree feedback exercise.

Self-awareness is deemed to be crucial in order to examine the way in which one relates to others in the leadership role. For example, Habermas (1979) and Butler et al. (1999) point to “transformational leadership behaviours” which focus on relationship-building as being far more effective than relying upon the use of rules and regulations. In terms of gaining compliance on key accountability measures, communicating effectively, sharing knowledge and inspiration build reciprocal understanding (Habermas, 1979), and are more effective than monitoring and

controlling patterns. Pierce and Newstrom (2000) agree that increasingly organisations are modifying the role of yesterday's manager, changing the role to that of a leader charged with the responsibility of gaining follower recognition and acceptance. They reconceptualise the twenty-first century leader role as in the manner of teacher, coach and supporter. This seems to support Parry's (1999) findings that respect for the individual is crucial if the leader is to gain the best from others, and is consistent with the findings of Rafferty and Neale (2004) regarding the apparent importance to staff of a supportive and encouraging leadership style. Similarly, the Scott et al. (2008) study suggests that ability to inspire and engage others depends on building a reciprocal professional relationship which operates on mutual respect rather than on a hierarchical power structure.

Addressing the issue of power in the leadership role, the subquestion "What constitutes 'real' power and influence in leadership?" yields an argument that a leader who acts out of vision to achieve a goal, laying aside self-interest in favour of engaging the willing involvement of others, occupies a more sustainable, powerful and influential position than one who uses power for selfish ends and attempts to lead by coercion. Empowering and enabling others, sharing knowledge freely, demonstrating interest in the development of self and others, pursuing "wholeness" and balance, are said to signify enabling or "real" power and influence in the leadership role, with portent for lasting value.

Clearly, perceptions of leader credibility play a significant role here. The paradoxical blend of humility (listening to others, being a learner, for example) and strong professional will (Collins, 2001) emerges as a powerful combination in

leader success. Again, notions of self-organisation and self-regulation (Scott et al., 2008) emerge as part of leader credibility inasmuch as the credible leader is seen to be organised and to follow through on decisions and plans. The argument proposed is that these qualities, in practice, turn upon the capacity of the leader to reflect upon his/her behaviours and so to moderate and enhance practice where useful to do so. This is consistent, for example, with evidence from Sosik (2001) where multisource data indicated that levels of work attitudes and correlations between work attitudes, charismatic leadership and performance varied as a function of self-awareness of managers.

The observations have implications for the appropriate development of leaders in each of the “transpersonal”, “interpersonal” and “intrapersonal” dimensions discussed. Evidence emerges that a blend of leadership oriented skills (i.e. interpersonal skills that inspire, motivate and support staff) and managerial skills (i.e. strategic planning and change and functional management capabilities) are required, but that ideally human centred behaviours translate across the domains for effectiveness. As Kotter (1990) states, leadership and management are complementary and equally necessary. In terms of implications for development activity, leadership development models demonstrating most success appear to be those which recognise the interdependency of these complementary elements, and which therefore include affective relationship-building skills, acknowledging the array of personal and functional capabilities required in the leadership role (Mead et al., 1999). It is believed that the best models integrate learning in relation to these capabilities throughout the organisation (Fulmer et al., 2000), recognising that fostering “human qualities and dispositions” (Barnett, 2004), building

“personal capacity” and “know-how” (Taylor, 2001) are increasingly sought after capabilities for leaders.

Overall, a challenge for tertiary leaders would appear to be the wider array of attributes required for leadership to span senior academic and professional leadership roles which invariably involve significant supervisory and “people leadership” aspects. These aspects may not have formed part of background experience in the academic role. Assisting, for example, new heads of school or academic department may include setting in place formal and informal networks where people can gather and learn from each other. It is recognised that informal networks are just as powerful, if not more powerful than, formal ones in organisations. As Goldhaber (1993) puts it, [m]ost organisational entities have significant communication events which “do not follow scalar or functional lines” (p. 167). It might be agreed that formal and informal leadership development strategies which foster self-awareness in leaders, build leaders’ capacity to inspire and motivate others, and which inculcate relevant skills and knowledge, clearly have value. It follows that preparing future leaders is all the more important given accelerated age-related attrition anticipated in Australian universities, reflecting society demographics (Jacobzone et al., 1998).

Succession leadership development by way of guiding and mentoring of future leaders (Adair, 2005; Boyatzis et al., 2002; Fulmer et al., 2000; Sauer, 2002; Stephenson, 2000) is considered to be part of responsible strategic management (Boyatzis et al., 2002; Byham 2002; Kesler, 2002; Leibman et al., 1996; Rothwell 2002; Walker, 1998). As has been suggested, it is not sufficient to have succession planning without development focusing on idealised capabilities, or to have

policies and codes in place without attempting consciously to build the culture of the organisation along the lines of stated goals and values. As Scott et al. (2008) assert, it is “the interaction between sound, linked leadership and a directly aligned, agile, sufficient and supportive operating context and culture that counts” (p. xiv). Reinforcing that interaction may involve building strategically- and values-aligned leadership talent throughout the organisation as a priority (Byham, 2002; Kesler, 2002; Leibman et al., 1996).

The next chapter presents each of the seven papers that constitute the PhD by Publication.

CHAPTER 3 – COLLECTION OF PAPERS

Papers Published, In Press and Submitted in the Course of this PhD by Publication

Paper 1 – Published

Drew, G. (2006). Balancing academic advancement with business effectiveness? – The dual role for university leaders. *The International Journal of Knowledge Culture and Change Management*, 6(4), 117-125.

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Glenys Drew

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Balancing Academic Advancement with Business Effectiveness?

The Dual Role for Senior University Leaders

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Abstract: Competing pressures have served to make universities increasingly complex organisations. Universities worldwide have been required to rely less on a “knowledge for knowledge’s sake” ethos to embrace a more “applied” or “user led” focus in an environment of mass education, decreased government funding and greater reliance upon collaboration with industry for funding of research and development. Concomitantly increasing administrative reporting and accreditation requirements see universities globally caught between the worlds of “Academe” and “business”. The question is how do universities build and maintain academic rigour while managing increasing internal and external accountabilities? How will the institution span its different “worlds” in the “unknown future” of the 21st century? Moreover, how are prepared are universities and education/knowledge organisations for the unprecedented age-related attrition which might be anticipated over the next five to ten years? This paper reviews literature and some evidence from the practice relating to management and leadership in university and knowledge environments. It scans external factors which might influence succession planning in leadership at a time when building leadership strength and safeguarding knowledge appears to be vital. The paper notes researched trends from data on perceptions of the practice of leading and managing in university and education/knowledge organisations and suggests some ways to harness organisational complexity positively to plan for a buoyant future.

Keywords: Universities, Academic, Succession Leadership, Feedback

Background

OVER THE PAST decade, the effects of globalisation, wider access to higher education and increased diversity in sources of knowledge have dramatically changed the landscape of tertiary education. Ramsden (1998) writes, “Universities face an almost certain future of relentless variation in a more austere climate. Change in the environment – mass higher education, knowledge growth, reduced public funding, increased emphasis on employment skills, pressure for more accountability have been reflected in fundamental internal changes” (p. 347). Serving new and different markets, universities are seeing the lens of scrutiny turning on themselves. Greater interest of government and the public in the way universities operate has seen the “spread of audit culture into every nook and cranny of academic life” (Cohen, 2004) as government attempts to “steer the university into positive... engagement with its wider economic environment” (p. 9). As Ramsden (1998) notes: “The immense cost of mass higher education means that those who pay the piper – ...mainly the taxpayers... - will want to call the tune”, while academics are “under daily monitoring from very public and often critical audiences” (p.349).

At the same time, given the centrality of knowledge to contemporary economy, universities have perhaps an under-acknowledged role to preserve

and extend knowledge and to contribute to the application of knowledge at the intersecting borders of their specialist domains. They are called upon to embrace new themes of vocational alignment, to partner in an environment less able to fund replication, and to innovate continuously in order to “do more with less”. This paper examines the literature and practice in response to the research question: “What might be some of the strategic challenges at the “transpersonal” (organisational development) level for contemporary universities pursuing effective leadership and management?”

The prefix “trans” meaning “across” or “beyond”, the term “*transpersonal*” reflects the inevitable “people” factor inherent in the way in which organisations operate *across* their various units and *beyond* to the outside world. The paper draws from literature and practice and suggests from the analysis some implications for universities preparing themselves and their leaders for success in increasingly complex leadership roles.

Balancing Academic Leadership and Business Efficiency

Universities today are vulnerable to risk and require a similar suite of governance and risk management strategies to those of their corporate neighbours. Typically, today’s vice-chancellor or university president is answerable for performance quality to



the university senate or council which in turn has stringent responsibilities under legislation for governance. In the Australian setting, Coaldrake and Stedman (1998) noted some six years ago: "Universities are exposed to risk to the extent that they wish to expand their activities into...commercial fields, yet remain bound by practices that inhibit their flexibility" (pp. 56, 57). The Australian Federal Government, for example, expects that universities demonstrate "more focus on matters of output, accreditation and quality assessment", with the result that universities generally have "moved from a position dominated by features of the collegium and bureaucracy to one closer to the corporation or enterprise" (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999, pp. 53, 12). Cohen (2004) agrees that "post-modernism changed universities forever – from quasi-autonomous institutions of learning to fully fledged consumer enterprises" (p. 9). Meek and Wood (1997) note that "Questions of efficiency and effectiveness are prominent on higher education reform agendas everywhere along with the additional imperatives that the higher education sector be more relevant to national economic and social priorities" (p. 3). The shift spawns vastly increased accountability processes for conduct of all facets of university work. Hence, the ability to adapt and change emerges as a key capability in university leadership.

Balancing the demands of constantly increasing administrative and reporting requirements with advancement of scholarship and knowledge, universities are caught between the two worlds of "academe" and "business". The remit for the university to maintain scholarship and operate as a successful corporation, presenting new challenges for university leadership, is noted by Hanna (2003) who claims that "higher education institutions must change – and, indeed, are changing – to meet future needs", and that they will need to address a number of strategic challenges as they "transform themselves to meet the demands of an increasingly complex and dynamic environment" (p. 26). As the clear bell of the ivory tower recedes, for some, to the sound of an unfamiliar cacophony of competing interests, the new milieu presents both a challenge and exciting opportunities. Amidst these challenges are ensuring a ready workforce for more changes ahead; one

which blends the best of longer standing experience and corporate knowledge retention with new and young "blood" as a vigorous and complementary organisational life force.

Jacobzone, Cambois, Chaplain and Robine (1998) note that Australia, for example, has one of the world's most rapidly ageing populations and in the next 50 years about a quarter of the country's population will be aged 65 and over. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) predicts that within the next ten years the population aged over 65 years will be growing at an annual rate of 4 per cent, considerably faster than the total population growth. It is anticipated that by 2021 over 20 per cent of the population will be older than 65 years. Hence, it is timely to re-think strategic organisational development issues to prepare and reinvigorate the workforce adequately for the increasingly complex academic leadership role. What are the dimensions of contemporary academic leadership challenges in typical academic leadership roles in order to steer development appropriately?

Development Needs Informed by Research and Practice

Research was carried out in the university sector in Australia in the late 1990s to identify the key issues in leading and managing in the tertiary education context. The research, conducted at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Australia, led to the development of an item set and a 360 degree survey instrument tailored to leading and managing in university and other key knowledge organisations. The instrument, known as the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP), was refined and developed into accessible on-line form in 2000. The QLP factor structure (Drew and Kerr, 2003) identified four areas: staff motivation and involvement, operational and strategic management, client focus and community outreach, and (for relevant senior academic positions) academic leadership (Figure 1).

The QLP has been used since 2000 by a growing number of universities and key knowledge organisations predominantly in Australia, and in New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Figure 1: QLP Factors

Quality Leadership Profile (QLP)	
QLP areas comprising factor clusters	
QLP Area	QLP Factor
Staff Motivation and Involvement	Staff Development
	Consultative Management
	Building a Team Environment
Strategic & Operational Management	Implementing Systems and Processes
	Making Decisions
	Managing Change and Innovation
Client Service and Community	Demonstrating a Client Focus
	Demonstrating a Community Focus
Academic Leadership	Academic Leadership

Implications of the Complex Environment for University Academic Leaders

Enquiry into the governance, structure and management of higher education institutions across the globe has stimulated change to the legislative and policy frameworks within which universities operate. Academic staff, upon winning senior leadership roles in universities, typically on the basis of their academic achievements, may or may not be well prepared for undertaking the diverse responsibilities of the head of school/academic department role. Moreover, if the highly experienced academic spends less and less time on his/her scholarly work and more on administration and managing, the organisation stands to lose in ways that are rarely examined. The capabilities required successfully to inspire excellence, secure funding resources, handle people issues, communicate and consult appropriately, manage budgets, undertake strategic planning, navigate change with staff and to support staff in performance development are formidable. Paul Ramsden (1998, p. 16) observes, "if academic staff are stressed by the imposition of external demands for accountability and performance, they had better get used to it as quickly as possible" (Coaldrake & Stedman 1999, p. 10). Falling to an overly litigious, overly bureaucratic culture in order to manage accountability requirements, however, is unlikely to serve organisational culture well. It is said that an overly instrumental pattern of management which fails to recognise the contribution of employees "cripples the workers by disabling them" (Kanungo, 1992, p. 415). A number of commentators propound a leadership style that commits to personal learning amidst complexity, and which enables and empowers others.

Marshall, Adams, Cameron and Sullivan (2000) discuss the complexities of the blended role of academic leadership and the critical "people" and "systems" dimensions of managing human resource and administrative functions. They note that these functions typically did not form part of the experience of the academic leader. Ramsden (1998) suggests that heads of academic departments are expected to be "all-rounders who combine aspects of management and leadership in relation to both *people* and *tasks*", and that "at the heart of the combination is the leader's own capacity to learn" (pp. 365-7). Ramsden believes that providing supportive development for those in senior academic leadership roles is vital and that these challenges "have important implications for the training of future generations of academic managers at every level" (p. 367).

Barnett (2004) notes the inter-relating, contradictory and unforeseeable impacts of complexity upon the world and hence universities and their leaders. Barnett captures the leader's plight characterised by "competing claims on one's attention, and an overload of entities" where any effort to satisfy one set of claims "may lead to indeterminable effects elsewhere", leading to real stress (p. 249). The review of issues affecting organisational leadership development in university and key knowledge organisation settings suggests a series of action strategies at "transpersonal" level. The following is proposed: Aligning formal and informal systems with defined values and goals; Streamlining strategically coherent systems and processes; Building client-focused alliances for strong internal and external partnerships; and Developing senior leaders in synergy with desired organisational culture and goals.

Aligning Formal and Informal Systems with Defined Values and Goals

Hanna (2003) notes that people and nations are relying on colleges and universities to help shape a positive future; and suggests that “to capture the advantage of this...central focus and role, higher education institutions will need to transform their structures, missions, processes, and programs in order to be both more flexible and more responsive to changing societal needs” (p. 25). Integrating identified organisational strategic goals within the organisation is a significant challenge for universities seeking to match “action” with the ambitions of their strategic plans. In an environment which values academic freedom and critical thinking, strategic synergy will not happen by “demanding greater output and imposing unilateral inspection and control on its staff” (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999, p. 13). However, “on the other hand, it is wishful thinking to expect that some invisible hand will guide the path of individual academics into a strategic direction, or that effective change can only come about by academic introspection and reflection” (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999, p. 13). In other words, an organisational culture of mutual respect and ethical conduct is something to be created and nurtured. It is not put in place by establishing a code of conduct and informing organisational members of its existence. The question is, how is alignment achieved so that “action matches the rhetoric” in organisations?

It might be agreed that culture will be created either purposely by consciously embedding desired practices at all levels, or it will occur in haphazard, capricious fashion based on behaviours which are experienced within the organisation. Dunphy and Stace (1995) suggest that culture consists of “values and artefacts that together express and reinforce a unity of spirit forged through those who share a community of fate” (p. 187). Behaviours that are modelled “from the top” profoundly impact organisational culture. Jordan (1999) offers that surrounding people with the right resources and mobilising talent and passion are critical, but it is the quality of the relationships between people as individuals interact over the various systems and processes of the organisation that are the most telling. An equipped and strategically connected staffing body is vital to a healthy “shadow” system marked by open communication and trust.

The importance of achieving coherent, well-understood values and goals for organisations is emphasised by Pratt, Margaritis and Coy (1999), Parcell and Bligh (2000), Carless (2001), Sauer (2002) and Drew and Bensley (2001). Further to seeking to embed desired behaviours within the organisation, this entails ensuring that the systems

of the organisation align with and support organisational goals. For example, if the strategic intent of the university is to value partnering, the systems associated with funding distribution should work towards rather than against cross-faculty collaboration. If it is of strategic importance to the organisation to be able to appoint an outstanding person quickly, the organisation’s systems should accommodate flexible recruitment strategies. Pratt, Margaritis and Coy (1999) note: “Management may have one view of the ‘required’ values but these may or may not happen in practice. Management’s behaviour may, in fact, reinforce an entirely different set of beliefs from those they would wish to promote” (p. 46). A buoyant alignment matrix of appropriate governance and structure – in short, being business-like - has perhaps never been more essential for universities than in the current tertiary education environment. Moreover, in the university environment characterised globally as time-poor (Kinman, 1998, Sapstead, 2004), “doing more with less” entails overhauling university systems, top-down, to ensure that processes are relevant and streamlined.

Streamlining Strategically Coherent Systems and Processes

As Goethe once said, we should not sacrifice what matters most for what matters least. Research of Nohria, Joyce and Roberson (2003) into 200 companies found that it mattered little whether the organisation centralised or decentralised its business, as long as organisations paid attention to simplifying the way in which the business was structured and carried out its work (Nohria et al., 2003, p. 43). The research of Nohria et al. found that the key to achieving excellence for organisations... is “to be clear about what your strategy is and (to be) consistently communicating it” (pp. 45, 46). This suggests the value of identifying and communicating the “big picture” objectives and then devising efficient systems to achieve those objectives rather than allowing available technology, a historical structure or embedded practice to drive organisational activity. It behoves organisations, then, to align their systems with their strategic values and goals, and secondly to refine and streamline organisational processes so that each element of a process can be defended as adding value.

In an increasingly time-poor environment with ever expanding workloads reported in universities, inefficient systems cause frustration and potentially a divide between the organisation’s executive and the faculties and divisions. Academic leaders focused predominantly on pursuing scholarly work resent administrative processes which appear inefficient

and repetitious; for example, calling for data for various kinds of reporting requirements in multiple forms. Listening to those responsible for particular services may yield valuable input to system improvement while fostering an inclusive, respectful culture. As Wick and Leon (1993) offer, a combination of strategic coherence and procedural efficiency works best when “learning permeates the processes used throughout the organization” (p. 126). As systems and processes, goals and ambitions are abstractions aside from the involvement of people, developing effective people leadership is the essential ingredient in supporting strategic and operational activity in organisations. Fostering a culture of feedback - listening to colleagues, clients and stakeholders – is vital to organisations dealing in knowledge and services.

Drew and Kerr (2003) note aggregate data of the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) derived from the

mean scores of self, staff, peer and supervisor respondents for academic managers undertaking the 360 degree feedback survey at one Australian university since 2000. This data, reflected also in national averages on the same factors, found that QLP Factors under the Area, “Staff Motivation and Involvement”, which relate most to the quality of interactions between people, register higher development needs and yield slightly lower scores nationally than factors under the other areas, being “Strategic and Operational Management”, “Client Service and Community Outreach” and “Academic Leadership”

At 2003 the following data reflects national average scores (Drew & Kerr 2003) (Figure 2 below):

Quality Leadership Profile Aggregate Figures

Figure 2: QLP Aggregate Figures at 2003

Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) Aggregate Figures for Academic Managers	
QLP Factor	Institution Average 2003
Staff Development	3.47
Consultative Management	3.65
Building a Team Environment	3.54
Implementing Systems and Processes	3.76
Making Decisions	3.89
Managing Change and Innovation	3.82
Demonstrating a Client Focus	3.84
Demonstrating a Community Focus	4.18
Academic Leadership	3.91

It is noteworthy that for academic managers undertaking the QLP survey, the factors under “Academic Leadership” yield second highest aggregate scores reflecting national aggregate results (Drew & Kerr, 2003). The comparatively high scores in “Academic Leadership” would appear to reflect that though academic managers may be “doing more with less” they are not “doing less” in terms of providing academic leadership despite the increased administrative and reporting dimensions of their roles. This would seem to reflect the commitment that academics typically demonstrate to their discipline, in that despite increasing and conflicting demands of their roles, the academic leadership dimension tends not to be neglected. However, the competing demands give rise to issues of high workload and difficulty achieving balance in the current more complex environment for academic managers.

Building Client- and Community-Focused Alliances for Strong Internal and External Partnerships

It is interesting to note from aggregate Quality Leadership Profile (360 degree survey) data in 2003 (Figure 2) that the highest aggregate scores (in other words, perceptions of strongest performance) for academic managers nationally were reported under the QLP area of “Community Outreach”. Reported below (Figure 3) are the comparative figures for 2006.

Quality Leadership Profile Aggregate Figures

Figure 3: QLP Aggregate Figures at 2006

Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) Aggregate Figures for Academic Managers	
QLP Factor	Institution Average 2006
Staff Development	3.57
Consultative Management	3.77
Building a Team Environment	3.71
Implementing Systems and Processes	3.82
Making Decisions	3.97
Managing Change and Innovation	3.92
Demonstrating a Client Focus	3.91
Demonstrating a Community Focus	4.28
Academic Leadership	3.95

The trend for “Community Outreach” to yield highest scores might reflect the increased attention that universities are paying to partnering to link with industry, commerce and the professions to obtain research funding and undertake “user-inspired” research. It might be agreed that mass higher education alone has seen a re-positioning of universities to broach somewhat experimentally new relationships with business, the professions and the community.

In an era of full fee paying students, changed expectations regarding university access, and the effect of market demands, the community becomes the “client” for universities in unprecedented ways. Forming partnerships may seem to be the lifeblood of the contemporary university. However, the patterns of academic work, ideals of academic autonomy and self-led career paths largely make for solo work. It might be suggested that gaining a doctoral qualification, developing a research and publication niche and pursuing academic promotion based on solo achievement do not encourage a partnering ethos. Delahaye (2000) describes knowledge partnerships, ideally, as “managing the knowledge creation process of externalisation, combination, internalisation and socialisation” (pp. 395). However, the challenges of collaborative ventures across organisational units and organisational boundaries are real. Coaldrake and Stedman (1999) observe that academic staff “feel burdened by the increasing weight of expectations placed upon them, in contrast to [academics’] ideal of determining the parameters of their own working lives” (p. 9). These authors note that “inevitably, ..academic values, and the work practices they reflect, have come into conflict with the demands of an external world on which universities have become more reliant” (1999, p. 9). Coaldrake and Stedman (1999) observe that a trend towards more entrepreneurial styles of university operation,

including increased collaboration, has significant implications for university culture and policy, particularly for academic staffing policy. The key would appear to be establishing shared understanding for innovative partnering ventures and promoting frank discussion on underlying values and competing interests (Stiles 2004, p. 158).

Developing Senior Leaders in Synergy with Desired Culture and Goals

Writing of the “learning organisation”, Byrne (2001) argues, an organisation of motivated and loyal individuals, devoted to principles of continuous learning and the “reciprocity of knowledge-sharing” is the basis of the “knowledge organisation”. Developing leaders in keeping with desired culture and goals is vital (Brown, 2001). Yet in universities, staff all too frequently arrive at senior positions on the basis of their specialist expertise with little support or familiarisation provided to prepare them for demanding multi-faceted roles. Executive leadership literature and practice suggest that a concerted and integrated approach to leadership development based on fostering effective partnering and communication of vision pays dividends.

Researching the development needs of New Zealand universities, Mead, Morgan and Heath (1999) report the work of one New Zealand university which found that opportunities and threats posed by a rapidly changing internal and external environment required that the traditional characteristics of a good Head of (academic) Department, namely scholarship and academic leadership, be augmented by additional attributes such as vision, leadership, strategic planning, staff management and organisational skills.

The principle that successful partnering occurs through the vitality of genuinely shared goals and mutual benefit concurs with the findings of Healy,

Ehrich, Hansford and Stewart (2001) in a study observing a District Director of school principals in rural Queensland, Australia. The study observed that the successful leader placed emphasis on building strong relationships with the school principals in her region. The District Director valued the principals not only as professionals but also as persons. In so doing, the leader created a partnership where honest feedback and discussion promoted the conditions to effect learning and growth, to the benefit of the principals and the staff and students in their schools. The study found that individual success, for the District Director, also depended upon the extent to which various principals availed themselves of the conducive conditions created by the leader.

Ramsden (1998) asks, "How can we improve the environment? Certainly not by protesting about the intrusion of managerialism and lamenting the loss of a golden age..." (p. 362) Ramsden views knowledge-sharing and inspirational approaches to leadership as a solution: "We need new ways of inspiring academics to work both independently and collaboratively; and new ways to help them through change" by focusing on building "more effective leadership" (p. 362). Ramsden asserts: "Higher education is about transforming what is here and now into what will be. Tomorrow's university will survive if it can establish an independent and distinctive means of accomplishing this purpose" (pp. 368, 369). It is suggested this condition will not be arrived at by accident. A specific and tailored leadership development plan is required. Various development program models noted in this study revealed that successful leadership ultimately depends on people exercising an array of personal qualities (Mead, Morgan & Heath, 1999) and that, to be successful, performance development initiatives must enjoy the imprimatur of the organisation's executive (Brown, 2001). It was noted that the best leadership development models recognise the independency of affective relationship-building skills alongside functional capabilities linked to identified organisational goals, and that sustainable benefit will occur only as a learning attitude permeates the whole organisation. Learning is a process which denies completion, as, ongoing, "the learning experience benefits both the organization and the learner" (Fulmer, Gibbs & Goldsmith 2000, p. 54).

There is evidence in the university sector, as for the corporate sector borne out in the literature and practice, that given the pace of change, leaders must be adaptable, able to learn continuously, and to apply that learning for better solutions and outcomes (Hanna, 2003). Establishing a culture of seeking and responding to feedback is vital to remaining in touch in an ever-changing scene, as it is to continuous learning and growth at organisational and individual

levels. Investing in well-facilitated tools such as 360 degree surveys promote reflection on leadership behaviours which tend to have a positive effect on on-job learning (Seibert, 1999; Tornow & London, 1998). Also, by "learn[ing] how others perceive them", leaders may discover what specific skills they need to develop, or which behaviours that they might adjust or modify in order to be more effective (Lepsinger & Lucia 1997, p. 22).

Universities are in the privileged position to both inform and be informed by their global communities, demonstrating erudition, critical analysis and synthesis, asking questions and creating knowledge on new ways of thinking and working. Commitment to developing the organisation as well as the organisation's environment becomes a reciprocal framework for learning and is the hallmark of the "learning organisation", as defined by Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1997) and others in the post-1990s literature. As Pedler et al. assert: "A Learning Company is an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and *consciously* transforms itself *and its context*" (p. 3).

This paper suggests that engaged individuals in an organisation allow the organisation to become adept at adapting as they interact with each other and the organisation's external community, and that the community of the university will see a coherent face in the measure to which strategic vision and client focus is communicated for all staff. Current expectations for increased communication and transparency by university stakeholders test ultimately the credibility of the organisation, "blending..."core business" rigour with the contemporary understandings attendant to communication modes and contexts" (Drew & Bensley, 2001, pp. 61, 68). Finally it is argued from the literature that the interdependency of quality relationships and quality processes is critical. This is one which brings together the seemingly disparate efforts of the "legitimate" system (the part of the organisation that is "operating close to certainty") and the "shadow" system (the way in which day-to-day activities are managed) (Delahaye, 2000, p. 394) in order to produce a congruent face to the university's external world.

Conclusion

Some key triggers for "transpersonal" effectiveness, in particular for universities, have been suggested in this paper. This review has looked at some implications for today's universities which are transferable to other knowledge settings. It has suggested some key challenges from the literature and from practice via aggregate results of 360 degree surveying within the Australian tertiary and key

knowledge environment through the Quality Leadership Profile. Some key questions for contemporary universities, arising from the review, are offered as a “checklist” for contemporary universities or knowledge organisations seeking to be well prepared in a constantly changing environment:

- Are systems and processes strategically aligned with the organisation’s vision and objectives, and are those processes streamlined and effective for people in performing their roles?
- Is the organisation “listening” to its stakeholders and key audiences or clients? Is it feedback-

oriented, investing in productive partnerships internally and externally?

- Is the university preparing itself for leadership readiness with succession planning and is it systematically developing leadership talent in keeping with increased role complexity for contemporary academic leaders.
- Is the university complementing its scholarship with accountable, ethical governance? Is there a means in place of assessing the degree of alignment between that which is “espoused” and “practiced” in terms of desired organisational culture, values and goals?

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EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Leadership and Organisational Culture: Can the CEO and Senior Executive Teams in Bureaucratic Organisations Influence Organisational Culture?

By Glenys Drew

Feb 18, 2009 - 2:44:27 PM

Introduction

The pressure on higher education to embrace a change agenda to cope with an increasingly complex operating environment has been growing over recent years (Hanna, 2003; Pick, 2003). Hanna (2003) writes that "higher education institutions must change – and, indeed, are changing – to meet future needs," (p. 26) and that they will need to address a number of strategic challenges as they "transform themselves to meet the demands of an increasingly complex and dynamic environment." (p. 26) These changes may require embracing different ways of operating, forging new and different partnerships to attract funds and undertake research, and streamlining processes to cope with the increased monitoring and reporting requirements (Drew, 2006; Hanna, 2003; Ramsden, 1998; Shattock, 2003; Stiles, 2004).

Moreover, melding a potentially age-polarised, diverse workforce with its differentiated mix of approaches, experience and styles in the current period of age-related attrition is a daunting mandate which only culturally sensitive leaders will navigate effectively. Much that has been written about leadership concentrates on the leader. This paper addresses the notion of the leader and organisational culture. It asks, firstly, why the link between leadership and organisational culture is important and, secondly, whether chief executive officers and executive leadership team members can affect organisational culture. Some comments derived as part of a larger research study described by Drew, in press, and Drew, Ehrich & Hansford (2008) provide a snapshot of the reflections of one leader on leadership and organisational culture issues. The reflections are of interest as, at the time, the leader, a South-East Asian national, was transitioning from a South-East Asian university to an Australian university. Drew (in press) and Drew, Ehrich & Hansford (2008) describe the methodology for the research program in which the comments, confirmed with the participant as an accurate record, were derived. This paper submits from literature and practice a set of principles as a Culture Investment Portfolio for effecting sustainable, enabling organisational culture in universities.

The Literature on Leadership and Culture

The blend of traditional and contemporary influences and a rapidly changing operating environment make universities interesting contemporary sites from which to examine notions of executive leadership and organisational culture. It is acknowledged that to effect any significant shift in organisational culture is problematic. Firstly, organisational culture is not fixed but is malleable and in that sense is an elusive concept. Secondly, the possible remoteness of the chief executive officer and the executive may be said to militate against their ability to influence organisational culture, yet the notion of remoteness, where it exists, is worth inspecting if organisations deign to develop leaders capable of drawing people together with strategic vision and operational effectiveness. It has been found that the behaviours of leaders do affect subjects. This has been noted in studying the principal-teacher relationship in schools (Singh & Manser, 2007; Varrati & Smith, 2008). Also, it has been noted that, irrespective of standards that might be inscribed in codes or mission statements, culture develops according to actual behaviours practised (Delahaye, 2000, Locke, 2007).

A climate of complexity and overlapping change, experienced in universities over the past decade (Shattock, 2003; Stiles, 2004), requires executive leadership that does not set itself up in isolation from the rest of the organisation. According to Barnett (2004) and others, effective leadership relies as much on "human qualities and dispositions" as upon skills and knowledge (p. 247), and, moreover, that "human qualities and dispositions" are critical to the notion of the leader "in relationship" with others. Barnett (2004) sees such an emphasis on the leader "in relationship" as vital to leading within an "unknown future" (p. 247). He suggests that this need has not received sufficient attention as a significant curricular and pedagogical question in higher education. What, then, does culturally sensitive management and leadership look like? Some tentative propositions are submitted. Firstly, it is when people of the organisation care about the type of behavioural patterning which forms around them. This notion of care for people was echoed by the leader reported in this study. The leader, having recently transitioned from a South-East Asian university to an Australian university, suggested that effective leadership comprised three key, linked parts, each part having cultural implications in terms of engendering mutual trust including trustworthiness to follow through on commitments made.

Firstly, trust; secondly, sincerity; thirdly, action. Unless you have people's trust, people are not going to come to you with issues and items which need resolution... You must put yourself in the other person's situation.

This strikes a note of personal authenticity resonating with a vast body of literature which describes the importance of supporting-encouraging styles in leadership for developing a positive culture. Rafferty and Neale (2004) undertook a Leximancer-based study of qualitative comments on a 360 degree survey, the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP), which is being used in education/knowledge organisations in Australia and New Zealand, tailored to such environments. The study revealed empirical evidence that it mattered to followers whether their leader was supportive and encouraging. The study found that reference to supportive leadership dominated overwhelmingly in respondents' comments about leaders (Rafferty and Neale, 2004).

It has been suggested that while the chief executive officer and executive leadership team are not entirely responsible for organisational culture, they possess the strongest role and greatest potential influence to shape culture through their individual and collective approaches to organisational decision-making. The link becomes critical if we agree that organisational health does not depend only upon corporate skills and knowledge (epistemological considerations focused mostly on information and planning) but also upon more "ontological" factors to do with "way of being" (as noted in Barnett's (2004) term, "human qualities and dispositions" (p. 247)). As the leader reported in this study claimed, a starting point of trust is a vital foundation bearing on culture for all organisational and leadership activity. It is ventured that considering organisational culture is vital in an environment where talented workers are seeking to place their efforts. Whitchurch (2006), examining changing identities in professional administrators and managers in higher education in the United Kingdom, observed that "multi-professionals," as middle management professionals operating as project leaders "place as much, if not more, emphasis on the cultures of ..institutions as on management structures" (p. 168). The question is, can chief executive officers and executive teams in bureaucratic organisations such as contemporary universities influence organisational culture?

How and where in the organisation is organisational culture most readily adjusted?

There are mixed views on where in the organisation organisational culture is most readily adjusted, and in what artefacts culture is most revealed (Locke, 2007). While much time might be spent in universities formulating policies and codes to articulate expectations in terms of behaviour (Delahaye, 2000), many researchers and writers argue that the quality of interpersonal engagement as people interact over the planning and decision-making processes of an organisation is most informant to organisational culture (Bass, 1990; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Locke, 2007; Schein, 1997; Wheatley, 2003). McCaffery (2004) proposes that leaders' capacity to engage the commitment and abilities of staff depends upon an understanding of, and sensitivity to, organisational culture. Certainly there appears to be acceptance in the literature that sound organisational relationships and sound processes provide organic stability (Drew & Bensley, 2001; Lewis & Slade, 2000; Luzader, 2001; Pick, 2003). Hence it may be worth attempting to assess the perceived difference between the behaviours espoused in policies and codes of an organisation and those practised (Delahaye, 2000; Drew, 2006). Culture surveys and 360 feedback tools may be deployed to help make assessments on the extent to which people experience supportive and empowering behaviours, for example, or the lack of these, in their organisations (London, 2002). The transitioning university leader in the research study said that the most influential element for good in making the transition was "the very supportive environment" in which she worked.

Further evidence that the behaviours of executive leadership are formative to organisational culture comes from researchers Maurer, Mitchell and Barbeite (2002) who found that feedback processes were far more effective when organisational support and senior level imprimatur existed for the initiative. They found that individuals gaining feedback attempted development in response to feedback more readily where they perceived institutional support for their development existed (Maurer et al., 2002). There is evidence, in turn, that such support is well-placed as systematic developmental processes are shown to play a role in the continuous improvement of leaders. Factors of the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) "360" feedback development instrument described by Drew (2006) and reported by Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008) as an example of research undertaken in Australia to identify key capabilities in the education/knowledge sector, show upward trending over time (Drew, 2006). The further continuation of that trend since that time suggests that leaders, through iterative use of a relevant "360" feedback survey, improve their leadership capabilities. According to Brookfield (1987), in fact, the ability to reflect upon and adjust one's practice is the touchstone of leader effectiveness, with ramifications for building "critical mass" towards sound organisational culture.

In turn, it is said, a culture-sensitive leader demonstrating other-awareness will attend to the human dimensions when applying new technological systems, for example. Trakman (2007) argues that leaders determine the type of culture that forms around use of organisational systems and governance practice. Trakman (2007) notes that when leaders take little cognizance of the human dimensions in myriad organisational operations they readily fall to "damage control" and poor governance practice when things go wrong, where thereafter "every transaction is scrutinised for irregularities" (p. 3). At the "macro" level, mandates for universities to contribute positively to their local and global communities might be said to depend on university executives' ability to engage not only their organisational constituents but each other collectively for the benefit of society. For example, Ranasinghe (2008), Trakman (2007) and others argue that for university leaders to realise their potential to influence and improve society calls for strong, strategic leadership capable of "serv[ing] as agents of change" in their organisations and as a collective (Trakman, 2007, p. 4). It is perhaps incumbent upon leaders of the academy to consider what it means to create or re-create the moral drivers in a way which will "make the world a better place" (Ranasinghe, 2008, p. 1). Ranasinghe (2008) suggests, of the current milieu, "it could very easily be the best times because we finally have technological resources sufficient to provide a good life for the entire

population of the earth. Sadly, the tremendous powers at our disposal are presently used only to alienate human beings from themselves, each other, and their natural environment.” (p. 1). Ranasinghe (2008) asks: Do we want to question if, how and why “vulgar pragmatism has . . . penetrated the academy itself”; in fact do we want our universities to be distinguishable from other “insatiable institutions” (p. 1)?

As acknowledged, in large organisations, with highly distributed leadership and unevenly applied commitment to reflective practice, for example, there may be no single definable organisational culture but different cultures operating at once. As suggested, however, to deny the potential for the chief executive officer and executive leadership team to influence the culture of their organisations and, by extension, the good of society, is to see those roles as mechanistic rather than the strategically co-operative and beneficial roles that they might be. From a review of the relevant literature, the following set of principles is offered as a Culture Investment Portfolio for building sustainable, positive, organisational culture. These principles then are described briefly in turn.

Culture Investment Portfolio for Organisations
<i>Reframing positively the concept of change</i>
<i>Acknowledging competing interests and uniting people in vision</i>
<i>Acknowledging the interdependency of “people” and “processes”</i>
<i>Attending to both “knowing” and “being”</i>
<i>Welcoming divergent views</i>
<i>Pursuing a positive climate</i>
<i>Combining a listening, learning disposition with personal persistence</i>
<i>Influencing via personal credibility rather than by coercion</i>

Reframing the Concept of Change

It may be necessary in organisations to reframe the concept of change. It is said, effective leaders work with change rather than “manage” or “fear” change (Wheatley, 2003). They acknowledge the “supercomplexity” of constant ambiguity and evolutionary change yet they take positive action (Barnett, 2004, pp. 249-50). Mindsets that may be critical to the organisation moving forward are said to lie in this domain. It is claimed that, most of all, organisations need people with adaptive performance competencies to help them handle change and stress and to learn new ways of operating (Hesketh & Considine, 1998). According to Schein (2003), sometimes critical “top-down” insight is required to diagnose “old cultures” to see the need for improved practice in certain areas and “to start a change process towards their acceptance” (p. 444). Such transition ideally entails bringing forward the best from former times and other cultures to inform new practices and technologies (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler & Tipton, 1991).

Acknowledging Competing Interests and Uniting People in Vision

Much is written about the importance of an organisation having strategic vision, values and goals that are clear and meaningful (Hanna, 2003; Oliver, 2001). Less appears to be written about whose role it is to generate, articulate and unite people of the organisation in vision and values, but it is clear that rhetoric about vision and values is not compelling unless people see vision and values modelled “from the top” of the organisation. As Latham (2003) suggests, cynicism tends to arise when super-ordinate goals are viewed as nothing more than empty slogans. There are arguments that the chief executive officer (CEO) and executive leadership team are best placed to exert influence on strategy and values; however, in universities in particular, this may be a highly complex remit. Universities are an eclectic mix of freedom and accountability, innovation and traditionalism, collegiality and competition, scholarship and commercial enterprise, and other dualities. Challenges associated with competing interests and ideologies might well be anticipated for all levels of leadership in these environments, yet successful enterprises work to discernible themes, and part of creating a positive culture is to rally people around those themes with passion.

It is said that at the individual level, the factual aspects of people’s values and theories are seldom conclusive (Rein, 1983) and it is often in specific concrete cases that people determine their ideological position by balancing the perceived positive and negative consequences that a policy or issue will have on their “multiple valued ends” (Weiss, 1983, p. 233). In a sector valuing academic autonomy, ideals for individual researchers, for example, may vie with those of the faculty and management, and the tendency for faculty members to be more oriented to their disciplines than to their organisations is well-acknowledged (Bellah et al., 1991). Forging a sense of united vision out of potentially “incompatible positions” (Barnett, 2004, p. 249) is unlikely to occur unless the CEO and executive leadership team consistently affirm and articulate their unifying themes and key messages. For the culture-building leader, this may involve ensuring that technological and other systems in support of key themes are being applied in ways which consider the human impact dimensions involved (Shattock, 2003). It may be acknowledged that the success of any strategic initiative depends on how people work and interact with each other around the key themes and processes (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Acknowledging the Interdependency of “People” and “Processes”

Many writers including Locke (2007) observe of organisational processes, restructures and mergers, that the

human factor should be high on the agenda if the initiatives are to be successful. Wheatley (2003) implies that Newtonian "reductionism" to treat an organisation as a machine by diagnosing a problem and a singular cause is not sufficient, given the interplay of myriad factors bearing on issues. It is suggested that those factors relate largely to the "people" and "process" interface. Parry and Proctor-Thomson (2003) remind that organisational culture inevitably is a function of interpersonal relationships and of systems and procedures, and that each has a different impact on the effectiveness of leadership. Studies of Avolio, Bass and Jung (1999), also, suggested that organisational culture consists of interpersonal relations and organisational systems, and that the effective leader continually questions methods used to problem solve. The interviewed leader reported in this paper commented favourably on a senior leadership program to which she had been nominated which brought together senior people from different parts of the organisation. The leader reported: "This gave me a great chance to go into my role knowing who the key people were and where they were from. I discovered that people had similar issues to mine. Talking on the same wave length with people in other senior roles was very helpful." The leader also reported that the frank, open discussions with senior executives who had given their time to the program had had positive impact. The comment resonated with the earlier reported comment about a trustful environment being the critical first base of amenable organisational culture, in the leader's view.

It is said that every human group sooner or later develops rules and norms for how they will operate (Schein, 1997). This leader found that observing other leaders as fellow participants helped to gather a sense of the tacit rules and norms that existed in the university. This suggests that there is a level of comfort in knowing the "ground rules", and that a self-fulfilling prophecy of sorts applies wherein those "rules" and patterns form culture. It is beyond the scope of the culture-building CEO and executive leadership team to ensure that all of the relationships of "people" and "process" are productive. However, Maurer et al. (2002) have shown that a whole-of-organisation approach to development expectations, endorsed from the top, stands the best chance of being influential. In other words, the "walk" is more powerful than the "talk" in terms of building desired culture as it is through the actions of people, rather than words, knowledge or even process validity, that the river of culture cuts its course.

Attending to Both "Knowing" and "Being" (Epistemological and Ontological Balance)

It might be agreed that one's knowledge and one's behaviour are separate considerations worthy of attention by leaders. Ever-changing contexts call upon ever-changing knowledge bases and skill sets. It might be accepted that knowledge is too malleable to serve as a point of absolute reliance and that a broader view that takes account of how one acts is required (Barnett, 2004; Wheatley, 2003). If the lifeblood of organisations is its people (Drew & Bensley, 2001; Wheatley, 2003), the way one acts (the notion of "being") becomes as important as what one knows (the notion of "knowing"). For example, the capacity for disagreements around sacrosanct knowledge bases tends to divide (Rein, 1983), while attending to "being" as much as "knowing" may invoke more collaborative ways of addressing conceptual difference to leverage (in fact) difference to create new knowledge, make unexpected connections and pursue collaboration and innovation. Again, the most effective messages to foster amenable ways of "being" - behavioural change, for example, which would promote a connected rather than disaggregated workforce - are said to be those which derive from senior imprimatur (Latham, 2003; Meadows, 1999). It might be agreed that traction for desired organisational culture is inevitably personal, and while to some extent it is bound around systems in bureaucratic organisations, it is experienced largely through interpersonal behaviour. Deploying a climate survey or "360 degree" feedback survey to gather others' perceptions tends to build stronger, more robust cultures via increasing individual self-awareness (Drew, 2006; Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997; London, 2002). Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008) posit that 360 surveys which measure capabilities relevant to university leadership have value in these settings.

Welcoming Divergent Views

How often do higher education organisations espouse diversity yet operate in ways which reify established ways of thinking and being? Of all sectors, universities whose business is knowledge are well-placed to host rich dialogue on issues, welcoming insights from different cultural backgrounds in order to mine high quality debate and well-considered options. In individual environments it is worthwhile asking whether this occurs. The quality of debate, for example, should be free from political interference and should cut across the boundaries of hierarchy, knowledge and experience to elicit multiple perspectives (Nichol, 2003). Sadly, "much of what we call bureaucracy, in the bad sense of the word, stems from misunderstanding across these kinds of boundaries." (Schein, 1997, p. 500) Welcoming divergent views is said to be a critical tenet of university life, and linked inevitably with this tenet are preparedness to take considered risks, support innovation and demonstrate flexibility (Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2003).

In terms of organisations welcoming divergent views, risk-taking, innovation and flexibility, it is noted that the leader reported in this paper recommended that university management provide more opportunity for their leaders to gain "a fuller perspective of worldwide situations" in their roles. Welcoming divergent views might be implied here, as the leader added: "Some haven't worked overseas before and the international dimension prompts people to think globally." The leader added: "It is about changing the whole culture of the university so that people see the bigger picture. A change of mindset or way of thinking is required in many cases". This reminds that no organisation is inured from falling to insularity. The approach enjoins an expanded view of the world - a much larger world than the world of "self" - in order to be "fully functioning" or "individuated" or "authentically oneself" (Bischof, 1970, p. 95). The evocation is that leaders connected to global networks,

mindful of cultural diversity and prepared to harness divergent opinion, are capable of bringing a richer, more global frame of reference to the organisation's operation (Drew & Bensley, 2001). While this, too, helps spell positive organisational culture, it is acknowledged that positive and constructive attributes take time to build, and that senior imprimatur for any change or development process lends authenticity and provides the strongest assurance of success (Maurer et al., 2002). Locke (2007) agrees that in organisational development and change processes, senior leaders and managers take the most significant role in directing and redirecting the stream of interactions which form organisational culture. Allied to the principle of welcoming divergent views is the principle of engendering positive emotions in the workplace creating a positive culture of engagement. A number of researchers and theorists suggest a strong link between the creation of a positive work climate and the wellbeing and productivity of members.

Pursuing a Positive Climate

Building a positive climate is closely related to the overall notion of building a positive, amenable organisational culture. According to Wheatley (2003), there is great value in building some predictability in positive patterns of operation (Wheatley, 2003), including, importantly, how the organisation manages perceived crises. Schein (2003) argues the benefits of incrementally establishing a "common set of assumptions...forged by clear and consistent messages as the group encounters and survives its own crises" (Schein, 2003, p. 438). Fredrickson (2003) reports that when people feel good, their thinking becomes more creative, integrative, flexible and open to information" (p. 333). Again, "stability" or sustainability in the longer-term is reconceived to imply how the leader operates, which might be understood as practicing capacity for personal stability within instability; and creating positive environments which help people develop their intrinsic capabilities to meet extrinsic challenge.

Collins and Porras (2003) report research findings which suggest that the greatest organisations are not built on good ideas but by a disposition where leaders primarily and persistently created an environment that was conducive to great products. (p. 383) Similarly, Schein (1997) suggests that "leaders may not have the answer but they provide temporary stability and emotional reassurance while the answer is being worked out [and that] if the world is increasingly changing, such anxiety might be perpetual, requiring learning leaders to assume a perpetual supportive role" (p. 375). The benefits of a positive work climate include, typically, high levels of trust, autonomy and resource supply (Scott & Bruce, 1994), as well as innovative, risk-taking cultures (Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2003). As noted, leaders who demonstrated the paradoxical combination of persistence of will ("strength, toughness, purpose") and humility ("generosity and nurture") were found to effect positive work climates capable of producing transformation and sustained outstanding success (Collins 2001b, p. 68). Singh and Manser (2007) report from research within schools that teachers in schools were affected positively and were more satisfied in their roles in schools where principals demonstrated emotionally intelligent interpersonal behaviours. The research showed that teachers want to be led by principals who are "confident in their leadership role, who send out clear unambiguous messages, who maintain self-control, who are adaptable and flexible and who face the future with optimism" (p. 1). A common finding in these studies and observations is that a positive, amenable culture promotes the well-being of members and contributes to higher levels of performance.

The desire to be engaged in worthwhile effort and accomplishment is acknowledged by Scott Peck (1990) who asserts that the human "capacity for transformation" is "the most essential characteristic of human nature." (p. 178). Transformation connotes forward movement and action. This returns us to the theme that positive climates are action-taking climates, best modelled from the top of the organisation. Indeed, an enemy of positive culture is lack of action resulting in stasis. The leader interviewed and reported in this paper implied that values (or "way of being") and skills/knowledge must work together; for example, one might be strong in one's disciplinary knowledge and a caring and involved team leader but there must be personal resolution to see matters through. The leader observed scope for greater commitment to follow-through, for example, as a culture-building value: "One needs to blend sincerity with organisational skills, as one can genuinely mean to do something but if they [sic] cannot organise themselves it won't get done, despite..sincerity...Good leaders are seen to have the ways and means to accomplish what they set out to do".

It is hypothesised that, irrespective of the context for leadership, leadership effectiveness turns on blending self-discipline (Collins 2001 a,b), self-direction and self-organisation (Scott, Coates & Anderson, 2008) and enabling human qualities and dispositions (Barnett, 2004). This kind of leadership is contagious and engaging, inviting capable others into its spaces of strength, invigoration and sustainable success. The notion is one of "connectedness" where "[l]eaders are viewed as those people who build and nurture connections with others" (Drew, Ehrich & Hansford, 2008, p. 13). Moreover, it is documented that leaders who take an outward-looking, holistic approach are more likely to be happy and effective in their work roles and enjoy a more balanced, strategic vision of how success is reached (Kofodimos, 1993). A range of commentators correlate a readiness to communicate effectively interpersonally, respecting and drawing from a wide range of perspectives, with a healthy, positive organisational culture (Carlopio, Andrewartha & Armstrong, 2001; Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997; Parry (1996). In the following example, one CEO and executive leadership team have a significant role to play by promoting workplace initiatives and behaviours promoting "wellness".

In one government department in Australia, Agency staff are rewarded and acknowledged by the senior executive team for best practice contributions to projects on the quality of staff safety, wellness and other enabling factors (Meadows, 1999). The Agency leaders believe that a rigorous, outcome-oriented culture is one

which attends to ensuring a healthy, conducive environment for staff given the impact of environmental factors on productivity and strategic and operational effectiveness. For the Agency, environmental wellness necessarily involves fostering productive relationships between people, as espoused by Mackay (1994) and Schein (1997) who suggest that leadership involves actively listening to people across hierarchical and sub-cultural boundaries.

Combining a Listening/Learning Disposition with Personal Persistence

Some interesting insights are revealed from research to suggest the potent combination of a listening/learning disposition and strong professional will on the part of the CEO as highly informant to creating a culture of success. Yung (1959) notes the "listening" and learning components of genuine engagement, and he correlates personal authenticity with humility and the capacity to be honest with oneself. Jung (1959) proposes that recognition of the "shadow," which he describes as our unconscious and sometimes conflicting "other," "leads to the modesty we need in order to acknowledge imperfection." (p. 301) One might correlate self-focused, learning-resistant patterns with enervation and loss for the self, and other-focused, empowering and learning patterns with vigour and gain. Hope of engaging others would appear to lie squarely with the latter.

A body of research carried out in the United States studied organisations which yielded repeated "bottom line" success and made certain observations about the CEOs of those organisations which had shifted from "good to great" (Collins, 2001a,b). Collins (2001b) identified United States companies which had shifted from "good performance to great performance – and [had] sustained it" (pp. 67, 75). He was able to identify common variables which distinguished those organisations which were able to both make and sustain a shift and those who appeared to have the ingredients to succeed but had failed to do so. In a potent, somewhat paradoxical reading of leadership, Collins' (2001a) research revealed that a particular culture generating from the highest level of the organisation had a profound effect upon the organisation. He found that these "Level 5 leaders" shared similar attributes of "humility" and "fierce resolve" in addition to the leadership capabilities which he articulated under the taxonomy: "Level 1: Highly Capable Individual;" "Level 2: Contributing Team Member;" "Level 3: Competent Manager" and "Level 4: Effective Leader" (Collins, 2001a, p. 20). Collins' (2001a) rigorous criteria for his research study of chief executive officers insisted that companies in the study must have recorded sustained triple bottom-line success. It is reported, these characters were described uniquely as demonstrating humility - "a study in duality: modest and wilful, humble and fearless" (p. 22). Arnold (2005), discussing Collins' findings, emphasises that Collins was interested in sustained greatness. Without taking away from the importance of leadership as a shared activity, the revelation of the findings suggests, in fact, that the leaders of these outstandingly performing organisations worked not solely but in partnership to build an empowering climate geared for the high performance and success of all.

That, in the research data, the absence of Level 5 leadership showed up consistently across the comparison companies demonstrates the empirical, rather than ideological, nature of the findings on the "Level 5" leadership concept. Moreover, the exacting standards of the leaders and organisations studied belie easy dismissal of the "Level 5" culture as "soft". Simply, in those organisations, expectations were clear, and emphasis was placed on recruiting and supporting the right people in a "culture of discipline" (Collins, 2001b, p. 68). The leader in transition reported in this paper spoke in favour of rigorous cultures. The leader commented: "I value someone who is sincere in the way that they approach a matter. For myself, I go out of the way to complete whatever task I start, even if it 'kills me': I close the loop". Further in support of a rigorous culture, the leader added: "Leaders provide guided thinking. They don't solve problems for people but they engage people in solving problems; they ask them to come with a possible resolution in mind. That way others feel part of the solution".

A "culture of discipline", for Collins (2001a,b), entailed genuine communication, asking the difficult questions, making the hard decisions, and taking action to support and recognise the organisation's people. When Collins (2001a) makes a distinction between "ruthless" and "rigorous" cultures, he attributes the word "rigorous" to the "Good to Great" cultures observed in the research (p. 52). It is not surprising that "Good to Great" organisations were observed as communicative workplaces with a penchant for intense dialogue. Collins (2001a) reports that "phrases like 'loud debate,' 'heated discussions' and 'healthy conflict' peppered the articles and interview transcripts from all the companies" (p. 77). Collins' (2001a,b) findings reframe humility and strong professional will as a potent, fertile agent for engaging productively with others in a way that positions the organisation for success.

Influencing via Personal Credibility rather than by Coercion

It is argued that leadership is a transaction founded on personal/professional credibility where others are motivated to follow and partner with the leader to achieve, rather than being dependent upon coercion to win support. Peck (1990) argues the self-defeating nature of using force or threat of force to achieve ends, and argues that, rather, under a service style of leadership others are inspired by example and voluntarily embrace the cause as worthy. The suggestion is that this type of leader is not motivated by personal aggrandisement, nor by a need to wield power for selfish ends but, rather, works with others to accomplish goals. Eric Hoffer (1992) alludes to the poverty of spirit which may lie behind an individual's wielding coercive power. He ponders "why our sense of power is the more vivid when we break a man's [sic] spirit than when we win his heart" (p. 248). Peck (1990) comments that coercive tactics will do more to create rather than ameliorate havoc and he contends that for all its apparent success, coercive power displays meagre genuine influence. Bolman and Deal (2003)

suggest that hoarding power produces a powerless organisation where people stripped of power “fight back,” while, on the other hand, “giving power liberates energy for more productive use”(p. 341). The set of principles as a Culture Investment Portfolio drawn from the literature concludes that empowerment, fuelled by trust, does most to foster effective engagement in leadership (Habermas, 1979) and stands out as an ethical imperative for organisations (Kanungo, 1992; Nielsen, 1983). For example, Franklin (1975) reports the critical role of a high degree of trust among members to team success, while Bass, Valenzi, Farrow and Solomon (1975) observed that more participative leadership cultures in organisations were those described by staff as more trusting.

In terms of credible leadership capable of influencing others, Barnett (2004) refers to characteristics such as “carefulness, thoughtfulness, humility, criticality, receptiveness, resilience, courage and stillness” (p. 259). Similarly, for Sinclair (1998), critical characteristics are those of credible influence - “strength, toughness, purpose and, more rarely, generosity and nurture” (p. 1). An example of credible leadership influence comes from the government Agency in Queensland, Australia, referred to earlier in this paper, where a mission was embarked upon to increase sustainability. The relevant agency’s engagement with sustainability attracted the interest of university researchers who found, on studying the Agency’s processes and outcomes, that emerging themes gravitated around notions of credible leadership: congruence - “walking the talk”; aspiration – linking sustainability with high order social change; and system intervention – acting on leverage points to influence measurable systemic change (Haigh, Hall-Thompson & Griffiths, 2005). The researchers identified that the influence of the CEO was critical in the success of the mission. They attest that “the goals articulated by the CEO tend to penetrate the entire organisation more effectively than any other statement of expectation” (Meadows, 1999, pp. 16-17).

The eight principles of the Culture Investment Portfolio and the argument that CEO may be influential in affecting organisational culture converge on this question of empowerment. The question presents itself for organisations: Will the organisation be a disempowered place where workers exercise their roles with little or no sense of “ownership”, passion or reward, or will it be an empowered workforce focusing on development, improvement and achievement? If positive culture creation is considered by the executive to be important, then critical mass on desired principles may develop as the relevant culture-building behaviours are accorded priority in overt and covert ways, building goodwill.

Conclusion

The literature examined in the paper notes that the executive leader’s primary contribution is to build a positive culture of participation and engagement. Eight principles were identified as a suggested model of sustainable, sound organisational culture, making possible a quality of engagement that empowers individuals around vision and goals. It was implied that organisational culture will build; that it will form either capriciously, or consciously through reinforcing desired values and equipping the people who will work with those values to achieve goals. Some evidence was presented to suggest that the CEO and executive leadership team are best placed to influence organisational culture, and that such influence may be for better or worse based on the actions, decision-making and interactions that they model and endorse.

The discussion noted Collins’ (2001a,b) reported findings on Level 5 Leaders that a rigorous culture with capability for outstanding achievement does not occur by accident nor by coercion but, in large part, through patterns which formed as positive behaviours and values were reified within the organisation. It is acknowledged that the nature of highly politicised environments may reduce the capacity of CEOs to act independently, and that this potentially diminishes the influence that they are able to exert on organisational culture. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that CEOs and executive teams may choose to build for quality and rigor. They may elect to work differently to ameliorate entrenched hierarchical divides, engender constructive dialogue and catalyse change. The very act of consultation, seeking feedback and connection, may invoke new conversations and may set in place new frameworks for engagement from which the whole organisation stands to benefit.

The model is offered for executives in bureaucratic organisations such as universities who aspire to greater heights of collective accomplishment. The final word goes to the leader reported in this paper: “It is what goes into the effort behind leadership that makes the difference”. This paper has sought to invoke thought on what “lies behind” successful leadership and successful organisational culture, to explore the covert, subtle but powerful nature of practice within organisations. It suggests that when executives of organisations such as universities use the authority of their roles to forge strong, sound organisational culture, all members may be inspired to greater productivity and sharing of success, and the workplace and community may well be the richer.

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AN ARTFUL LEARNING FRAMEWORK FOR ORGANISATIONS

ABSTRACT

This paper proposes an Artful Learning Framework as an organisational development initiative. The framework is designed to assist people in organisations seeking higher levels of engagement in their strategic and operational endeavours, such as navigating change. The Artful Learning Framework offers three strategies as potential artful learning events designed to help people in organisations engage with each other creatively to achieve their organisational and professional goals. The Artful Learning Wave Trajectory model (Kerr, 2006) forms a conceptual antecedent for the Artful Learning Framework. The Framework's strategies align with the relevant literature on organisational learning and, in particular, a proposition of Kerr (2006) who identifies a suite of skills, capacities and capabilities that are important in organisations. The notion of the wave, with the effect of 'pausing and gathering' to consider amidst the inevitable ambiguity and turbulence of forward movement, is invoked as a metaphor for the elements of the Framework which support its strategies. The paper will be of interest to individuals and groups that are committed to profound learning and capability building for the benefit of themselves, their teams and the organisations in which they work.

Key Words: Reflection, engagement, organisations, artful learning, management, change

BACKGROUND

It is proposed that real learning involves preparedness to be unsettled (from preconceived notions; habitual behaviours), to question, be creative, and to brook a wider span of possible options in organisational life. The Artful Learning Wave Trajectory model described by Kerr (2006) reflects the notion of perturbation and disturbance capable of spawning creativity as precursors to learning and action (Maturana & Varela 1980, 1987). The purpose of the paper is not to rehearse or further examine Kerr's (2006) model, worthy though that might be, but to suggest

some practical strategies that give effect to the following proposition of Kerr's (2006) when she discusses the Artful Learning Wave Trajectory model as follows:

The proposition in this paper [Kerr, 2006, writes] is that skills, capacities and capabilities required of people in their organisations include the need to be reflective, to engage with change, to be comfortable with ambiguity, to have standards, to understand the key questions that need to be asked in any situation, to be conscientious about both people and what they want, and to ask about values and trust (p.2)

A scan of the literature supports these identified skills, capacities and capabilities as critical to well-functioning organisations. This paper proposes an Artful Learning Framework suggesting three strategies aimed at artfully honing those skills, capacities and capabilities in people and, hence, in organisations. The strategies of the Framework, as for any activity that purports to support the notion of 'being artful' , have to do with transforming self through profound learning experiences which extend human consciousness, as opposed to more instrumental forms of management (Kerr & Darso 2007).

For this paper, the wave is a metaphor for the conceptual reality of turbulence, changeability and ambiguity inevitably inherent in life for the 'self', people and organisations (Barnett 2004), and for the concept of 'drawing back' to pause and gather (information, people, insight), reflect and engage, as a continuous cycle of learning and growth for the self and the organisation (Figure 1). The paper suggests that to operate in such a way is a form of 'art' which stands to enhance effectiveness for people and organisations. This 'art', as for the Framework, is ever a work in progress. Hence, deployment of the Framework, for example in an organisational change process, is seen as involving an act of will for those involved with leading the change to behave in ways which support productive outcomes and artful, co-operative learning processes. For this purpose, the Framework encompasses three stages, 'Sound beginning', 'Artful Appreciation' and 'Ongoing learning' (Figure 2).

Stages of the Artful Learning Framework

The Artful Learning Framework invests in the preparation stage of a sound beginning, a middle stage of artful appreciation during the course of consulting and engaging

effectively with others in deploying the Framework, and a third brief stage to promote ongoing learning by way of evaluation and communication of insights gained to inform future practice. It is proposed that organisations which embark on major organisational initiatives may do so with a ‘get down to business’ approach, or an approach that takes cognizance of a deeper canvass of the issues involved. The former approach may fail because of a lack, in fact, of sound beginning, a superficial or notional consultation process which denies an artful appreciation of the real issues involved, and lack of any mechanism to capture and transfer any learning that might have been harnessed for future benefit – a perhaps not unfamiliar scenario in organisations. Aspects of the three stages are outlined in the course of the paper. The discussion begins with the Conceptual Underpinning of the Artful Learning Framework including an overview of the Framework’s strategies before considering the Strategies of the Artful Learning Framework in more detail.

Conceptual Underpinning of the Artful Learning Framework

The Artful Learning Framework is underpinned firstly by Kerr’s (2006) proposition concerning the skills, capacities and capabilities that are required by organisations. The Framework purports to boost those capabilities with a process of learning-in-action. The Framework’s most useful application is as a planning, consultation and recommendation process for organisational change or other major organisational initiative of engagement, working in conjunction with the organisation’s relevant executive stakeholders for the initiative. As Knight and Trowler (2001) point out, merely examining our thought processes and learning strategies may not necessarily result in change. It is proposed that pausing and reflecting, for individuals and organisations, calls for act of will to suspend ‘autobiographical’ responses borne of habit in favour of canvassing the full scope of an issue, behaving in ways that promote participation and inclusion, taking soundings to see what others think, and overall to consider relevant matters in their wholeness. It is argued that artful appropriation to ‘help people to keep upgrading their metacognitive awareness and to reflect more rigorously’ (Knight & Trowler 2001) could well receive greater attention in our organisations when effective change leadership is required. The Framework simply

offers an artful means of achieving successful, sustainable quality for organisational initiatives and fostering the ongoing learning of all members.

Secondly, accordingly, the Artful Learning Framework is underpinned by the notion of learning as a product (Kerr 2006). The product or artefact here is reflective practice; not as something called in occasionally but as a cultivated aspect of ontological patterning or 'way of being' for the self (Barnett 2004). The Artful Learning Framework strategies are proposed to foster an artful sophistication of process to trade 'dependent uncritical thinking' for 'independent critical thinking', individually and collectively (Daft 2002), seeking to refine and improve 'means' in order to improve 'ends' (outcomes). Fundamental to the Framework design is a belief that the learning process itself is a pivotal source of competitive advantage, with the ability to 'learn faster...[said to be, in fact] the only sustainable source of competitive advantage' (Starkey 1996: 14). The evocation is that of a drawing back where people exert their collective will to behave in a way which increases the calibre of 'participation, collaboration and persuasion' which is said to be necessary to achieve any 'innovative accomplishment' (Moss Kanter 1997: 108). It might be said that learning as product involves a degree of pausing to reflect and consider what makes for quality engagement, as productive engagement is vital to navigating change or other strategic or operational improvement (London 2002).

The key strategy of the Framework is deploying cross-functional groups when navigating major organisational change, strategic development, restructure, system review or similar initiative. The cross-functional group strategy draws together people of different roles, status and level to gather maximum cross-organisational intelligence on issues affecting staff, when high levels of engagement are critical to the success of the initiative (Moss Kanter 1997). Enhancing this strategy is a built-in evaluation component which works during the life of the group to leverage the reflective process for richer outcomes. The aim of this central strategy is to provide a safe, reflective locus of participation and consultation where staff members may feel part of a change process that affects them. It will be outlined that the Artful Learning Framework is meant to operate as a 'living laboratory' for a change process that is inclusive, participative, and rich rather than superficial in its scan of options. A final underpinning concept is that the learning (as product) derived from applying the

Framework is captured, communicated and acknowledged to be as significant as the practical recommendations and outcomes yielded from application of the Framework so as to inform future practice. The three strategies of the Framework are outlined briefly below, noting the element of Kerr's (2006) proposition to which each strategy refers:

- The 'Provocateur' pertains to having standards, and understanding the key questions that need to be asked in any situation (Kerr 2006). The strategy involves using strategic questioning to provoke a deeper canvassing of issues for decision-making and/or problem-solving.
- 'Trading Places' demonstrates conscientiousness about people and what they want; and cares and asks about values and trust (Kerr 2006). This strategy aims to enhance appreciation of organisational issues. It seeks to increase insight into the needs of others including clients/stakeholders. Seeing matters from the perspective of key 'other'; for example, if two leaders of functional support areas exchange roles for a time, may yield a fresh perspective on issues and more balanced understanding of the strategic and operational issues touching each of the functional domains.
- The Self-evaluating Cross-organisational (or Mixed) Group strategy promotes reflection to enhance engagement in change, tolerance of difference and of ambiguity (Kerr 2006). This central strategy of the Framework promotes effective consultation and, hence, engagement ('buy-in') for a change process or other key organisational initiative.

The identification of the Framework's strategies, while being fuelled by Kerr's (2006) proposition above, emerge as practical suggestions from the author's research and practice. This includes opportunities to have tested, as part of practice rather than research, the Cross-organisational Mixed Group strategy, and the 'Provocateur' and 'Trading Places' strategies of the Framework. In the example observed, a cross-functional group approach was applied to an organisational change issue where consultation on new strategic direction was being sought by the relevant Chief Executive Officer. The strategies entitled 'Provocateur' and 'Trading Places' were also facilitated and/or observed at the same organisation by the author, each within the last four years. It will be outlined that these observations suggested the usefulness of

formally researching the strategies for their longer-term results. The observations from evidence-based practice tended to support the literature-based conceptual underpinnings of the strategies that the strategies serve usefully for artful learning and results. The strategies of the Framework are outlined below, together with the particular skills, capabilities and capacities of Kerr's (2006) proposition to which each refers.

'Provocateur'

This strategy, usually deployed in pairs, offers an artful approach to problem-solving. It involves probing with deeper questions and identifying possible gaps in thinking on difficult problems or issues. In canvassing wider options it may enrich a change process or other organisational issue because it delves beyond the superficial responses of habit to probe for more creative ways of thinking and acting on all kinds of issues and perceived problems in organisations.

'Trading Places'

Thinking from the standpoint of 'other' may change the way we see things. The 'Trading Places' strategy of the Framework may be deployed as role exchange, for example for two managers of cognate areas of the organisation involved in offering service delivery to clients. The strategy helps organisational members gain greater insight into the perspective of 'other' including overlapping 'territorial' issues which typically fragment organisations. It promotes a fuller appreciation of all of the many facets of a change process or other organisational initiative for a more concerted, strategic view of the issues involved. All three strategies promote organisational understanding. The central strategy, briefly outlined next, may incorporate the two outlined so far as the concept of drawing back to pause, gather, reflect and engage is common to each.

Cross-organisational Group strategy with built-in Evaluation component

The Cross-organisational (Mixed) Group strategy with built-in Evaluation component, the central strategy of the Framework, seeks a genuine approach to canvassing issues

amongst those affected by a change process or other major organisational initiative so that the process potentially gains the greater ‘buy in’ of organisational members. Members of the mixed group are representative of organisational areas affected by the proposed change. The built-in evaluation component is designed to help ensure that reflective practice occurs systematically within the group during the life of the mixed group tasked with consulting, planning and navigating the change process. For this purpose, a ‘Learning Agent’ (LA) is assigned from within the group or groups. The LA moderates the work of the cross-organisational group in terms of process and goal achievement during the group’s tenure. The LA exerts a refining effect on learning and action. Thus the built-in evaluation component helps ensure that reflection on action occurs as an integral part of the group’s meeting its goals. The LA helps the group acknowledge the learning that comes out of navigating the change process in consultation to inform and continuously improve their practice. In the words of Ibarra (2003: 5), in ‘doing first and knowing second...we evaluate alternatives to criteria that changes as we do...[and] where we end up often surprises us’.

It is said that if a group (as for an organisation) is acting with the integrity of sound operating principles where actual behaviours match espoused behaviours, the group is better placed to adjust to new information and change (Delahaye 2000). Thus the mixed group process, and its built-in self-evaluation component, invest in improving the intrinsic value and quality of process and outcomes through an artful cycle of learning and knowing (Ibarra 2003).

The strategies of the Artful Learning Framework are next described in more detail against the dimensions of Kerr’s (2006) key proposition to which each refers, and the element of the Artful Learning Framework (Figure 1) to which each strategy relates.

‘Provocateur’ strategy

Propositional element (Kerr 2006): *to have standards; to understand the key questions that need to be asked in any situation*

Element of Framework: **Pause** to provoke for artful solutions

The 'Provocateur' strategy of the Artful Learning Framework repudiates superficial, 'reactive' readings of situations in favour of considering potentially richer solutions. In understanding the key questions that should be asked in a situation and chasing gaps in understanding, one gains an appreciation of the larger whole (Kerr 2006). Under the 'Provocateur' sub-strategy, an issue or dilemma requiring resolution is outlined briefly by 'Person A' (the individual experiencing the particular problem or challenge). No names or identifiers are used at any time during the process. 'Person B' invites Person B to expand on the issue, asking only questions, providing no comments or advices. Person B asks deeper, more probing questions to help reach dimensions of the issue which might not have been explored. Person B asks further questions to check relevant bodies of knowledge which might usefully be brought to bear on the situation. Person A is then asked to outline the issue again taking note of a broader canvass of issues and potential new understanding which the further questions may have prompted. Person B asks Person A to identify what might lie in the potential 'gap of understanding' between what was stated the first time and the second time to see if this sheds light on the situation. Person A and Person B confer, exploring the issue with potentially a more creative solution than otherwise might have been achieved. In a sense, the very disturbance of self (Kerr 2006) challenges the self to better learning, decisions and action.

It is posited that 'artful learning' presupposes artful action. The central premise of the root word, 'art' has to do with human skill in making or doing something. Deploying a systematic means of reflecting on process is essential in change leadership operations (Drew 2006; London 2002; Rao & Rao 2005; Thach 2002). These concepts underpin the central strategy of the Framework, that of the mixed cross-organisational groups to leverage engagement in organisational change initiatives.

'Trading Places' strategy

Propositional element (Kerr 2006): *To be conscientious about people and what they want, and to ask about values and trust*

Element of Framework: **Gather** in the perspectives of 'other' for artful appreciation

The strategy, 'Trading Places' seeks to create vital understanding between organisational areas for strategic and operational benefit. It is useful in organisations to 'force into the open aspects of the culture that may not have been previously recognized' (Schein 2003: 440). 'Trading Places' helps artfully to appreciate those aspects of underlying culture, or of habitual process, for example, which, to address, would result in greater understanding and improved practice. The strategy seeks to 'unearth' held assumptions regarding, for example, what other clients or stakeholders want, or what key parties encounter when they interface with the organisation. The strategy works to address organisational issues from a 'whole of organisation' perspective rather than addressing issues in a fragmented way. Addressing the link between achieving the best interests of the organisation and the best interests of clients is said to be a key task of management (Butler, Cantrell, Flick & Randall 1999). As Bawden (1998: 39) also suggests, 'if we are to change the way we do things in the world about us, we first need to change the way we see things'. Such may be the transformation yielded by travelling the road of the 'other' as, under the 'Trading Places' strategy, key personnel commit to doing, learning and then knowing in order to appreciate different perspectives and realities and thus operate in a more enlightened way.

As part of our change process scenario, the 'Trading Places' strategy of the Framework may leverage understanding between cognate areas of the organisation where a greater appreciation of issues faced by the other will bear usefully on how the change agenda is devised and how it plays out in practice. For example, when two managers of cognate and inter-relating organisational areas exchange roles for a period of time they tend to experience the challenges of the other area while gaining greater insights. The strategy aims to improve appreciation of issues in their completeness. Seeing issues in their 'wholeness' is argued by Wheatley (2003) as artful learning [which] goes beyond analysing discrete events or individuals [arguing, in fact, that] 'analysis narrows our field of awareness and actually prevents us from seeing the total system', because as 'we move..into the details' we move 'farther away from learning how to comprehend the system in its wholeness' (Wheatley 2003: 499, 500). Fragmentation, because of its very focus on 'segment' or 'self' rather than 'whole' or 'other', is the enemy of a change process. It forgets about values and trust;

it clings, unthinking, to artificial boundaries, unseeing the potentially informing gems of ‘difference’ and the perspectives of ‘other’.

As ‘Trading Places’ is focused on building an ‘other’ centred perspective to solve organisational problems, it aids planning for potential challenges. Insights yielded may prosper proactively ‘shared vision [said to be] a powerful tool for achieving extraordinary results’ (Parry 1996: 47). To be successful, the strategy requires artfulness to maximise the experience for shared understanding between organisational units. It takes ‘artfulness’ to mitigate the ‘silo’ effect, and for making those adjustments which might effect better procedures, processes and outcomes for the organisation’s clients and stakeholders. Thus, the strategy potentially presents an artful learning opportunity capable of transforming the ‘self’ and the self’s situated environment. As Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1997: 3) suggest: ‘A Learning Company is an organisation that facilitates the learning of all its members and *consciously* transforms itself *and its context*. The next described strategy of the Framework builds upon the notions examined so far – pausing to provoke for artful solutions and gathering in the perspectives of ‘other’. It too emphasises applied learning in an inspirational environment which spawns creative decision-making, consultation and problem-solving.

Self-evaluating mixed (cross-organisational) group strategy

Propositional element (Kerr 2006): To reflect, engage with change and be comfortable with ambiguity

Element of Framework: **Reflect** with self-critiquing group consultation

The central strategy of the Framework is to form a mixed cross-organisational group or groups whose role it is provide a locus for genuine consultation to gather views and gain engagement in the change process. As has been suggested, just as life in the physical environment takes soundings to adapt for durability and health, an organisation performs better when elements integrate and interact with each other (Morgan 1997). To embrace change willingly, people need to see a purpose and to understand why certain aspects of their roles or structure need to change. Being artful

is creatively to explore options based on as wide a brief of possible knowledge, data and the experiences of self and others, and then to take action in incremental steps even when the way ahead is not entirely clear. 'If anything', Miller (2003: 14) argues, 'the need for understanding how organisations learn and accelerating that learning is greater today than ever before'. Engagement, in organisations, does not occur by accident and needs to be nurtured. True engagement, as for learning, requires an artful approach. As Walker and Lambert (1995: 17-18) posit, 'learning is a shared activity; and reflection and metacognition [in a shared environment] are vital in 'constructing knowledge and meaning'. London (2002) suggests the value of securing engagement in important organisational ventures by engaging cross-functional groups, proposing that bringing together diverse experiences for collective learning is part of making any joint venture work. Under the Artful Learning Framework, this strategy brings together a mixed, cross-organisational group to gain a wide range of input and increase participation and engagement in an assisted reflective environment. The goal is that a spirit of engagement and reflective practice increasingly becomes part of organisational culture long after the cross-functional group has completed its work.

Let us take, as an example, a change process to effect a change in strategic priorities. Typically, such a change process touches upon several organisational units, each possibly with different perspectives and some overlapping points of interface with the other. Under the strategy, a cross-organisational group is formed. The group consists of personnel at mixed rank, role type and level within functional areas affected by the change process. Group members consult with colleagues in their organisational units on issues most important to them in relation to the change. The mixed groups meet and discuss overlapping 'territorial' or other issues in relation to the change. They suspend addressing system change until they explore cultural factors, tacit assumptions, and unearth possible latent misunderstandings which beneficially might be surfaced for discussion. The task of the mixed groups is to identify the linkage points and what actions need to be taken to secure the change, while also treating the exercise as a learning opportunity to effect more robust, better quality processes to apply to other aspects of their work. 'What can we learn?' is the tenor of their deliberations.

Part of a sound beginning for enacting the Framework is identifying a Learning Agent

(LA) for the group as someone interested in artful reflective processes. The LA is selected not on the basis of his or her substantive role or level but on a demonstrated interest in people and notions of engagement, group learning concepts, and in different, artful approaches to learning and problem-solving. The LA is provided with prior briefing/training. The LA and group members meet in preparation with the stakeholder executives. Built-in evaluation questions are mapped against tasks, timeline and co-operative learning goals. These are discussed and agreed with the group in conjunction with stakeholders before the group begins an artful appreciation of the real issues involved in the change initiative. Throughout, the LA undertakes 'real time' evaluation of the group's efforts.

The LA helps expand the group's horizons through questioning and dialogue and helps the group navigate the more complex issues which might arise in discussion. Dealing with difference is crucial to achieving best outcomes. Respectfulness is paramount and divergent views clearly are welcomed. The stakeholders assist with any major challenges faced. Improvements in process are negotiated and effected *during* the lifespan of the mixed group. The sponsor, Learning Agents and mixed groups hence have the opportunity to become 'conduits of critical information from elsewhere in the organisation'; and may 'serve as sounding boards, counselors, confessors, and pressure valves' (Heenan & Bennis 2003: 153; Renz & Greg 2000). However, practice tells us that very often groups fail to reach their goals. Artful learning and action is to take the time and effort required to turn back to a failure to evaluate it and allow experience to inform future action for continuous improvement (Mitchell & Poutiatine 2001). Senior imprimatur for such initiatives has been found to be critical (Maurer, Mitchell & Barbeite 2002). The LA interacts regularly with the sponsoring executive stakeholder/s as determined, as does the group on occasion. In group discussion, the group is demonstrably supported by the project sponsor who reinforces the importance of co-operation across organisational units in the change process being planned.

The built-in self-evaluation component, as discussed with the group, works throughout as a barometer for effecting organic improvement through reflection and self-learning during the group's life. This is similar to Kerr's (2006) idea of perceived value, in terms of evaluation, being understood as *enhancing the capacity* of the

creative living organism. The built-in self-evaluation questions constructively raise awareness of the behaviours and co-operative learning principles believed by group members to be important. It is understood that regularly reflecting on and assessing behaviours perceived as important raises awareness concerning those desired behaviours and tends to embed them within the culture of the group (McCarthy & Garavan 2001). Smith and O'Neill (2003: 64) argue that 'experience itself is a very slippery teacher; most of the time we have experiences from which we never learn', while 'action learning [another term for a reflective process] seeks to throw a net around slippery experiences, and capture them as learning'.

To help the group think as a 'collective' for the greater good, the cross-functional teams which meet fortnightly are asked to consider the connection points of issues affected by the proposed change in the organisational units that they represent. The Learning Agent ensures broad, wide-scope questioning and dialogue to avoid the group falling to easy solutions. The LA, group members and stakeholder leaders discuss relevant opportunities to deploy the auxiliary strategy, 'Trading Places', where they deem it would be valuable for a pairing of members to swap roles for a designated period of time or on an open-to-trial basis. In such a pairing, each may gather in the perspectives of 'other' to shed new light on an issue and gain a greater understanding of strategic organisational issues relating to the change and ongoing work. The 'Provocateur' strategy may be deployed at any time with the effect of suspending ready answers and superficial readings for more artful solutions. The LA encourages full participation across the mix of perspective, styles, gender and cultural background. Gee (1991: 5) states that 'vital "acquisition" happens in natural settings which are meaningful and functional'. Appreciating diversity may be agreed a 'vital acquisition' to guard against uncritical 'group think' behaviours or where the most strident individuals have their views accepted not necessarily for the worth of the view but by force of personality in putting the view, or by political overtones. The Artful Learning Framework ideally is geared to integrity, fairness, and to creating shared meaning and understanding to produce greater 'ownership' of shared vision; all artful concepts because they tend not to occur by default, requiring a will to act in particular ways to serve the collective good.

Members of the mixed group consult within their own organisational areas and bring back salient issues, including those which their representative may not personally favour, and work through these co-operatively. The group keeps itself accountable to operate within agreed guidelines to pause, gather, reflect and engage for productive outcomes in a situated learning consultative process (Barker, Wahlers & Watson 2001). Reflective practice is steered by the LA's work within the group, in the way group members interact with each other and with the organisational units that they represent. The stakeholders as leaders of the process exert a valuable role to sponsor and champion the group's work and ensure that honest two-way communication occurs. Relevant to the spirit of the Framework is the question and answer offered by Max De Pree (2003): 'What are artful leaders responsible for? Leaders can decide to be primarily concerned with leaving assets to their institutional heirs or they can go beyond that and...leave a legacy..that takes into account the more difficult, qualitative side of life, one which provides greater meaning, more challenge, and more joy in the lives of those whom leaders enable' (66).

A further legacy of the process is the potential for members of the mixed group to build bridges of understanding between organisational units mitigating the 'silo' effect of territorial counties within the organisation. Thus, the cross-organisational group strategy fosters 'organizational and group environments in which members share information and ideas' in relation to a change process, for example, while 'develop[ing] a sense of self-mastery and empowerment from modelling and observing others' (London 2002: 250).

The group considers opportunities to deploy the auxiliary strategy, 'Trading Places', where it is deemed valuable for a pairing of members to swap roles for a designated period of time or on an open-to-trial basis. Such pairings gather in the perspectives of 'other' to shed new light and understanding on, for example, a key aspect of the change affecting two organisational areas. The 'Provocateur' strategy may be deployed at any time when in-depth exploration of issues are required, with the effect of suspending ready answers and superficial readings in favour of pausing to reflect on artful solutions.

Periodically, the cross-functional project teams report on progress to their sponsor and to staff. In turn, the stakeholders of the change process provide any additional or new information to the mixed group so that the communication conduit remains complete. The LA ensures that this interchange of information occurs. The LA provides advices from the mixed group to organisational executive stakeholders on major implications of the change process including potential pitfalls and opportunities to do things differently and better in relation to the change process. Throughout, a key aspect is the built-in evaluation process 'owned' by the group and steered by the LA. The following outlines how the Learning Agent (LA), equipped with suitable training, assists the group to self-evaluate the mixed group process and the learning outcomes from the 'Provocateur' and 'Trading Places' strategies where relevant as a reflective, situated learning and review exercise (Barker, Wahlers & Watson 2001).

The LA's role is pivotal to the mixed group process. From the outset, the LA, supported by the sponsor, ensures that the observation/evaluation part of his/her role is not intrusive but that the responsibilities of the role are well understood by members. The LA artfully steers the evaluation process as, itself, a developmental exercise in 'real' time. The evaluation component may consist of Scanning, Questioning, Reflection, Discussion, Observation (Tyson 1998: 208).

- Under 'Scanning and Questioning', the broad results envisaged from the mixed group work aligned with organisational goals and values are determined. The group discusses the goals to be achieved. A relevant timeline is formed and this is re-visited at each meeting of the group. A distinguishing feature of the Artful Learning Framework is that both task/outcome goals *and* co-operative learning (process) guidelines are clarified and are inspected regularly during the life of the group.
- 'Reflection' and 'Discussion' relate then to determining the co-operative learning (process) goals as guiding principles for how the group will operate; essentially a code for how group members will work with each other. These goals may differ for every group, but some elements constituting a respectful, rigorous and creative/artful process are suggested below as a guide. From these, some key process questions are formed and these are returned to briefly before the close of each meeting. The group should formulate and hence 'own' its co-operative

learning (process) guidelines and corresponding evaluation questions. Checking both task and process questions before the close of each meeting keeps the group on track in these linked dimensions.

- ‘Observation’ is a critical aspect of the built-in evaluation process. While this is the principal role of the LA, group members commit to observing and refining the way they work with each on both task and process goals. To ensure this reflection and observation occurs, task goals and co-operative learning (process) goals as questions are revisited, while at the end of the process, a final focus group captures and communicates the learning from the mixed group exercise for continuous organisational learning purposes.

The self-evaluation process for group members aims contemporaneously to monitor and build individual ‘authenticity’ associated with the notion of ‘know[ing] oneself, to be consistent with oneself, and to have a positive and strength-based orientation toward one’s development and the development of others’ (Avolio 2005: 194).

Evaluation questions surveying both task/outcome *and* process elements are provided in advance to members as advance reading, in keeping with the intention of raising consciousness concerning preferred behaviours to help embed these behaviours for maximum group effectiveness (McCarthy & Garavan 2001). The aim is to create an invigorating, creative and rigorous environment to leverage quality in decision-making and in advices going forward to senior stakeholders on aspects of the change to leverage maximum engagement. The argument is that a quality result can stem only from a quality process, and the latter is more likely to occur as responsible people ‘reflect, deeply reflect, on events that surround [themselves]’ and...are willing to observe, and modify where necessary, how their own behaviour and actions impact and influence others (Avolio 2005: 94).

The LA drives the evaluation and engages the group so that the in-built evaluation operates as an artful continuous learning process. The LA and the group take ten minutes before the close of every meeting to evaluate and moderate group behaviours according to agreed questions. The LA records findings briefly, preferably using a laptop computer so that findings and achievements on both co-operative learning and task goals are recorded and agreed progressively. Collaboration and co-operation are obviously key guidelines, and in paying equal attention to ‘achievement’ goal/s and

‘group maintenance’ goals the group acknowledges the interdependency of both types of goals to useful outcomes (Barker, Wahler & Watson 2001: 38). As Limerick and Cunnington (1993) argue, collaboration is essential if a group is to experience optimum operating success. The LA’s role to prompt ‘learning in action’ is critical. A key question for the LA might be: *Is high commitment to both task (achievement goal) and co-operative learning (group maintenance goal) observable?* The result will not be perfect but conscientiously acting upon such a commitment is ‘being artful’. Following are the prompts that the LA might deploy in assessing continually the extent to which the mixed group is ‘being artful’ in its co-operative learning.

Attendance to both task and to co-operative learning goals

Full participation is dependent upon clarity on what the group is meant to achieve. If the goal of the group is to plan and effect a change process, the starting point is determining the goals for the group, and the goals for the organisational change process. Directional clarity questions for the organisation might be: *Where are we now and where do we want to be in X period of time? What are the incremental steps involved in getting there? How will we know when we (as an organisation) are reaching the goal?* Directional clarity questions for the group might be: *What is our role and what is our goal? What is not part of our role? What five key process objectives will keep us on track to reach that goal?* Harvey (1998) writes of the pitfalls of ‘the Abilene Paradox’, which is the ‘tendency for groups to embark on excursions which no group member actually wants’. ‘Stated simply’, Harvey writes, ‘when organizations blunder into the Abilene Paradox, they take actions in contradiction to what they really want to do and therefore defeat the very purposes they are trying to achieve’ (1998: 15). Talking about what the objectives really are and gaining shared ownership of those objectives predicates consideration of how objectives might be reached. Then, identifying in advance the stages the group would like to reach in stepped timeframes is, of course, essential (Wysoki & Beck 2000). A high level of participation and a degree of comfort for individuals to express themselves freely should be evident. The LA’s qualitative observation and reporting activity should note silence, turn-taking and interruption. An adaptation of the Descriptive Rating Instruments described by Cathcart and Samovar (1984) may be used to note the ‘kinds of contributions’ made by group members (464-472).

According to Sullivan (1996), ‘as individuals begin to share experiences, and others agree and make additional comments, an intuitive understanding seems to emerge about how well various groups are functioning’ (114). Some possible questions to promote artful refinement of the group process are suggested below:

Does evaluation show working ‘atmosphere’ or group ‘spirit’/zest to be high?

Relevant non-verbal cues might include alertness in eyes and posture, laughter and active listening. The LA might note clues such as whether individuals, when silent, appear to ‘tune out’, and whether overall body language within the group demonstrates concentration and active listening. Under the Framework, artful learning presupposes a preparedness to listen. Thus, a useful point of assessment for an effective working climate is: *Do individuals appear genuinely to be listening to each other? What is the evident level of trust and positive working atmosphere?* Trust is inspired through honest, genuine relationships according to Daft (2002). The Artful Learning Framework addresses the issue of trust head on by asking: *In addressing the issue at hand, what are the potentially contentious issues, or questions that individuals have of each other, that will help us safeguard trust?* Taking care of the trust issue in such a way minimises the ‘iceberg effect’ where the bulk of what really should be addressed lies under the discussion bar, leaving the superficial, only, to be formative to decisions being taken. The Framework also works to effect a more consultative environment. Leadership and management literature and evidence from practice suggest that productive interpersonal relationships which inspire the involvement of others are crucial to management (London 2002; Miller 2003). Moreover, it is said, people, at base, want meaningful lives, and the new worker is looking for shorter term tenure in functional workplaces that offer opportunities for new learning and professional growth (Taylor 2001).

Power and influence

At some stage the group process is likely to see individuals taking strong positions on issues. Does power and influence within the group appear to be reasonably equitable? Chances are that the answer is ‘no’ because of differences relating to personality, style and cultural difference. For example, organisations need to address racial or ethnic

prejudices that may exist, and they may need to raise awareness on these issues through cultural diversity initiatives of various kinds (DeSimone, Werner & Harris 2002). The LA takes note of cultural factors to ensure that group discussion truly benefits from diversity, rather than being driven by the assumptions of the dominant culture. Awareness regarding different kinds of power and influence in the group typically is a critical observation and learning point for the LA and group. It will be important to ask: *What are the cultural diversity factors that we need to be aware of in rolling out this change process?* Further questions might be: *What will it take to bring the current situation toward the ideal? Will this decision help bring this change about? Have we thought of other ways, besides this way, that will bring this change about?* Often, it is said, ‘the vision is partial but people are able to identify pieces that need to change [and] later these specifics can be worked into a cohesive whole’ (Peavey 1994: 100-101). The problem is that factors such as cultural implications, such as correcting some of the faulty assumptions, values, and beliefs people have about other cultures may be overlooked in an albeit mixed group, depending on the backgrounds of its members (DeSimone et al 2002). As with the other elements of suggested built-in ‘real time’ evaluation, appropriate measures should be introduced to ensure that issues of differentiated power, influence and cultural background are highlighted for inspection so that the *whole* group plan the change process in cognizance of such issues from the outset. All members are accountable for just such checks and balances as these for enlightened, ethical behaviour, and in this regard, ‘two heads are..better than one when it comes to decision making [and] as the psychological literature indicates, groups make better choices than do individuals’ (Heenan & Bennis 2003: 152).

Communication between members (level of open/closed)

It might be useful to ask: *Was there evidence of lightness or of humour?* How we engage in an encounter sets the tone for the encounter and, to some extent, predetermines whether the interaction meets or fails to meet its aims. Relieving small tensions with humour and lightness artfully carves a course for constructive discussion in potentially ‘charged’ situations. Individuals transmit emotions, positive or negative. Indeed, on the positive side, Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2003) assert that ‘one of the reasons why emotionally intelligent leaders attract talented people [is]

for the pleasure of working in their presence' (52). Nevertheless, the presence of 'emotional magnets' can be disconcerting, especially in a mixed cross-organisational group where individuals do not already know and understand each other. 'Taboo' behaviours such as disrespect, identified at the start, if they emerge, should be checked as encountered. Care is taken to disengage behaviour from personalities at all times. A 'taboo' behaviour might be to avoid 'splinter' groups emerging between meetings. The group may agree that if an issue is considered sufficiently important to be raised in 'splinter' discussion, it merits group discussion. Again, skill is required to recognise the different norms in terms of open and closed communication styles existing between different cultures present in the group. Tyson (1998) notes that mild or severe culture shock potentially occurs for individuals moving into a group with a distinct but unfamiliar culture. This requires tact and sensitivity in group processes.

Navigating disagreement and conflict

In terms of handling conflict, the group is wise to agree at the outset that disagreement not be seen as disharmony, but as a positive challenge to ask deeper, more interesting questions. Disagreement is reframed as an opportunity to mine more creative possibilities. Peavey (1994) notes, 'A strategic question is often one of those "unaskable" questions. And it usually is unaskable because it challenges the issues and assumptions that the whole issue rests upon' (99). On all but straightforward issues, a point of positive evaluation is not the measure of agreement evident within the group but, more importantly, how divergent views are brought to bear for the best decisions.

Ideally, the LA fosters recognition that all group members bring to the discussion table their assumptions and 'autobiographical' responses borne of prior experiences and preferred theories. McWilliam, Lather and Morgan (undated) note: 'Each of us thinks and knows and believes and acts within fields of influences. Those influences also work on us and work within us, maybe in ways we're not always aware of' (19). A component of artful learning is to have the courage to see an alternative, even opposing point of view, and be able to critique it objectively and dispassionately. Questions are: *Did group members use disagreement primarily to seek to understand,*

to reach a better decision, or to put a view even more forcefully? Did members listen to other views, work through disagreement and come to a decision when required?

Finally, investing in a process of overall evaluation is a vital component of the Artful Framework. The effects of a learning initiative are not easy to measure, and it is difficult to ascribe success of a particular organisational objective to one element of influence given many possible influences in play. The expectation is that, as a by-product of participating in and critiquing the strategies of the Framework the principles of the Framework to pause and draw back (from superficial responses) to gather, reflect and engage (for artful result) will permeate organisational processes and behaviours. Learning organisations provide learning opportunities for sustainable development (Pedler et al 1997). This begins with recognising the benefits of their people developing their self-insight and professional growth (London 2002). The points of application for the Artful Learning Framework in organisations are myriad, limited only by a potential sense that there is too little time to invest in processes that consider a range of strategic, operational, task and co-operative learning elements. Miller (2003) offers that given complexities of people and organisations (including, it might be said, less than rigorous approaches to ‘people’ issues), it is not surprising that leaders of organisations are seeking new ways of building capacities in their organisations to learn and re-learn.

Final evaluation questions for the Artful Learning Framework round off a process that is characterised by a goal continuously to learn. These questions, typically addressed with a focus group of group members and key stakeholders at the end of the process, might include:

- How many staff members are participating in a strategy or strategies of the Framework? Was there opportunity to trial all three strategies of the Framework?
- What are the results of the group’s efforts in terms of task/recommendations and co-operative learning/process goals? (Participants are encouraged to use a reflective journal to document and reflect upon their learning and achievement in engaging with the Framework)
- Do the reports of the Learning Agents on the ‘evaluator as learner’ component positively assess process quality and outcomes of strategies of the Framework?

- ‘What can we learn for the future?’ in terms of the Framework’s application.

Interim trial

The author observed and trialled all three strategies at a tertiary education organisation in Australia while occupying a senior management leadership development role within the organisation. The mixed group strategy was utilised as part of a consultation process for the development of new strategic vision for the organisation – one which called upon a significant change agenda touching most parts of the organisation. A number of cross-organisational mixed groups worked on aspects of the change process in respect of the proposed new strategy. The author had the opportunity to facilitate and observe this process. It was felt that higher levels of communication and participation yielded by the mixed group process paid dividends for ‘ownership’ of the strategy. However, in observing the work of the mixed groups, the author felt that a self-evaluating mechanism during the life of the group’s work was an important element that, had it been added, would have enhanced inclusiveness and the value of the exercise for learning and outcome. This view was confirmed when, as often occurs, suggestions for enhancing the group work were made by group members after the groups had met. There was no built-in mechanism for improving and monitoring practice while the groups were still in session. Typically, also, groups ‘got down to the business’ in terms of the task with little thought to how they wished to operate and the guidelines of process they would adopt.

In the ‘Trading Places’ exercise trialled in the same organisational context, two senior staff managers of cognate departments relevant to effecting elements of the change strategy exchanged roles for a period of three months. The result was a sense of increased understanding of the challenges faced by each department. Some specific recommendations went forward as to how the two departments could better work together for the benefit of clients. The result for the two departments was to build a more co-ordinated presence as service providers in cognate areas for clients. The trial was recognised as having been successful. The downfall noted was the shorter-term frustration for certain members of the organisation who had become used to relating to the managers in their substantive, rather than temporary, roles. However, the short-

term inconvenience was seen to have been outweighed by longer-term strategic benefit, stemming from drawing back to see issues affecting both departments and their client bases from an entirely different perspective. Those depending on the two departments for services were treated to a more concerted, strategic response because they were operating cohesively rather than in isolation. The author did not facilitate the 'Trading Places' exercise, but contributed to its design and the debrief process which following the exercise, and was requested to comment upon the trial.

The 'Provocateur' exercise was deployed by the author as part a leadership program conducted around the same time in the same organisation. Participants were part of an accelerated leadership development program which included a change leadership dimension. In this context, the 'Provocateur' exercise was conducted in 'workplace learning' mode where, in a safe environment, participants could tackle in pairs difficult issues that they faced relating to change leadership in the context of the new strategic plan for the organisation. Overall, participants reported that the deeper questioning technique helped leaders solve perceived problems as they were assisted to 'find the gaps' in understanding to mine a richer seam of options. One participant, a female senior staff member working in a knowledge resource support role, said that the questioning technique, with her partner in the exercise, had occasioned a rephrasing of how she saw the problem and this, together with two or three further open questions, had identified previously unexplored possibilities which had led to the solution. These experiences are described here to state that further research is required to test the effectiveness of these strategies formally, but that sufficient evidence exists from the literature and practice so far to support the Framework as potentially delivering a reflective, engaged process of artful learning in organisations.

As stated, the missing link in the informal trial was believed to be a form of built-in evaluation of the mixed group exercise, with one person from within the group having responsibility for that role with support provided. It is felt that this dimension would provide a valuable 'check and balance' effect to ensure that group members reflect more deeply on issues, and on their interpersonal behaviours. On this note it is important to propose that 'being artful' is both an attitude and a will to act with integrity to make and do things differently, to eschew the 'quick fix' approach to which all readily succumb in time-poor environments.

CONCLUSION

It has been proposed from the literature that to be artful is to be continually doing, learning and knowing for more creative, sustainable solutions (Kerr 2006; Kerr & Darso 2007). An Artful Learning Framework, with prospects of building a change-ready, participative, well-functioning organisational environment, has been proposed. Three strategies of the Artful Learning Framework have been described, bound together with an 'evaluator as learner' component designed to monitor positive and inclusive ways to pause, draw back, gather, reflect and engage for best outcomes. It has been proposed, in effect, that good questions catalyse good answers, and that questioning, practiced as an art, may broaden scope and widen the horizons of the 'self' and organisations to greater and more exciting possibilities. A drawback of the Framework is that fast-paced organisational life leaves insufficient time to invest in an Artful Learning Framework. However, one might pause and reflect that in one's store of experiences, what might be termed artless approaches have resulted in the downfall of projects, the failure of change processes, loss of credibility and disillusionment of the people involved. Experience might tell, indeed, that the bridge of attempted remediation to redress the schism and failure of a failed initiative takes considerably longer to build and complete than the bridge of the artful, well-thought-through 'beginning'.

Nick Nissley (paper forthcoming), describing Kerr's (2006) Learning Wave Trajectory Model returns us to the theme of the wave and the notion of artful events catalysing learning, more artful events and more learning. This paper has been concerned with artful activity and capability transpiring to 'have product, through being artful and becoming an artful being' (Nissley, forthcoming). Consistent with this notion of sound outcome for individual and organisation, the Artful Learning Framework is offered to organisations seeking excellence in quality of engagement and quality of outcome, having a commitment to continually learning, doing and knowing.

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Figure 1:
Model of Artful Learning in Change

Artful Learning Framework Strategies

*Pause to provoke, gather, reflect, engage
back to provoke, gather, reflect, engage*

As the Wave...PAUSE to provoke for artful solutions (Provocateur strategy)...GATHER in the perspectives of 'other' for artful appreciation by 'Trading Places' ...REFLECT with self-critiquing group consultation (Self-evaluating Mixed Group); and ENGAGE artful learning for change

Paper 4 – In Press

Drew, G. Issues and challenges in higher education leadership:

Engaging for change

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Queensland University of Technology

Faculty of Education School of Cultural and Language Studies

Head of School Professor Annette Patterson

Our Ref: **2008.76**

Monday, 12 October 2009

Senior Leadership Development Consultant,
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Dear Glenys Drew,

We are delighted to inform you that your paper '**Issues and challenges for higher education and education leadership: engaging in change**', has been accepted for publication in the peer-refereed journal *The Australian Educational Researcher*. We anticipate that your paper will be published in a forthcoming issue and we will correspond with you regarding publication matters, closer to the publication date.

Congratulations on the paper and we look forward to seeing it in print.

Kind regards,

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**ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN HIGHER
EDUCATION LEADERSHIP: ENGAGING FOR
CHANGE**

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Issues and challenges in higher education

leadership: engaging for change

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Abstract

It is proposed from this study that engaging productively with others to achieve change has never been more critical in educational environments, such as universities. Via semi-structured interviews with a cohort of senior leaders from one Australian university, this paper explores their perceptions of the key issues and challenging facing them in their work. The study found that the most significant challenges centred around the need for strategic leadership, flexibility, creativity and change-capability; responding to competing tensions and remaining relevant; maintaining academic quality; and managing fiscal and people resources. Sound interpersonal engagement, particularly in terms of change leadership capability, was found to be critical to meeting the key challenges identified by most participants. In light of the findings from the sample studied some tentative implications for leadership and leadership development in university environments are proposed, along with suggestions for further empirical exploration.

Introduction

The increased complexity of the leadership role in the higher education environment has gained attention as a subject for study over the past ten years (Coaldrake &

Stedman, 1998, 1999; Cohen, 2004; Knight & Trowler, 2001; Mead, Morgan & Heath, 1999; Ramsden, 1998). The list of challenges grows longer as university core business increases in complexity (Barnett, 2004; Drew, 2006; Hanna, 2003; Marshall, Adams, Cameron & Sullivan, 2000; Marshall, 2007; Middlehurst (2007); Scott, Coates & Anderson, 2008; Snyder, Marginson & Lewis, 2007). This paper discusses some of the points of tension for academic and administrative staff pertaining to leadership in higher education. It reports the results of a qualitative research study undertaken to identify what a sample of emergent and new senior leaders in one Australian university considered to be the major challenges for universities, and hence for leaders in universities, over the next five years. The findings suggest implicitly and explicitly the centrality of sound engagement capabilities in meeting the challenges identified. The paper commences with a review of literature relating to perceived challenges in university leadership.

Major challenges

Researchers and workers in the field have explored a canvass of intersecting and potentially competing challenges impacting on academic staff and academic administrators. A number of these challenges relate to engagement of different kinds. For example, some commentators cite the changed and differentiated ways in which students engage with the university (Cooper, 2002; Longden, 2006; Snyder et al., 2007; Szekeres, 2006). Szekeres (2006), Whitchurch (2006) and others consider the effects of change relating to administration and general staff experiences in universities. Offering a quality higher education experience fit for the needs of both the individual student and society (Longden, 2006) might be accepted broadly as a concerted goal of university educators. However, reality may see academic leaders charting a course

between different, even opposing, paradigms such as “student as scholar” focusing on fostering enquiry, scholarship and life-long learning, and “student as consumer” where students seek a relatively expedient, efficient, vocationally oriented educational experience. Snyder et al. (2007) and Giroux (2005) note the oppositional yet intersecting forces of mass education and of sound pedagogical principles in higher education, with the student as collaborator and critical reflector on the one hand, and, primarily, proactive consumer, on the other.

Other commentators point to the challenge for academics to partner with cognate disciplines, industry, commerce and government, creating linkages in order to compete for industry-based funding and undertake research and development (Stiles, 2004; Whitchurch, 2006). Here, the notion of academic as independent thinker and researcher vies with the more pragmatic orientation of what Whitchurch (2006) terms the “business enterprise project” (p. 167). An enterprise or business manager may preside over a “communication web of [parties such as] directors of research, academic staff, and external partners” (Whitchurch, 2006, p. 167), requiring an ability to “synthesise academic and business agendas” (p. 167). Stiles (2004) sees the most effective leaders in education leadership as those who repudiate boundaries to engage in innovative solutions. The recent study of themes and issues identified from academic leaders surveyed in Australian universities confirmed that relationship-building qualities of engagement are most potent in leadership roles (Scott et al., 2008).

Further writers suggest that partnering around a common sense of vision is vital in the increasingly complex environment of academic leadership (Hanna, 2003; Yelder & Codling, 2004). However, in an environment of potentially differentiated agenda,

background, skill and knowledge bases it is not an easy matter to foster the quality of strategic engagement that can build unity of purpose. Yet it is effort worth taking. Indeed, Snyder et al. (2007) state that complexity in the interplay of different approaches, paradigms and overlapping influences in education leadership are as interesting as the identification of the multiple paradigms themselves.

Over the past decade tensions have arisen between delivering on sound principles of pedagogy and research *and* the necessity to create efficiencies in a global environment of mass education (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999; Meek & Wood, 1997; Pratt & Poole, 1999; Ramsden, 1998; Szekeres, 2006). Studies in the United Kingdom have shown that downward pressure resultant from efficiency gains “applied year on year by government” (Longden, 2006, p. 179) has resulted in higher education providers “opting for either larger classes or reduced contact time, or a combination of both” (Longden, 2006, p. 179). While the global higher education environment suffers from “resource reduction, increased stress and increased expectations” (Szekeres, 2006, p. 141), collaborative engagement with industry is increasingly vital in securing research funds and in enacting research (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1998; Drew, 2006). We see pockets of educational leaders sharing resources, ideas and practices to find more effective, streamlined ways of supporting learning, simply because so many of the challenges are the same.

The need to navigate change and adapt is widespread. Barnett (2004), Hanna (2003) and others point to the challenge of leading within uncertainty in the higher education environment, which involves the courage to take action when the longer-term way ahead is unclear. Not surprisingly, it has been suggested that a capacity to support and

develop leaders capable of handling complexity, engaging people in vision, partnering effectively and leading through change is “not a luxury but a strategic necessity” for today’s universities (Fulmer, Gibbs & Goldsmith, 2000, p. 59). Of change leadership, Kotter (2007) sees the ability to guide change as the ultimate test of a leader.

The theoretical framework for the study follows the ideas of John Adair and his Action-Centred Leadership Model discussed by Middlehurst (2007) and outlined in Adair’s book, *Training for Leadership* (1968). Middlehurst (2007) argues that John Adair’s model, with its interlinked foci on achieving the task, building and maintaining the team and developing the individual are key dimensions of leadership applicable to the university environment. Indeed, Middlehurst credits Adair’s ideas in relation to this model and Adair’s subsequent work as ultimately spawning the formation of the United Kingdom Leadership Foundation. The key feature of the model and its application is its emphasis on the personal, human dimension, in each of the three foci. Middlehurst (2007) strongly argues the importance of taking account of this dimension in exploring all of the challenges of practice and development in the university leadership setting. Hence, the model, although dated, is a useful reference point for the study. Precisely, this personal, human dimension was found to be an important consideration in exploring key issues and challenges in the empirical study.

The brief scan of education leadership issues confirmed the researcher’s interest to conduct a small qualitative study to discover what a group of new leaders (having held their roles for one to four years) in one Australian university saw as the key challenges that they faced over the next five years in their roles. The study sought to discover the drivers and influences bearing upon the university leadership role which would appear

to have challenging implications for leadership practice and development. For this purpose, in this study, a sample group of university academic and administrative leaders were interviewed.

Methodology

The focus of this study was an investigation of a cohort of mid to senior level university leaders' perceptions on what they saw as the main challenges over the next five years for the Australian tertiary sector and, hence, for themselves as individual leaders. Semi-structured interviews were held with eighteen participants, all of whom were part of a "by invitation" accelerated succession leadership program at an Australian university. The university had acknowledged the need for leadership succession planning in recognition of age-related attrition anticipated globally over the ensuing five years (Jacobzone, Cambois, Chaplain & Robine, 1998; Yelder & Codling, 2004).

Senior and near senior academic and administrative staff completed the development program over three years – one cohort per year - totalling forty-five staff in all. The program comprised eight half-day sessions over a period of one year. At the end of the third year, participants were asked if they would be interested in participating in the interviews. The offer of invitation to participate in the study was made to all forty-five participants of the succession leadership program cohorts at the same time on the conclusion of the third year/cohort of the program. A total of eighteen, eleven females and seven males, participated in the interviews. Ten of those participants held academic supervisory roles and eight held administrative supervisory roles. This

breakdown was typical of the gender and role type breakdown for the forty-five participants who undertook the succession leadership program over the three cohorts. In signing off on nominations, the Vice-Chancellor had paid attention to achieving reasonable balance across gender and role type dimensions, for example, overall. Reasonable balance was achieved, with, overall, marginally more women than men, and marginally more academic than administrative staff, taking part in the program over the three cohorts. The types of roles occupied by the eighteen participants, listed in terms of multiple to single representation in role type, were: heads of school; associate professors; faculty administration managers; information technology project managers; faculty postgraduate studies co-ordinator/ academic; undergraduate studies co-ordinator/academic; senior supervisor (administrative) in information technology, senior supervisor (administrative) in the office of research, head of research institute/professor; and an information technology research professor. Typically, participants had held their roles for between one and four years.

Hour long semi-structured interviews with each participant were held to gather data. The following open question posed at the interview was provided to participants approximately one week before the interview. "What do you see as the most significant challenges for university leaders over the next five years?" The interviews were held as conversations with little structure other than to encourage interviewees to provide their views frankly. Qualitative in-depth interviewing based on sound ontological and epistemological principles, and tied to a specific research question (Mason, 2002) characterised the investigation. This methodology, where interview conversations with participants are held in an environment where participants feel comfortable to provide

their views, is described by Silverman (2000) as the “gold standard” methodology in qualitative research.

A laptop computer was used by the researcher to record participants’ responses. These responses were confirmed with participants individually after the interviews. Data analysis took the form of constant comparative analysis (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran, 2001) whereby themes were identified and coded as they surfaced. As new themes emerged, these were compared with the previous ones and were regrouped with similar themes. If a new meaning unit emerged, a new theme was formed (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). The thematic analysis also noted any differences observed between the comments of academic and administrative participants, respectively. While the study was set in Australia it is anticipated that the findings may have implications for other university settings given some similarities in the higher education environment globally.

Findings and Discussion

The most significant challenges with major implications for contemporary university leaders, in the view of the group, clustered around the following five themes:

Fiscal and people resources

Flexibility, creativity and change-capability

Responding to competing tensions and remaining relevant

Maintaining academic quality

Effective strategic leadership

While “maintaining academic quality” was identified mainly by academic staff, the remaining four themes reflected the ideas of both administrative and academic staff. The discussion that follows considers these themes, reflecting the most frequently cited key challenges. Following that discussion, note is taken of participants’ views which may be said to have disagreed with the majority view; in other words, who cited as their key challenge an item which was not cited by other participants, or by one other participant only.

Fiscal and people resource issues

Competing for resources, the amount of time taken to gain funds, dealing with paperwork and compliance issues, and concerns at recruiting and retaining quality staff were cited as key challenges by academic staff in particular. This is not surprising given reported reduced government funding and increased monitoring accountabilities experienced by universities in recent decades (Cohen, 2004; Knight & Trowler, 2001; Ramsden, 1998). Concern was expressed at the need for new skills as people in leadership roles in universities are not necessarily experienced in work associated with attracting funds, while perceived increases to the bureaucratic burden sit somewhat uncomfortably on academic shoulders.

One academic participant commented on the amount of time spent trying to gain funds and said that “doing this [funding acquisition] part of the role effectively” was a key challenge. Consistent with the projections of Coaldrake and Stedman (1998), concern at resource constraints in the face of high academic workloads and increased monitoring and reporting requirements was an issue for most of the academics interviewed. This concern was cited by administrative senior staff as well as by

academic participants. Participants' comments included the following (note that new paragraphs denote comments from different participants):

The challenge is working smarter not harder. The..significant challenge is to realise that the university sector is changing and that sources of income are coming more from research... and hence our focus, primarily, is supporting that (Administrative senior staff member).

We have to learn to...make more positive overtures to government.

We have to be cleverer about how we do that (Academic senior staff member)

Individually, the challenge is trying to achieve unrealistic expectations about having the resources to do what is required (Academic senior staff member).

Indeed, the Bradley Review (2008) asserts that strictures represented by reduced resources have impaired universities' capacity to make their utmost contribution to society. Consistent with Hanna (2003) and Knight and Trowler (2001), competing for scarce resources was seen as increasingly driving the academic agenda, and as ultimately forging a binary divide between research and teaching. One administrative leader said:

I think we will see the tertiary system split again in Australia. I'm not sure

whether it will be split along the lines of research or teaching. The “pie” stays the same but the money becomes scarcer, so we have to streamline what we can...the implication for the leader is that you are always doing more with less.

Two out of the eighteen participants specifically foresaw that reduced funding would forge a bifurcation between research and teaching in universities, as, in their view, aiming for excellence in both research and teaching may become problematic because of limited resources. Concern at scarcity of resources extended to concern at recruiting and retaining the right people. As identified earlier, the contemporary leadership mandate extends beyond leadership in research and teaching to include community outreach supported by management of quality, information, finance and physical and human resources (Marshall et al., 2000; Snyder et al., 2007).

A number of academic participants expressed concern that lack of certainty about ongoing funding for projects inhibited their capacity to enlist postgraduate students. While staff retention and succession planning were critical to the research effort, planning staff resources adequately was jeopardised by inability to offer other than limited contract opportunities. Participants commented:

We want to achieve things and we have to spend money to get outcomes such as research student numbers... but if we don't have the money for the scholarship we lose that potential income.

For leaders, a big challenge is the difficulty of retaining good staff because of limited contract opportunities; managing with declining budgets; being able adequately to recognise staff...

For the sector...it is getting people with right skill sets. Skills shortage is everywhere.

The comments reflect the complexities of building a culture of scholarship along sound educational principles in the face of an increased compliance agenda, increased government intervention and relative skills shortage (Drew, 2006; Rochford, 2006). Nonetheless, participants' comments overall clearly demonstrated a positive spirit. Positivity and openness to new ways of thinking were evident in their body language and verbal expression. One participant said: *We have to have the courage to explore options and take risks.* From another: *It means bringing in different people who are not like us and allowing them to "be".* The challenges identified were seen as requiring an ability to extend outwards and operate flexibility. Cohen (2004) and Hanna (2003) agree that capabilities to streamline processes, adapt and innovate are critical in the current complex university leadership environment.

The need for flexibility, innovation and change-readiness

Views of academic and administrative leaders (participants) were equally represented under this theme, typified in comments relating to preparedness to take risks, to think and act creatively, and to help others deal with change:

The level of risk that one has to be prepared to take now is a lot higher than previously. Leaders need to be ready...to be flexible, creative...

The greatest need is being able to think creatively...Some universities can be very set in their ways...we need to be able to operate with flexibility as the changes are making big impacts upon us.

Participants' views concurred with Barnett (2004), Cohen (2004) and Hanna (2003) that a university's key challenge is the ability to be flexible, adaptable and know how to problem-solve in order to "meet the demands of an increasingly complex and dynamic environment" (Hanna, 2003, p. 26). As argued by Marshall (2007) and Gayle, Tewarie and White (2003), there is a need for leadership development which addresses key challenges including "how to gain consensus among constituents that change is needed" (Gayle et al., 2003, p. 1). Indeed, a recurring theme from participants was having the courage in leadership to think and act creatively, to take considered risks and to help staff deal with the impact of change. Scott et al. (2008), referring to their study of leadership challenges and issues in higher education, write of the need to assist academic leaders in "making sense of the continuously and rapidly changing context" in which they operate, and that, overall, "what emerges is how important it is for academic leaders to be able to deal with change" (p. 27). Participants' comments reflected the ambiguity of concomitant educational and commercial drivers in higher education which call for an innovative, flexible approach that is prepared to take risks. For example:

*The most important thing, if the sector is to thrive, is to allow innovation...
[to] shake loose old ways of thinking...allowing the risk of failure...*

Ramsden (1998) observes that academic people fundamentally understand change, given their familiarity with the “uncertain process” of “discovering and reinterpreting knowledge” (p. 122) but, he adds, to accept change, they need to see change and innovation as being genuinely beneficial to their work. The observation resonates with the data of the study in that participants appeared to be very accepting of the need for innovation and change, but found that a significant challenge for them, as leaders, was engaging others in change and innovation. In this regard, participants implied that an important dimension of their role was to help build robust capacity in others to accept and adapt to change. As one academic participant expressed:

The main challenge for leaders is to communicate that change is taking place...and that it [change] will be constant. Being a manager of change is the most important thing that I can be and do for staff so that they can understand...how to “be” [to function] within ongoing change.

Marshall (2007), Scott et al. (2008) and Whitchurch (2006) concur that the ability to tackle topical issues and lead universities through major change are the most critical needs in the contemporary university environment. Of organisations generally, Wheatley (2003) argues that change leadership calls for a focus on the

people expected to work with the change rather than relying upon a devised system or structure.

Responding to competing tensions and remaining relevant

Challenges associated with responding to competing tensions and remaining relevant were reported mainly by academic leaders. As one academic participant expressed:

Achieving balance between research and teaching and achieving the right balance intellectually and financially in the sector are major challenges.

Remaining relevant, apprehending the “real needs” of students and engaging effectively with students were cited. As one participant expressed: *The challenge is to stay in tune with what the needs are..to prepare students in ways which match the real needs.* Other participants said that helping students develop both knowledge and values was a challenge:

The most significant challenge is to develop in students the necessary generic skills as well as a values base, and help equip them for the conflicts between the two that occur in practice. We have tended to train for the ideal world and the world “out there” is not always “ideal”

A challenge is dealing with the clash of values and tensions that leaders encounter in contemporary practice: managing the tension between personal values and outcomes

The observation resonates with research into the school leadership environment which noted the prevalence of ethical dilemmas faced by school principals, concluding “it is clear that as schools become more complex and the challenges facing the leaders of those schools more acute, that some attention to this area of ethics and ethical dilemmas is required” (Cranston, Ehrich & Kimber, 2004, p. 15).

Many participants revealed a need to balance the increasing demands of compliance and the leadership aspects of their roles. They expressed a concern that time paucity inhibited their sense of executing all aspects of the leadership role well, including attending as fully as they wished to their relationships with staff, students and peers. This challenge was particularly noted amongst heads of school; for example:

There is a sense of competing demands to do well in everything. In the tertiary sector, a major challenge relates to compliance...The risk is that we place more focus on administration than on creating a leadership environment. That is a balance that needs to be managed very effectively...

Participants’ comments reflect that responding to competing tensions around teaching and research, administration and academic work, intellectual quality and affordability is not a straightforward matter. As Cooper (2002) and others observe, divergent philosophical differences and relationships between stakeholders such as students, academics, universities, government and commerce spell complexity for managing in universities. This suggests that the differences between treating universities and

businesses and managing universities in a business-like way, as discussed by Gayle et al. (2003), represent implicit tensions which need to be managed. Participants' comments, however, suggest a will to engage forward with strategic clarity and positive relationships and values.

Maintaining academic quality

Dissent encountered in academic departments, Ramsden (1998) suggests, frequently concerns leaders underestimating resistance related to academic values and, hence, failing to pay attention to “the need to gain shared consent within a culture that so values autonomy and cooperative decision-making” (p. 122). A major challenge identified in the study was finding balance around the business model, a more regulated environment with increased administrative demands, and academic quality. One participant said:

I do believe that compliance models which have been applied to universities do not realise the unique set of values that universities have. It is acknowledged that we are dealing with public money and we need appropriate processes to ensure that this money is spent wisely, but we should not be thinking of ourselves as operating a business and that acknowledgement is out of alignment with current thinking.

This suggests that universities not allow business imperatives to undermine their unique positions to extend knowledge and learning. The challenge of maintaining academic quality while responding to government policy efficiency changes

resonates with some of the literature in the field, globally (Meek & Wood, 1997, Cooper, 2002; Szekeres, 2006). One participant said:

Responding to those [efficiency] changes whilst protecting the academic environment within is the challenge; getting the balance at that point is becoming harder.

Preserving quality for credible engagement was seen as a priority. For example:

Our results will be better if we go with quality and academic leadership in our society.

Yet balancing tensions between developing a collegial academic culture and competition is the reality for universities. As one participant expressed:

For the individual leader, building a viable and collegial academic culture is essential. I.. think about how we develop sustainable collaborative models....'In my view, in developing a business like approach..we create inefficiencies.'It creates an environment where people compete with each other. Part of 'my challenge is how we share resources across parts of an institution and across institutions as well.

Participants appeared to call for an integrated approach to academic planning to foster collaboration and the preservation of academic values including teaching quality so that these were not sacrificed for business efficiency.

Strategic leadership

The need for sound strategic leadership in particular “change leadership” was equally represented in participants’ comments. A need for “change leadership” that fosters innovation, collaboration and ability to influence was implicit in a number of comments. Participants saw a key place for leadership which “takes the longer, strategic view”, which is inclusive, and is prepared to serve. This concurred with the scan of the literature concerning the need for sound strategic leadership to help staff navigate change and collaborate in new and different ways. This requires learning and understanding of cultural differences within the university and amongst key external parties in order that university members think and act strategically in a global context in cognizance of different cultural mores.

Two participants stated:

...Whether it is quality assurance, bringing new courses out, having our client satisfaction improve – you are there to serve...It is about changing the whole culture of the university so that people see the bigger picture.

For the leader, gathering people around the strategic aims, and having to deliver on this is the biggest challenge.

Leadership capable of aligning people around strategic vision was emphasised:

We can't really afford to look only at the short-term picture, but [need to] focus on the strategic, longer-view. This wider thinking takes time to build.

A lot of 'r gq r r g' f q p o' t g c r k u g i v j c v' j g t g' c t g' p q y ' u k i p k k e c p v' k o r r k e c v k q p u' l q t ' l w c h l i' ""' v j' c f q r v' c' f k h g t g p v. ' y k f g t' i n t c v g i k e' r g t u r g e v k x g i "

This concurs with the view of Yelder and Codling (2004) and others that rallying together people from diverse backgrounds in pursuit of common goals is vital.

The conflation of responsibilities, ambiguity and challenge reflected in the literature and participants' comments are confronted by Barnett (2004) who writes:

“To see universities and teachers as consumers of resources, or even as producers of resources and on the one hand, and...as sites of open, critical and even transformatory engagement are, in the end, incompatible positions, no matter what compromises and negotiations are sought” (pp. 251-252).

Barnett's (2004) suggests an ontological “way of being” approach where the difference-making element is to depend more on building personal resilience to deal with fluctuating circumstances than to depend upon the circumstances being favourable. This epitomises the importance of the personal, human dimension emergent in the study. It might be said that hope of engaging others vests largely on a leader's personal resilience and ethical consistency to model the way positively to others. Authors such as Cranston, Ehrich and Kimber (2004; 2006) and Dempster and Berry (2003) note the ethical considerations that are critical to inspiring trust and engagement. Views that were much less represented in the data are recorded next. One participant cited as the key challenge the increase of

paperwork and compliance issues, making tough decisions, and difficulty retaining and rewarding staff within budgetary constraints. It is noteworthy that, here too, the personal dimension was in play. One participant said:

It is the reducing budgets, the paperwork and compliance issues.

For leaders, a big challenge is the difficulty of retaining good staff because of limited contract opportunities; managing with declining budgets; being able adequately to recognise staff; undertaking performance management constructively, and making tough decisions.

Another participant referred to organisational structure issues creating tensions for heads of school:

When one is positioned between university executive leadership and ground level, the challenge for the leader, say head of school, is how to manage the stretch between those two. The senior leadership is interfacing between university and government, and the head of school is interfacing between the “coal face” and senior leadership, at the same time as trying to nurture creativity and the academic environment.

Middlehurst (2007) seems to reflect this point, in part, when he suggests that one of the distinctive features of leading in the university environment is “[i]nsufficient departmental autonomy to carry management through” (p. 50). Gayle et al. (2003) imply the importance of university leaders grappling with relevant issues and reflecting on their perceptions and attitudes in relation to institutional structures and organisational cultures in universities. Some implications of the study are next explored.

Implications and Conclusion

The identification of key issues and challenges identified in the study would appear to support the literature discussed earlier in the paper and the theoretical framework identified for the study. Both the literature and the theoretical framework propose the critical nature of the human dimension in issues and challenges to do with leadership. The study revealed that quality engagement, including the ability to deal with change, is a critical challenge for university leaders, and that to neglect the human dimension is to fall short of the potential for task accomplishment, building and maintaining the team, and individual development of those involved. How university leaders balance their time and hone required skills to partner with others to gain funds, fulfil administrative accountability measures, effect process efficiencies, demonstrate strategic leadership and ensure a quality experience for all in their charge all depends to some extent on an ability to engage through change. This concurs with the three foci of the model - task achievement, building and maintaining the team and developing the individual – and recognition of the human element in each of these foci, as necessary in meeting the challenges identified.

The study found that inter-relational capabilities to engage and mobilise staff (through change, for example) were most needed. One gained the sense that it is more effective to focus on the people who are expected to embrace strategic change and innovation than focusing on the structure itself (Hanna, 2003). This is implied in comments such as: *[a] lot of people don't realise...that there are now significant implications for staff to adopt a different, wider strategic perspective.*

This might be said to exemplify, as Adair (2005) implies, that leadership is best understood at a personal level, and leaders must know themselves and be clear about what they are aiming to achieve in order to be effective (Miller, 2006). In this example, it might be argued, the role of the leader is critical to a team being able to adopt a different perspective in organisations as changing strategy might demand.

A key challenge noted by the participants in the study, and again reflected in the literature review, was striking a balance between effecting necessary efficiency changes and protecting academic quality. Here, too, the findings are consistent with the triple foci of the theoretical framework model. It might be agreed that achieving such balance depends upon clear communication of the goals, team engagement to pursue and work within perhaps competing agenda, and individual development to foster relevant skills and knowledge (Drew, 2006; Mead et al., 1999). A need to acknowledge the human element in trying to achieve balance in complex working environments such as universities is unmistakable. Remaining relevant within the competing tensions was a key, associated challenge.

In terms of remaining relevant, setting up mechanisms by which to receive feedback from a range of sources may help individual leaders tailor development effort most effectively for continuous improvement. The study suggests the interdependency of knowledge/skill *and* human-centred behaviours for effectiveness in leadership. Scott et al. (2008) note that a number of studies, “including a small number from Australia, (e.g. Ramsden, 1998; Drew, 2006), shed light on the specific qualities deemed as important and necessary for leaders now and in the future” (p. 15), and that “similar domains of focus and

development can be seen in 360-degree leadership instruments and processes used in higher education, such as the Quality Leadership Profile” (Scott et al., p. 15). Academics co-developing mutually informing research and teaching agenda in cognate disciplines may assist universities to enrich student learning, reflecting the intersecting borders of discipline and cultural domains which operate in society and life. Teaching that excites enquiry *and* leverages consideration of values has the golden capacity to make a difference; as Ranasinghe (2001) asserts, “to make the world a better place” (p. 1).

That the eighteen interviewees demonstrated confidence about the future reflects their strong commitment to key academic and professional goals and a readiness to engage with change. While many participants expressed confidence for the future, comments from just one or two participants reflected concerns about the future - for example, whether ever-tighter budgets and the difficulty gaining research funds would place university teams in a position where they were hard pressed to undertake core business and deliver services adequately. The study supports the view that leadership support and development deserves increased attention today given the multiple and ambiguous drivers of higher education agenda, differentiated expectations of students and stakeholders, and the disparate ways in which quality is measured.

As outlined above, the findings of this study align with the interrelated concepts of the literature review reflected in Adair’s Action-Centred Leadership Model and the more recent distillation of that work to reveal the personal, human dimension

as most critical in key issues and challenges cited. In this regard the study proposes, with Brown (2001), that the challenges in higher education will be assisted by “paying greater attention to people and process and more consciously practising the principles of effective leadership” (pp. 312-323). Some implications of the study for leadership development in universities are next proposed, after which some limitations of the study acknowledged in order to identify a path forward for further research.

The above findings have implications for the appropriate development of leaders. The study supports the importance of pursuing task accomplishment in a way that takes account of the team who will do the work, and of the development and growth of the individuals involved. An associated implication is learning from the diversity with which higher education is blessed. This is summed up in one participant’s comment.

The more complex the organisation, the more complex will be the issues to be considered in terms of leadership...Leadership is much more dynamic and honest where you are able to enter into a dialogue that is real...In complex education/university environments...we could make more use of the variety of opinions and expertise in considering all kinds of issues.

The findings have implications for how universities not only espouse but place resources to training and preparing leaders capable of responding to competing tensions, balancing multiple agenda and embracing ambiguity. Tracking the

progress of leadership development in universities is not attempted here, but it is noted that, typically in the late 1990s, audits of the “quality movement” responded to the inherent challenges of embracing new paradigms for leadership in the late 1990s, and a need to respond to challenge and change was noted in responses to the quality movement at that time (Mead et al., 1999; Meek & Wood, 1997).

Further significant work has been done since then to suggest the desirability of leadership programs and the usefulness of their contribution to building stronger, change-capable and engaged higher education communities (Barnett, 2004; Brown, 2001; Cohen, 2004; Cooper, 2002; Drew, Ehrich & Hansford, 2008; Marshall, 2007, Middlehurst, 2007, Scott et al., 2008).

That interviewees in the study indicated that they appreciated being able to voice their key challenges suggests the importance of providing an environment where leaders may share and discuss the challenges they face, and benefit from each others’ strategies for meeting challenge and change. Gyskiewicz (1999) proposes the concept of “positive turbulence” where the very challenges of changing organisational landscapes and shifting priorities may become sites for consciously developing climates for creativity, innovation and personal/professional growth. Valuable organisational learning experiences are lost unless there is a way of harnessing and sharing the insights gained.

It has been noted that in the complex roles of education leadership, accountabilities may be blurred (Cranston, Ehrich & Kimber, 2004). Similarly, this study, and that of Scott et al. (2008) recognised that competing tensions in academic leadership domains represent challenges to leaders, calling for clear, engaging, strategic

leadership. The findings have supported the need for strategic leadership development supported by a trustful environment where, for example, feedback on leadership may be gained and monitored for continuous improvement. Similarly, a well-contextualised leadership program may provide a useful forum for sharing new relevant information and the challenges of practice. Institutional support, ideally, is critical to building individual self-efficacy that is necessary to successful leadership learning in organisations (Maurer, Mitchell & Barbeite, 2002). Finally, Marshall (2007) discusses change leadership as the key difference-making component and challenge of today's university; critical to effecting cultural shift, globalisation, diversity and equality and strategic adaptation. The research findings of this study reinforce this view.

As stated, a key implication of the study is that the findings may inform leadership development in universities. In that regard, a note on the distinctiveness of the university sector in terms of development needs may be helpful and is included, in closing. Middlehurst (2007) argues the distinctiveness of the university sector. He reports research conducted by way of evaluating the Adair leadership courses where “respondents drew attention to the distinctiveness of universities as organizations as well as the receptiveness or otherwise of their institutions toward more executive styles of management” (pp. 49, 50). Of the university environment, Middlehurst (2007) posits a number of distinctive features including “[t]he difficulties of managing change in universities where strong democratic and antimanageial traditions existed”; secondly, “[t]he problem of managing highly individualistic academics with no strong sense of corporate identity to department or university” and, thirdly, “[t]he need for a level

of understanding of management concepts and the freedom to exercise degrees of control and influence in order to exercise effective leadership” (p. 70). It may be noted that each of these allegedly distinctive features pertain to the human element in managing and leading people. Finally, two main limitations of the study are discussed.

There are two main limitations to this study. Firstly, the findings of the study need to be treated with some caution because of the small sample size. Thus, the size of the sample mitigates mounting strong arguments by way of implications and recommendations from the study. The second limitation, and a point worthy of exploration in further research, is whether the views of the sample might have been unduly favourable given that research participants were chosen as individuals receiving accelerated development in a succession leadership development program. A significant proportion of the eighteen participants, and indeed a significant proportion of the forty-five participants overall in the succession leadership development program’s three cohorts, have gone on to gain more senior roles at the university, while some have left to take up other higher level positions at other places.

Overall, the findings of this pilot study support the tenets within the literature as to the key challenges faced by leaders in higher education. The study, overall, offers a vantage point from which further studies might be undertaken to ask the same research questions of the same participants in, say, four years’ time; to compare results of this sample with those of a broader sample unrelated to a particular

development program, and cross-sectorally to gain a sense of shared and different issues and challenges faced.

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2. they take public responsibility for their part of the publication, except for the responsible author who accepts overall responsibility for the publication;
3. there are no other authors of the publication according to these criteria;
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I have sighted email or other correspondence from all Co-authors confirming their certifying authorship.

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An Exploration of University Leaders' Perceptions of Learning about Leadership

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ABSTRACT: The paper reports on a study conducted with 18 new and emerging middle level university leaders who had been targeted for a senior leadership development program. Participants were asked to identify (i) what constitutes effective leadership within a university setting; and (ii) reflect on one or more significant learning experiences that helped them to learn about leadership. The findings revealed that effective leadership practices were those that fell within two broad categories of interpersonal skills and engagement; and strategic thinking, action and operational effectiveness. Three main types of significant learning experiences cited were learning from others; formal university leadership programs; and critical incidents on the job. The paper concludes with some key implications for developers of university programs.

Introduction

Universities around the world have begun looking closely at their leadership succession plans to ensure there is an adequate pool of quality applicants who will take their place as leaders given anticipated staff turnover and age-related attrition (Jacobzone, Cambois, Chaplain & Robine, 1998). To meet these challenges, leadership preparation and development programs have been utilised to develop the capacities required of leaders in a changing landscape. For the purposes of this paper, leadership capacity is defined as 'broad-based skilful participation in the work of leadership' (Lambert 1998, p. 18). A more complex socio-cultural milieu in which university

leaders now work (Marshall, Adams, Cameron & Sullivan, 2000; Ramsden, 1998a, 1998b) has also pointed to the need for effective leadership programs to support them in their daily endeavours. Of interest in this paper are the perceptions held by new and emerging university leaders regarding what constitutes effective leadership, and how they learned about leadership. It is argued that investigating participants' viewpoints has the propensity to enhance our understanding of the nature of leadership given there is limited empirical research that has explored effective leadership within higher education institutions (Pounder, 2001). Furthermore, it is argued that learning about participants' views regarding leadership may provide some useful insights into effective ways of providing leadership development for leaders within university settings (Knight & Trowler, 2001). This paper begins by providing a discussion of the challenges and complexities that beset the university context and, by implication, university leaders. Some of the broader literature on effectiveness in leadership is then considered followed by an examination of how leaders learn about leadership within university contexts.

Changing University Context

In recent decades, higher education institutions around the world have faced increasing complexity and change due to a range of external social, economic and political pressures. Kezar (in Kezar & Eckel, 2004) identifies three significant changes to the higher education environment that are making governance more problematic and these are diverse environmental issues such as accountability and competition; retiring faculty staff and more diverse faculty appointments; and the need to respond efficiently to shorter decision time frames. Ramsden (1998a) concurs when he says:

[u]niversities face an almost certain future of relentless variation in a more austere climate. Changes in the environment – mass higher education, knowledge growth, reduced public funding, increased emphasis on employment skills and pressure for more accountability – have been reflected in fundamental internal changes (p. 347).

Part of the complexity facing universities is their dual role. On the one hand they fulfil a key role in local and global communities where they engage in knowledge creation and dissemination through teaching and research. Yet, on the other hand, they must operate as successful corporations able to withstand scrutiny to financial management practice, administrative reporting and in relation to accreditation requirements in relevant disciplines.

It is not surprising, therefore, that these and other competing pressures are having a significant impact upon the lives and work of university leaders and managers and, as Kezar and Eckel (2004) state, are placing enormous responsibility upon leaders to make 'wise decisions in a timely manner' (p. 371). It is in this challenging context that university leaders need to be able to create and lead change, motivate staff and tend to the managerial matters such as budgeting in a timely and efficient way (Pounder, 2001; Ramsden, 1998a). Given a complex context in which leaders now work and the challenges posed by changed governance arrangements, what might constitute other effective leadership practices within the university context?

Effective Leadership Practices within Universities

In writing about leadership within the higher education sector, Ramsden (1998b) argues that 'it is identical to leadership in other organisations and idiosyncratic to university environments' (p. 123). By this he means academic or university leadership is distinct from other types of organisational leadership, because it is concerned with academic business (i.e. research, scholarship, teaching, service). At the same time, academic leadership can be understood within the broader framework of the leadership literature because in many ways it is not fundamentally different and consists of similar elements. For this reason, the discussion that follows draws upon a selection of perspectives from the broader leadership literature that has currency for university leadership in addition to some writing and research that comes from studies of leadership within university settings.

Over the centuries there has been much attention given to the topic of leadership yet to date there continues to be little consensus regarding its meaning, nature and the best way to develop leaders. Much writing in the field distinguishes between leadership and management. For instance, leadership is described as a practice that focuses on setting visions, mobilising people and bringing about change, while management is described as a practice that involves planning and budgeting, organising staff, controlling and solving problems (Kotter, 1990). Most writers would agree that leadership and management are complementary processes and necessary for the running of effective organisations. For the purposes of this discussion, leadership is defined as 'a practical everyday process supporting, managing, developing and inspiring academic colleagues' (Ramsden, 1998b, p. 4).

Leadership has been construed in terms of traits, practices, behaviours and attitudes. Two theories pertinent to university leadership that are considered in this discussion are Bales and Slater's (1955) leader behaviour theory and transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985). While introduced to the field over half a century ago, leader behaviour theory emerged in the 1950s and held that effective leadership comprised two factors: structure and consideration (Bales & Slater, 1955). Structure referred to task oriented behaviours and getting the job done while consideration focused on interpersonal relationships with followers (Bales & Slater, 1955). Central to both sets of effective leadership practices was the need for leadership oriented skills (i.e. interpersonal skills that inspire, motivate and support staff) and managerial skills (i.e. strategic planning and change and meeting expectations and outcomes). In more recent times, theorists have built upon these two dimensions of leadership (e.g. see Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996). Although the two dimensions of structure and consideration constitute a relatively simple conceptualisation of leadership, it is argued that these dimensions have relevance for understanding university leadership. As Ramsden (1998b) argues, 'in universities, as in other organisations, systematic processes which produce orderly results are required to balance the imaginative ideas that produce change' (p. 109).

Over the last 20 years, there has been much leadership thinking focused on transformational and transactional leadership. Transformational leadership involves motivating and inspiring staff as well as satisfying their higher needs (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1988; Burns, 1978). It is also about stimulating and encouraging thinking and bringing out high performance in staff, beyond

normal expectations. A key component of transformational leadership is the notion of 'enabling others to act' (Kouzes & Posner, 2002) which refers to leaders who encourage and empower others to act, take ownership and strengthen their performance. Building an inclusive culture that supports genuine collaboration and effective team work has been identified also as an important leadership practice within organisations (Senge, 1990) and schools (Johnston & Caldwell, 2001).

In contrast to transformational leadership, transactional leadership is concerned with the positional power of the leader to ensure compliance by followers. It views leadership as an exchange where rewards and punishments are handed out to acknowledge performance of followers (Burns, 1978). While Burns (1978) saw that transformational leadership was positioned at one end of the continuum and transactional leadership at the other, Bass (1985) argued that transactional leadership was not incompatible with transformational leadership and both strategies could work together to constitute effective leadership. Both Pounder (2001) and Ramsden (1998b) have argued that insights from transformational leadership theory are pertinent for university leadership. For example, based on his study of organisational effectiveness in higher educational institutions in Hong Kong, Pounder (2001) argued that what is required in leading universities today can be reflected in a leadership approach that draws upon elements of transformational and transactional approaches to leadership. He argued that transformational leadership is necessary to build interpersonal relationships, morale and team work while transactional leadership is necessary for planning-goal setting and productivity-efficiency (Pounder, 1999 in Pounder, 2001). According to Pounder (2001), such a combination of transformational and transactional approaches should enable universities to manage the variety of paradoxical pressures that they face. The final part of this discussion refers to the work of three writers who provide insights into leadership within university contexts.

Firstly, Filan and Seagren (2003) drew upon research and theoretical insights to arrive at six critical components of leadership which constitute leadership training within their university. These are: understanding of self; understanding of transformational leadership; establishing and maintaining relationships; leading teams; leading strategic planning and change; and connecting through community. They describe their university academic leadership program which is based on a series of activities that build leaders' knowledge and skills in each of the six critical areas. That these authors highlight opportunities for academic leaders to learn more about themselves and focus on self development is not surprising. For example, London (2002) claims that 'self insight [is] a prerequisite for understanding others [and] the foundation for development' (p. 27) for leaders in organisations while Bhindi and Duignan (1997) argue that an understanding of self is a critical feature of what they coin 'authentic leadership', where authenticity refers to discovering the self through relationships with others and has a focus on trustworthiness, genuineness and ethics. Following the work of others (e.g. Ramsden 1998a & b; Pounder 1999, 2001), Filan and Seagren (2003) highlight the relevance of academic leaders drawing upon insights from transformational leadership theory for its ability to inspire trust and engage staff to high levels of achievement.

Secondly, Ramsden (1998a) refers to studies he and others conducted at the Griffith Institute for Higher Education that found that academic leaders, such as middle managers, play several roles and these include motivating and inspiring staff; bringing about high performance in colleagues; credible leadership that stimulates and encourages thinking; filtering out bureaucratic

demands so that academics are free to 'get on' with their jobs; leading from behind as well as from the front; facilitating the work of others rather than focusing on their own work; and balancing open ended problems while acknowledging goals, constraints and expected outcomes. These types of roles are congruent with transformational and transactional leadership behaviours.

Thirdly, a recent Carrick sponsored study led by Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008) explored what the perceptions of some 500 academic leaders were regarding important leadership capabilities or attributes. The findings included a range of capabilities such as empathising, self-regulation, self-organisation, decisiveness, commitment to learning and teaching, strategy, diagnosis, influencing, flexibility and responsiveness and university operations. In summary, then, the capabilities mentioned by Scott et al. (2008) and the other writers in the leadership field discussed above point to a blend of human centred and strategic operations behaviours, attributes, attitudes and practices in recognition that leadership is a multi-faceted activity.

Learning about Leadership

Just as there is no consensus on what is leadership or what constitutes effective leadership, there is no consensus regarding the best way to develop leaders (Blackler & Kennedy, 2004) or the best way leaders learn about leadership. Over the last couple of decades, research studies have found that new academics often feel alienated and unsupported in their work (see de Rome & Boud, 1984). However, it is not only new academics who have reported feeling isolated but also new leaders (Daresh, 2006; Ramsden, 1998b). In response to these concerns, universities have established a number of formal means of support for new staff including induction programs, targeted training programs, leadership development programs and formal mentoring programs. Of these, leadership development programs are often cited as approaches to develop leaders and, for this reason, are considered in more detail below.

Leadership development programs

Organisations throughout the world continue to invest considerable sums of money in leadership development programs for aspiring and existing leaders based on the belief that leadership holds the key to organisational growth and renewal (Brown, 2001). Yet leadership development programs are strategies that are deemed to be 'underutilized in most universities' (Brown, 2001, p. 313). According to McDade (1988) these programs have not achieved the same level of acceptance in the higher education area as they have done in the corporate world. Commenting on Australia, Anderson and Johnson (2006) claim that there is a tendency for academic leaders to learn on the job rather than engage in leadership development programs. While learning on the job can be a valuable way of learning, leadership development programs are viewed as a more formalised active alternative (McDade, 1988). In more recent times, there has been a strong argument in the literature for the implementation of leadership development programs that build effectively the leadership capacity required to lead universities into the future (see Carrick Institute, 2006; Southwell, Gannaway, Chalmers & Abraham, 2005).

It is important to note that leadership development programs can and do vary a great deal. A

particular view of what is meant by leadership drives their content and the way in which they are taught (Ehrich & Hansford, 2006). These programs range from more traditional academic formal approaches (Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001) to experiential approaches (Hornyak & Page, 2004). Experiential approaches are said to provide learners with opportunities to reflect alone and with others on their experiences, evaluate them and thus come to new understandings about them (Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001). Some of the more common purposes of using experiential exercises to develop leaders include helping learners to take risks, be innovative, develop skills of collaboration, manage conflict and use diversity (Kaagan, 1999). Mentoring comes under the umbrella of an experiential learning approach to leadership development since it takes place within the context of a relationship with another and involves opportunities for both parties (the mentor and the mentored) to share, reflect upon experiences and learn from these experiences. It is discussed next.

Mentoring is an interpersonal learning activity whereby a more experienced person (a mentor) provides professional development and various levels of support to a less experienced person (protégé or mentee) (Hansford, Tennent & Ehrich, 2003). In a university setting, mentors have been described as key players who socialise new members of staff into the role and culture of the organisation (Bochner, 1996). These relationships often evolve between persons due to their mutual interests and/or the desire of either or both party to work together (Clutterbuck, 2004). However, it is not uncommon to see formal mentoring programs implemented in universities (Bochner, 1996) to support the learning of new leaders. The previous discussion has identified some of the ways in which university leaders learn about leadership. The authors concur with the ideas of London (2002) who argues that leadership development is not and cannot be construed as a one time event that is going to prepare leaders. It is more likely to be an ongoing process combining formal and informal learning experiences for staff.

Methodology

The focus of this study was an investigation of a cohort of mid to senior level university leaders' perceptions about (i) what constitutes effective leadership and (ii) what are some significant or defining leadership experiences that have most assisted their learning in the leadership role. Interviews were held with 18 participants, all of whom were part of a 'by invitation' accelerated succession leadership program held over three years for 40 invited participants in all. Participants held a variety of middle level senior academic and administrative roles such as Head of School, administrative roles in student services, and research administration or information technology positions. Following the completion of the program (comprising eight half day sessions over a period of one year), participants were asked if they would be interested in participating in interviews with one of the researchers who also was one of the facilitators of the leadership program.

Eighteen participants agreed. Of a total of 11 females and seven males, 10 participants held academic supervisory roles and eight held administrative supervisory roles. The hour long interviews were based on the two open questions identified above. The thematic analysis also investigated any differences observed between the comments of academic and administrative

participants, respectively.

Interviews, as a data collection method, are effective as they enable dialogue and conversation for researchers and educators 'eager to grasp new ways of knowing' (Greene, 1994, p. 454). A laptop computer was used by the researcher to record participants' responses and these responses were confirmed with participants individually. Data analysis took the form of constant comparative analysis (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran, 2001) whereby themes were identified and coded as they surfaced. As new themes emerged, these were compared with the previous ones and regrouped with similar themes. If a new meaning unit emerged, a new theme was formed (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Findings

The results of the findings from the two core questions are discussed here. Regarding question 1, the analysis of participants' responses yielded several themes which centred on characteristics of leaders as well as particular practices. These themes have been identified in order of most frequently to least frequently cited.

Effective leadership conditions or practices that constitute high performance

There was strong support by participants that effective leaders are persons who have people skills; who promoted an environment that fostered growth of leadership in others, opened doors for staff and helped create opportunities; were credible and engendered trust; acted as role models; were ethical, inclusive and collaborative in their practices; were strategic and took responsibility for decisions; communicated the goals and vision of the organisation; understood organisational priorities; and had adequate resources and connections. These comments were equally distributed across the academics and administrators in the sample. Some illustrations are included below:

People skills

In terms of people skills, one participant summed it up as:

People management is most important... You are thrust into a role primarily about managing and leading people.

These people skills included being both approachable and visible. It is noted that people skills were implicit in a vast majority of the comments.

Promoting an environment where leadership is fostered in others

A prominent theme identified by several participants, most of whom were academics, was promoting an environment where leadership can be fostered in staff. Three examples are provided below.

To foster the growth of leadership in others...using delegation to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility in others and hence to "grow" the leadership skills and capabilities.

Leaders should provide autonomy and allow others to do the job in their own way; not to micromanage. If they are new to their role...the leader puts the other person in the

driver's seat and provides the conversation and back up support needed.

It is not enough just to have the structure right; the personal dimension needs to be right. You need the capacity to delegate to people; something that is possible in the presence of mutual trust.

Closely related to this theme was the notion of leaders using their influence and role in helping staff create and act on opportunities. For example:

Someone whom you can respect in terms of having a vision, demonstrating intellectual capacity...creating opportunities and helping you take advantage of opportunities... Good leaders force you out of your comfort zone, have confidence in you for a new role and then back you in that role (academic).

It is giving people the opportunity to succeed (academic).

Not only do leaders need to provide these types of opportunities, but another participant claimed that leaders need to create an environment where people are able to bring ideas to the table without fear. A common concern raised by participants in the aforementioned quotes was that staff should be offered opportunities, encouragement and support to develop their talents and build their own leadership skills.

Credibility and the engendering of trust

Credibility and trust were words that emerged mainly in academic participants' comments regarding important characteristics of effective leaders. One academic referred to his PhD supervisor as a brilliant example of a leader: For example:

... He didn't demand respect, he earned respect. He was a humble person and he had credibility. People follow a person like that. The environment that he created was one of trust.

Other participants said:

The leader must have the trust and respect, from supervisor, staff and peers in order to have credibility (administrator).

The leader must be able to instil confidence in you concerning his/her capacity to lead. Saying "there is a problem" where there is one, and "let's fix it" is important (administrator).

Two academic participants nominated sincerity and action as part of the trust element, expressing the view that part of trustworthiness is the ability to see matters through. One put it this way:

Unless you have gained people's trust, people are not going to come to you with issues and items which need resolution... One needs to blend sincerity with organisational skills, as one can genuinely mean to do something but if they [sic] can't organise themselves it won't get done, despite their sincerity. That's the type of leader I look for.

Role models

Both academic and administrative participants referred to the importance of leaders being role models for staff and setting a good example for them. Four quotes illustrate this:

For me, it is...leading from the front, versus the notion of managing from the rear...

It is being an example-setter. It is having a good example to benchmark myself against. It is a level of approachability in the leader. The stronger ones as leaders tend to be those

who are more approachable than others.

Leaders need to be most visible in times of change.

I like the word "leader". I expect to be led by example; to be led by someone who is dynamic, intelligent, visionary, and truthful.

Ethical, inclusive and collaborative practices

An important theme that emerged was the need for leaders to be ethical, inclusive and collaborative in their practices. For example, participants stated:

Having no favourites; interested in a fair outcome for everyone (administrator)

For me, they are inclusiveness, transparency and a collaborative approach to both strategic and operational issues (academic).

Integrity is most important (academic).

Taking responsibility for decision making

A number of participants, mostly administrative leaders, alluded to the importance of decision making, not only in terms of the leader following through but also in making sound judgements. For example:

Directness is important. I prefer my supervisors to be providing direction with honesty about what they are doing, showing integrity; and when a decision is made to follow through on that decision.

Decision-maker – an ability to seek advice appropriately and to weigh up that advice.

An academic participant referred to the importance of leaders themselves being pro-active in making decisions and not merely implementing decisions of those higher up in the university. He said:

In relation to governance, governance that is generated by the leadership members themselves and not just imposed upon them is far more effective. You need to develop an internal discipline on governance, generating the "spirit" of it from within.

Communicating the goals and vision of the organisation

Both administrative and academic participants nominated vision as a key requirement of leadership. Two participants said:

[leaders who are]... able to act as though they "own" the vision. They don't have to create their own vision; we have that through the university [mission and goals], but they have to "own" those goals for others to own them.

We need to undertake the collective view of things, and part of that is about communicating your vision to others so that there is clarity regarding how you move forward together.

Understanding organisational priorities

Related to vision was leadership that requires an understanding of organisational priorities. One participant stated:

Leadership requires clear vision...At the organisational level the leader needs to have good understanding of organisational priorities and a good sense of their own place and sphere of influence within those priorities.

Participants referred to the need for a ‘collective view’ in pursuing strategic organisational priorities, and a consultative, participative approach to solving issues. One academic stated:

Good leaders are seen to have the ways and means to accomplish what they set out to do. It means being creative about ways to solve issues. Leaders provide guided thinking. They don’t solve problems for people but engage people in solving problems; they ask them to come with a possible resolution in mind.

Adequate resources and connections

Effective leaders required access to adequate resources and connections. As one administrative participant stated:

The leader must have adequate resources and connections to be able to take carriage of projects and activities for which he/she is responsible.

Significant learning experiences for leaders

Some participants reported that the very act of reflecting upon their experiences or learning activities helped them to acknowledge that they, in effect, had learned about leadership. Participants’ experiences were categorised into three main areas and these were learning from others (i.e. mentors, role models); formal courses or programs; and critical incidents or on-the job learning activities.

Learning from others

A number of participants, mostly academics, referred to the value of learning from another person such as a mentor or a role model who inspired, supported and encouraged them. For instance, one academic participant said:

The most valuable messages in terms of leadership have come from other people who are leaders who have provided me with either the modelling or messages which have been very tangible in terms of my development.

For another participant (administrative), having access to a mentor who provided good advice and discussed developmental matters was cited as important:

...the Dean at [X University] strongly encouraged me to do a masters course, though I was in science, and get into administration. He discussed what he saw as my strengths and weaknesses. He was right. Doing the masters course opened doors. It allowed me to see management from a different perspective...I believe that having a good leader who advises staff well and takes the time to have staff development discussions.

Formal courses of study / leadership programs

Across participants equally, significant leadership learning came about by engaging in leadership development programs and courses. A number of participants, particularly academic leaders, referred to benefits of sharing with others in the relevant ‘by nomination’ senior succession leadership program entitled ‘Leading in the New Era’ (LINE) provided at the given university. One academic participant said:

It was the LINE (Leading in the New Era) program. It was like a coming of age for me. I really enjoyed X’s [senior university executive’s] presentation about the way he deals with issues.

Other participants commented about this program. A commonly cited benefit, particularly from heads of school, was the value of *standing back and reflecting on one's own professional development and leadership behaviours* [given the] *unlikelihood of finding the time to do this without the discipline of a program*.

An administrative participant identified a leadership development course with a strong experiential focus undertaken some 10 years ago which had caused her to reflect upon and question her leadership approach:

... The whole point of the exercise was to teach people as managers not to be rule bound. For me it had a huge impression because the whole thing fell apart. Prior to that I had had a tendency to be rule bound... the lessons that it taught me about being flexible and open to change never left me.

Several participants referred to critical or defining events when they learned one or more valuable lessons about themselves as leaders. One academic cited the following:

When our research centre didn't get ...funding there was a great sense that I had to do everything I could to maximise people's potential to get other jobs. It brought home to me that I have to look after my people...Managing within a major change experience one has to be clear and honest... and keep people informed.

Another academic said:

Crisis situations are those from which I have learned most. One aspect of that is learning to disengage when needed and still to remain in control of your life. Going through difficult times shores up ability to lead.

For two academic leaders, significant leadership learning came about through on-the-job learning precipitated by pressing needs to lead through change.

For me there was an early developmental experience... where I learned about strengths that I didn't know I had...

...watching and learning from others in leadership roles. Some experiences which were painful at the time one can reflect upon later and say "I would do that again" or "I would not do that again".

One academic participant mused that learning was the result of all three of the activities named here. He said:

I would like to see a continuation of events and activities as well as educational experiences ... mentoring. It is in learning from the experience of others and from one's own experience. The learning experience is an upward, incremental trend, drawing on a mixture of influences.

Discussion

In terms of what constitutes effective leadership within a university environment, participants in this study identified a number of leader qualities and practices. For the purposes of the discussion, the nine themes that emerged from the first question are discussed in relation to two overarching categories: interpersonal people skills and engagement, and strategic thinking and operational effectiveness. Both of these broad leadership practices are said to be complementary and necessary for effective leadership (Bales & Slater, 1955; Kotter, 1990).

Interpersonal people skills and engagement

Participants referred to people skills that are central to effective leadership. It is precisely these skills that emphasise the human side of leadership (Ehrich & Knight, 1998) and assist us to see leadership as an interpersonal relational activity (Bales & Slater, 1955; Bhindi & Duignan, 1997; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Pounder, 2001). As Ramsden (1998b) says, 'leadership is to do with how people relate to each other' (p. 4).

An important theme that emerged in participants' responses was that effective leadership provided and promoted an environment where leadership was fostered in others. This idea has been supported in the literature where effective leaders are seen as educators who provide staff with opportunities that help them grow and become leaders themselves (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Ramsden, 1998b). In the study participants referred to effective leaders who delegate and empower staff to take ownership and responsibility, a notion that both Ramsden (1998a & b) and Kouzes and Posner (2002) discuss as critical to leadership. Related here is leadership that comes from behind and plays a supportive role as well as a challenging one (Daloz, 1986; Kouzes & Posner, 2002) in helping people to get out of their comfort zones and embrace the challenges of leadership.

Although participants did not use the term, 'transformational leadership', much of what they described as effective leadership could be considered as constituting this type of theoretical approach. For example, participants referred to the process of enabling others to become leaders (Burns, 1978; Kouzes & Posner, 2002); valuing people and their growth (Burns, 1978) inspiring trust in staff (Burns, 1978) and promoting cooperation and collaboration (Ramsden, 1998b). Participants referred to leaders who have the trust and respect of their peers and staff. Related to this was credibility in the role. Credibility has been defined as the dynamic currency of leadership (Leavy, 2003) since it depends on performance of the leader. For participants, credibility was viewed in terms of leaders who followed through, were trustworthy and 'walked the talk'. Credibility was also identified as an effective leadership practice of roles of Heads in Ramsden's (1998a) study. Trust was seen as essential in the presence of integrity and a 'hallmark of environments in which people feel respected, valued and appreciated' (Filan & Seagran, 2003, p. 26).

Participants referred to effective leaders as those who set an example and acted as role models for staff. One of Kouzes and Posner's (2002) five leadership practices is 'model the way' which refers to the need for leaders to model the behaviour they expect of others if they want commitment from staff. The final theme that fits within the overarching category of interpersonal people skills was ethical, inclusive and collaborative practices. Here participants referred to the need for leaders to be ethical, not to have favourites, but to be transparent, fair and collaborative in their dealings. In recent years there has been a resurgence of writing on the moral and ethical dimensions of leadership (Duignan & Collins, 2003; Preston & Samford, 2002) needed in organisations. Some writers have argued this focus is due to the increasingly complex environments in which leaders work (Cooper, 1998). The importance of creative inclusive and collaborative practices resonates with Filan and Seagren's work (2003) that maintains that leaders need to build and encourage team work where collaboration is key. As they say, 'collaboration requires learning to work on teams, handling conflict, making decisions through consensus,

demonstrating ethical process and using team assessment' (p. 28).

Strategic thinking and organisational effectiveness

According to Filan and Seagren (2003), leading strategic planning and change is a key role of academic leaders. In the current study, participants alluded to a number of practices that were related to strategic thinking and organisational effectiveness. For instance, participants referred to the importance of leaders who not only make sound decisions but also who follow through on these decisions. Support for this idea can be found in the work of Bryson (in Filan & Seagren, 2003) who maintains that strategic planning and decisions need to be followed through with thinking and acting that result in change, and in the findings of Scott et al. (2008) on the importance of self-organisation in leadership.

Participants referred to the importance of leaders who communicate vision to staff. A key effective leadership practice of Kouzes and Posner (2002) is inspire a shared vision where leaders invent a future based around the vision and help staff to commit to it. To do this requires leaders to operationalise the visions and goals and empower staff (Sergiovanni, 1992) so they are able to 'own the vision,' as one participant said.

Understanding organisational priorities and directions was identified by participants as a feature of effective leadership. A participant who was Head of School referred to the need for governance to come from within the department rather than merely to be imposed from the top. In other words, leaders in concert with staff need to articulate clear goals for the department as well as be able to understand the wider systemic organisational priorities. It is because of Heads' location occupying the middle ground between staff and the system that Ramsden (1998b) says they need to filter out bureaucratic demands so that academics can get on with the job.

Finally, participants referred to necessity for adequate resources to be able to undertake their job effectively. Yet, in the climate of shrinking resources within universities (Currie, 1998), this has posed a challenge for many university leaders. The importance of having access to adequate 'connections' is related to Filan and Seagren's (2003) notion of 'connecting through community' where university leaders need to have connections not only within the university environment but also outside of it. Leaders are viewed as those people who build and nurture connections with others.

Learning about leadership

The new and emerging leaders in this study identified three significant ways in which they learned about leadership. Firstly, formal programs of study such as leadership development programs and post-graduate study were cited. Given that leadership training and development programs are used by universities as a means of supporting staff and building capacity, this finding was not unexpected. A couple of participants referred to a program they recently completed which introduced them to the university's strategic mission and goals. Another participant recalled a group experiential learning activity that enabled her to reflect on her current practices of managing and to come to new understandings about herself and her practices. Experiential learning activities are designed to do this – to develop skills of collaboration, entice risk-taking in a supportive environment (Kaagan, 1999) and challenge leaders to think again and see a situation differently

(Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001). It appears that the formal programs of study described by participants fell within both the more traditional and academic approaches (Mitchell & Poutiantine, 2001) and experiential approaches (Hornyak & Page, 2004; Kaagan, 1999).

Secondly, participants referred to learning from others (mentors, other leaders) who acted as role models, inspired them and provided useful advice, all functions that are said to be performed by mentors in the literature (Clutterbuck, 2004; Kram, 1985).

Thirdly, participants identified a number of critical incidents that occurred on the job that provided rich and valuable learning about leadership. This finding was unsurprising given Anderson and Johnson's (2006) comment that much learning for academic leaders occurs on the job. For some participants, the learning emerged through crisis situations and difficult times that required them to take action. For others, the incidents provided them with opportunities to reflect upon themselves as leaders, their strengths and their capacities. The importance of self-understanding (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997), empathy and self-regulation (Scott et al., 2008) and self-insight (London, 2002) has been highlighted in the leadership development literature. A number of participants identified key lessons they learned which included the importance of honesty in one's dealings; helping others to look at situations differently; embracing change; and working with limited resources. All of these lessons describe roles university leaders are expected to play (Ramsden, 1998a & b).

Implications and Conclusions

The results of this study have shown that, from the perspectives of 18 new and emerging leaders from one university in Australia, demonstration of interpersonal, relationship-building, inspiring trust in staff, and motivating and enabling attributes lie at the heart of successful leadership. Indeed, the descriptions provided by participants had a strong flavour that 'transformational leadership', following the ideas of Burns (1978) and other writers, was what they perceived as effective for leadership within a university context. Nevertheless, it was clear from participants' perceptions that the human centred attributes and actions of leaders did not constitute, on their own, sound leadership. Participants referred to important strategic thinking and organisational practices that were necessary for sound and effective decisions to be made. Participants perceived that leaders needed a strong comprehension of organisational priorities, a clear vision they could share and help staff commit to, and necessary resources and connections. Leader credibility, then, was seen to entail personal attributes such as sincerity and humility in fostering others' potential, *and* an ability to make decisions and take follow-up action. The perceived interdependency of interpersonal skills and strategic and operational competence was an important finding of the study, resonating with the Schott et al. (2008) study.

What lessons might be learned from the results of this study for leadership developers in universities? Two key lessons are provided here. Apart from the obvious point that there is no one or best way to develop leaders, the findings indicated that learning about leadership occurs at different levels within the university. Following the ideas of Ramsden (1998b), different levels include the self or the personal level; the department level where much of the on-the-job learning and work is done with staff; and the system / university level and beyond. Participants in the study described learning experiences that encompassed each of these levels – learning about self;

learning on the job through critical incidents when they were dealing with particular dilemmas often requiring them to work with staff to confront these issues, and learning that was provided by the system or university leadership programs. Learning from others, such as mentors where they were both supported and challenged provided fertile ground from which they recalled valuable learnings that contributed to their leadership understandings. University run programs were discussed in terms of effective experiential activities that left a lasting impression on some participants since they enabled them to reflect upon practice and change their attitudes and practices. These programs also provided other opportunities for participants to reflect, observe and listen to other leaders, and extend their networks within a safe environment. From an examination of some recent literature published on leadership programs provided by universities (see Brown, 2001; Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001), these types of activities are not uncommon in leadership development programs. Since leadership is practised at a number of different levels, we concur with Marshall et al. (2000) that any type of leadership program should include interventions at the three main levels identified previously in this discussion, recognising that learning also takes place outside of formal programs.

The second lesson would be to reinforce the centrality of the exercise of reflection in any type of leadership development program (Avolio, 2005) since much of the learning described by participants in this study involved reflection on practice (alone and with others). Ramsden (1998b) reinforces the point about the place and role of reflection but also adds the need for self assessment, the importance of experience, and a commitment to personal improvement as necessary for leadership development. It would seem that a range and variety of activities are necessary to encourage reflection on action as well as other learning experiences that heighten leaders' understandings of their work (Marshall et al., 2000).

The findings of this study have shown that there is little doubt that 'learning to lead is a lifetime responsibility' (Ramsden 1998b, p. 227). Such an idea is critical not only for leaders' own development but also for the ongoing learning and development of their staff. As one of the participants in this study put it:

I don't think of myself as a leader, I think of myself of someone in the group. For me, the best is to say: "We did the impossible; we did a great thing". It gives me confidence in the group to believe a group can do more. In fact, if I am a leader they are incredibly important moments because I have brought the potential of the group to realisation. I think that that link is very important.

Finally, the findings of this study need to be read with some caution due to two methodological limitations inherent in the research design. Firstly, the study was small in scale and involved interviews with 18 new and emerging leaders from one Australian university only. For this reason, it is not possible that these findings can be generalised to other university contexts. Secondly, one of the researchers of this paper was also the presenter of the leadership program from which participants were invited to attend. It is possible that the invitational methodology for the program may have had a bearing on the type of participants who volunteered to engage in it. Relatedly, it is possible that the comments made by the participants may have been affected by the researcher playing the dual role of facilitator of the leadership program and researcher. The consistency between the findings of this study and those of the large study carried out by Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008) in the sector is noteworthy.

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A “360” DEGREE VIEW FOR INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

ABSTRACT

Purpose:

To explore the perceived usefulness to participants of a particular 360 degree leadership survey process to assist an understanding of how ratees receive and respond to 360 degree feedback.

Methodology:

The study included a sample of eight new and emergent leaders at one university in Australia who had completed a 360 degree feedback survey. Through semi-structured interviews, they were asked to report on their learning as a result of undertaking the 360 exercise. A constant comparison method of data analysis was used to analyse the participants' responses.

Findings:

The research study found from the group undertaking the 360 degree feedback process that, in equal proportion, participants reported receiving (i) no surprising feedback but reinforcement and affirmation, and (ii) new insights, with developmental strategies identified to effect change as a result of feedback. The paper argues, from findings of the literature and the study, the importance of a measure of institutional support for the feedback process including sound facilitation. The results of the semi-structured conversations held with the small sample attested to the importance of self-efficacy (belief of capacity to learn and develop) on the part of ratees to act on feedback gained, and of the organisation's role in assisting self-efficacy in 360 programs. The findings support an incremental theory approach in that participants saw the feedback exercise as an opportunity to improve their capabilities and pursue learning goals over time by acting on development items suggested by the feedback. It is posited that support received by participants in undertaking the feedback activity as part of a program of development contributed to the positive response. The paper concludes by providing some guidelines for conducting effective 360 feedback discussions.

Originality/value of paper:

There is a reasonable body of literature about 360 degree feedback processes from a theoretical standpoint. This qualitative study addresses a relative gap in the literature to explore how participants describe their experience of undertaking a facilitated 360 degree feedback exercise, including whether they gained new knowledge, or no new knowledge. The paper also suggests some principles that might be employed in facilitating 360 feedback to maximise benefit from the process.

Keywords:

Feedback, management development, leadership, 360 degree feedback

A “360” DEGREE VIEW FOR INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND

This study came about because of a desire to discover more about the place of 360 feedback in leadership and management development. The study is set in the higher education leadership environment, and is timely in a period of accelerated age-related attrition in the global tertiary leadership sector currently, placing pressure on succession leadership planning and development (Boyatzis, Stubbs and Taylor, 2002). The intention of the study was to investigate how 360 feedback might best play a role in leadership preparation and practice improvement. Specifically, the goal was to discover more about how leaders respond to 360 feedback exercises and how, from the insights of the sample group, 360 processes might be strengthened for maximum impact.

The paper begins by examining some of the pertinent literature on 360 feedback processes. It then explores what might constitute an effective facilitation for a 360 process, and recommends some guiding principles for a constructive 360 feedback result interview. The second part of the paper discusses the methodology that steered the study. The findings are then presented and some implications of the study are discussed.

360 Degree Feedback for Management Development

Multi-source feedback and its role in wider performance management practice has been the subject of considerable study, theoretical debate and divergent opinion. A 360 feedback survey, typically, is where an individual leader’s staff, peers and supervisor are invited to provide scores on a range of questions relevant to their leadership role. The leader (ratee) also provides “self” scores against which the perceptions of others are compared. Peiperl (2001) defines this process as “peer appraisal” which “begins with a simple premise that the people best suited to judge the performance of others are those who work most closely with them” (p. 143). Peiperl (2001) studied for ten years the theory behind 360 feedback and reports the

somewhat vexed nature of its practice. As Peiperl (2001) says, performance management is not easy under any circumstances, and while “a certain clarity exists in the traditional form of performance review, when a boss evaluates a subordinate”, some paradoxes arise in “the novelty and ambiguity of peer appraisal”, the chief one being that “people are torn between being supportive colleagues or hard-nosed judges” (p. 143). A wider rater base, hence invoking wider opinion, may provide greater balance; however, views on the effectiveness of 360 feedback processes are far from uniform.

The vexed question of 360 surveying

Some research shows that, whether a feedback exercise invoked multi-source feedback or upward feedback only, the feedback from staff is the most important dimension to be gathered. One study by Brutus, London and Martineau (1999) revealed that ratees listen most to feedback from people whom they supervise. The study, covering data from 2,163 managers, showed that multi-source feedback contributed to the selection of developmental goals, and that subordinate ratings, compared to ratings from other sources, were most influential in the setting of goals. Some studies show that only limited improvement will follow.

A study involving 5,335 ratees in a large, global organisation were followed up after engaging in a multi-source feedback process to determine whether the ratee had shared the feedback and whether this appeared to have positive impact (Smither, London, Reilly, Flautt, Vargas and Kucine, 2004). Smither et al. (2004) found a very small though statistically significant proportion of variance in improvement occurred over time. Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill and Stride (2007) examined a sample of 45 managers and 308 staff members of a health care organisation receiving an upward feedback report and a short workshop to facilitate interpretation. The study invoked two measurement points within six months. It found that managers lack insight into the impact of their behaviour (which in itself suggests the usefulness of gaining feedback) but that the upward feedback program had small overall positive effect. The study found that managers’ self-rating on key interpersonal behaviours decreased over the two successive measurement points. (Perhaps ratees’ self-scores in subsequent surveys decreased as they became more mindful of their interpersonal behaviours and

the impact of these on others.) Of the literature scanned, most authors commenting on multi-source feedback supported “in principle” the notion of leader obtaining feedback, but it would appear that the link between 360 degree feedback and development action has been relatively little researched (Maurer, Mitchell and Barbeite, 2002). This poses a dilemma which is discussed in the following sections of this paper. While it is outside the scope of this paper to debate the range of summative and formative approaches to 360 applications, the paper takes as a point of reasonable theoretical agreement the felicity of 360 processes to aid reflective practice.

Leveraging reflective practice

Avolio (2005) states: “To be an effective leader means to reflect, deeply reflect, on events that surround oneself that have reference to how you see our own behavior and actions influencing others” (p. 94). To reflect, Avolio (2005) suggests, means “to know oneself, to be consistent with one self, and to have a positive and strength-based orientation toward one’s development and the development of others” (p. 194). London (2002), Peiperl (2001) and Rao and Rao (2005) argue the efficacy of 360 feedback to aid reflective practice, particularly to improve interactive engagement in the leadership role.

Context for 360 feedback process

According to many workers in the field, 360 degree surveying importantly allows for participants to reflect on perceptions from a variety of observers of their work to improve self-monitoring (Avolio, 2005; Avolio, Bass and Jung, 1999; Bass, 1997; Lepsinger and Lucia, 1997; London, 2002; Smither et al., 2004). An idealised goal of 360 feedback is that leaders who are high self-monitors can then “adjust their behavior as they watch the impact [that their behaviour] is having on followers” (Avolio, 2005, p. 95). This paper argues that the perceived success of a 360 feedback process turns largely upon how the intervention is contextualised and delivered organisationally, including whether/how ratees are assisted to be high self-monitors able and willing to make adjustments where useful to do so. A gap in the literature at this point is of interest. What contextual settings appear to be the most conducive to making 360 processes worthwhile? Some suggestions for 360 feedback to leverage reflective practice for richer 360 feedback outcomes are proposed.

Caveats for success of 360 interventions

Top-down modelling / rewarding of desired behaviours

A useful question relevant to 360 survey success is whether the organisation appears to value and reward the behaviours reflected in the survey. Reilly, Smither and Vasilopoulos (1996) attempted to answer this question in a study of 92 managers during four iterations of an upward feedback program over 2.5 years. The study found that managers whose performance was perceived by subordinates as low improved between the first and second iteration of the program and sustained that improvement two years later. The study found that rewarding and top-down modelling of desired behaviours appeared to be the most important factor leveraging improvement. Dominick, Reilly and McGourty (1997) agree that people will be more motivated to develop the behaviours that they believe are rewarded. In fact, Dominick et al. (1997) found that employees can change behaviour merely by becoming aware of the behaviours that are rewarded in the organisation. It follows that survey participants may take their survey results on behaviours more seriously if they perceive the relevant behaviours to be valued. As London (2002), for example, asserts, organizational leaders, from the CEO down, can empower themselves and their people to become continuous learners through use of multi-source feedback processes. This notion is closely tied to the empowering nature of organisational support provided for the 360 process. Ideally, this includes top-down modelling to seek and act upon feedback, and providing institutional support for skilled debriefing of reports and follow-through.

Institutional support for the 360 process

There is evidence to suggest that institutional support of various kinds plays a significant role in the likelihood of 360 processes leading to continuous improvement. Aspects of institutional support may include how the 360 process is to be contextualised and introduced; if and how it links to other performance assessment mechanisms; how the results will be transmitted to participants; and what mechanisms are in place to support learning and follow-through assistance (London, 2002). A study undertaken by Maurer and colleagues (2002) found that a significant difference-

making element was the way in which the feedback process was implemented and facilitated.

The study examined predictors of 150 managers' attitudes toward a 360-degree feedback iteration and the extent to which the recipients of the feedback (typically ten months after receipt of feedback) had engaged in development action in response to the feedback. One of the findings reported by the authors suggested that "differences in the context in which the feedback is given and characteristics of the feedback recipients themselves [were] just as important or more important than differences in feedback level for attitudes and involvement in development activity following feedback" (p. 105). Snyder, Marginson and Lewis (2007), studying the higher education management environment, similarly argue the importance of supportive institutional strategies to ensure appropriate integration of a 360 feedback mechanism. It is suggested, the 360 feedback interview should focus on relationship-building to create shared meaning and mutual understanding (Lewis & Slade, 2000) and should inspire self-motivation to learn (London, 2002). In a study published in 2004, a team of researchers were interested to discover the emphasis that raters placed on supportive and developmental forms of leadership.

In the study, Rafferty and Neale (2004) investigated notions of supportive and developmental leadership by analysing open ended comments made by respondents to the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP). The QLP is a 360 degree feedback survey instrument tailored to leading and managing in the education/knowledge environment, used mainly by both academic and administrative leaders in Australia and New Zealand (Drew, 2006). The QLP uses a rating scale and a free text section for brief open comments. The researchers analysed QLP results over a total of 160 QLP surveys involving 1445 raters to determine what the open ended comments on the QLP revealed as "top of mind" issues for raters. The authors' Leximancer-based analysis found that followers appreciate and endorse supportive and developmental forms of leadership, with comments on supportive leadership predominating over other themes in the analysis. The findings suggest the importance of supportive leadership and, in turn, the benefit of organisations providing resources fostering

supportive and developmental forms of leadership. It is documented that where individuals as 360 degree feedback participants perceive that support exists for development from supervisors and peers they are “more likely to participate in development activities and have more positive attitudes toward a developmental feedback intervention” (Maurer et al, 2002, p. 92).

Responding to feedback on a relevant set of capabilities, the feedback result interview ideally forms part of institutional support for a 360 process, assisting participants to reflect on the results. Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008), writing of the Australian tertiary leadership sector, argue the importance of working from a relevant set of capabilities as the basis for 360 interventions and related feedback conversations. Scott et al. (2008) observe that a number of studies, “including a small number from Australia (e.g. Ramsden, 1998, Drew, 2006), shed light on the specific qualities deemed as important and necessary for leaders now and in the future” (p. 15). Scott et al. (2008) point to the Quality Leadership Profile, for example, as offering domains of focus and development in higher education. Their extensive study identified key leadership themes and capabilities in the Australian higher education sector and reported the need for empathy as well as self-organisation and self-regulation in leading and guiding others. Accordingly, at the feedback interview, as 360 participants receive support for their own development they may be assisted to build supportive and developmental forms of leadership to inspire and empower others. Hence, the feedback interview, as the ratee’s critical first encounter with the survey results, may be crucial to the leader’s engagement with the feedback and to observable outcomes. Studies have shown that professional conversations are an excellent strategy for promoting change in individuals engaging willingly in them (Healy, Ehrich, Hansford and Stewart, 2001). Promoting listening and openness to attend to others’ views (Mackay, 1994; Petress, 1999), they may improve “on-job” performance (Seibert, 1999; Tornow & London, 1998). Relatively little appears to have been written about the 360 feedback conversation. Thoughts are offered below on two aspects of an “add-value” approach.

Facilitating the 360 feedback conversation

Effective meaning-based 360 feedback conversations assisted by good questions may foster recognition of “the assumptions underlying..beliefs and behaviors” which inevitably underlie human behaviour (Brookfield, 1987, p. 13). A skilled QLP facilitator uses good questions to help the ratee interrogate his/her own practice to affirm what behaviours might be contributing to excellent results and to explore assumptions that might lie behind any surprising negative feedback received. For example, the ratee might see himself/herself as approachable, accessible and consultative, whereas a different perception might register in staff scores. Skilled facilitation may help the leader to explore held assumptions in cognizance of the perceptions of others. Sharing their initial reactions and plans with the group, the feedback recipient indicates to staff how he/she intends to use the feedback for development (London, 2002, p. 144, 149-154). This positions the leader positively as a listening, reflective practitioner.

Raising self- confidence to act on perceptions and effect change

The feedback conversation is an ideal time to check and build “self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1982). Self-efficacy is described as an individual’s self-belief that he/she is able to effect behavioural change (Maurer et al., 2002). If it is the “experiences of success [which] persuade[s] individuals that they are able to perform the behavior” (London, 2002, p. 149), this behoves organisations to place priority on developing leaders’ confidence in their ability to enhance their practice. Institutional support may entail providing a coach to encourage development planning (London, 2002). Greene (2005), Mintzberg (2004), Kerr (2004) and Palus and Horth (2002) discuss the value of creating spaces for insight, artful learning and action for the enhancement of practice. The study reported in the remainder of the paper sought to discover whether a group of participants in a 360 process gained new insight, or no new insight, from a particular feedback process. The contextual setting for the survey process is described briefly, and comments that participants offered on issues of institutional support for the process are reported.

Contextualisation for research study undertaken

Firstly, some comments are made on the wider cultural and contextual environment of the organisation in which the research study was undertaken. The relevant

organisation, an Australian university, provides strong institutional support for development. At that university, for development purposes, the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) 360 survey is undertaken twice in a five year contract for academic and general (professional) senior staff holding significant supervisory responsibility. Participants involved in the research study enjoyed particular support for development, having been nominated by their supervisors to undertake an accelerated succession leadership development program at the relevant university. Participants were eight in number and were equally distributed across gender and across academic and professional (administrative) senior supervisory staff at the university, such as Heads of School and managers of administrative sections.

METHODOLOGY

The focus of the current research was to explore the views of eight academic and administrative leaders who had used a 360 degree feedback survey process regarding the effectiveness of that process. The Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) was the 360 degree feedback instrument used by participants in this study to gain feedback on their leadership behaviours. By way of background to the instrument used, the QLP was the subject of six years of research at the Queensland University of Technology, Australia. Gathering norms since 2000, the QLP is tailored to leading and managing in education and knowledge organisations. The factor structure of the QLP is: “Staff Motivation and Involvement”, “Strategic and Operational Management”, “Client Focus”, “Community Outreach” and, where applicable, “Academic Leadership” (Drew, 2006). The instrument operates for the development and support of senior supervisory staff in some twenty-eight organisations in Australia and New Zealand.

The relevant 360 process was offered as part of a “by invitation” accelerated succession leadership development program conducted at an Australian university. Eight participants from the program who had been eligible to complete the QLP given their senior supervisory roles were invited to contribute to the study. All eight agreed to participate. The eight participants, five senior academic and three senior administrative staff, were interviewed individually for approximately one hour following the conclusion of the leadership program. Semi-structured interviews

(following Mason, 2002 and Taylor and Bogdan, 1998) were designed to capture participants' reactions to the findings of the 360 survey component of the program.

The researcher invited participants' comments and recorded their comments on a laptop during the interview. Transcripts were confirmed with participants individually. Data analysis took the form of constant comparison analysis (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran, 2001) whereby themes were identified and coded as they emerged. As new themes emerged, these were compared with the previous ones and regrouped with similar themes. If a new meaning unit emerged, a new theme was formed (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

FINDINGS

All eight participants reported that follow through for learning and development had occurred from the 360 degree feedback process. Two contrasting themes, equally represented amongst participants, derived from the analysis. The first theme was that the 360 survey yielded no surprising feedback but that useful reinforcement of self perceptions had occurred. The second theme was that the process had yielded new insight and that development strategies and change had been attempted as a result. Participants' comments are examined under these two themes, followed by a number of comments offered by participants on the development experience in the context of the overall program. Those comments are included as they help further to contextualise participants' responses on the 360 process.

No surprising feedback: Reinforcement and affirmation

The four participants reporting no surprising feedback appeared to be well in touch with their staff, peers and supervisor. They described activities such as regular interactive meetings where issues are raised and discussed freely. London (2002) observes: "People who are more self-aware are more likely to have higher self-other agreement" (p. 49). Four participants reported that while there was no surprising feedback, the result in itself constituted valuable learning as it promoted reflection on what was working well, and on where to place developmental effort. For example: *The QLP is a useful tool which, for me, affirms what you have as a "gut feeling",*

both positive and negative, on issues. But the negative is confirmation that you need to do something about it.

A comment reflected valuable affirmation: *The good feedback was consistent with what I get back from students. It is noticeable coming from two different quarters; comments such as an ability to listen and to reflect.*

Another participant reflected that the mixture of results brought some new information and some affirmation on aspects of the role which had involved making some difficult decisions: *No real new insights although disappointed with low staff and peer score re staff development, but happy to see that my willingness to make tough decisions is acknowledged.*

New insight: Developmental strategies and change attempted as the result of feedback

Comments on outcomes included various resolution. One participant, for example, noted that he would pay a little more attention to looking after “self” including his responses to stress. He also said: *An insight is that if there is a high pressure situation it saturates and flaps me to some extent, and one thing I’ve been trying to work on is not letting it flap me, and stay in the leadership domain.*

Consciousness-raising on various aspects of staff needs was reported. One participant indicated: *I gained especially around the notion of career planning. I tend not to plan my career systematically and I didn’t realise that others need and like to plan systematically. The QLP feedback showed me that my staff are looking for this type of leadership from me.*

Another participant’s comment particularly reflected strong self-efficacy and appreciation of the 360 debrief process: *I think the process was a good one in facilitating real feedback and I’m happy to see the areas for improvement and can easily make improvements over the next 12 months. I think it is an effective process*

and simple to initiate and complete. I appreciated the “in person” debrief and particularly the assistance with interpreting the results.

Participants reported following up to share what they had gained from the process with their supervisor and to their directly reporting staff.

At the relevant university, the QLP forms the developmental aspect of the organisation’s formal Performance Planning and Review (PPR) process for senior staff, to help ensure that continuous improvement is taken seriously within the organisation. One participant said: *I didn’t appreciate fully the value of Performance Planning and Review (PPR) before, but reflecting back, it is useful for development and, with that realisation, one is able to “sell” it better as a Head of School... They will see the benefits if they take it seriously and participate in the process.*

In interpreting these findings, some biographical details of participants may be of interest. Fewer than half of the group had undertaken the 360 survey previously. All, however, were practicing managers/leaders in senior roles of supervisory responsibility and had engaged in programs and activities internal and external to the university to enhance their reflective practice. These factors may account for the high level of reporting no surprising feedback but affirmation of a profile that they had expected to receive. The interpretation is perhaps assisted by some comments made by participants on the development program overall.

Development program overall

A number of participants commented on the development program of which the feedback exercise formed part. The design of the development program aligned with the researched factor structure of the QLP (outlined earlier in this paper). The first module of that program had provided an introductory context for the 360 feedback exercise, explaining its intent for development purposes and gaining the engagement of participants. The implementation briefing to participants included a suggestion that participants advise at least their directly reporting staff that they would be inviting them to complete the survey, outlining its developmental purpose, and that the process would be confidential. Further modules of the program held approximately every six

weeks over a year, had dealt with staff motivation and involvement and a range of strategic and operational issues. In informal settings, participants could interact with senior executives of the university and other presenters, and each other.

The comments of participants related mainly to supportive mechanisms provided to underpin the 360 feedback element. This affirmed the importance of providing “social support for development” identified in the study of Maurer and colleagues (2002, pp. 91,105) and the frequent citing of “supportive leadership” in open-ended comments on QLP surveys analysed by Rafferty and Neale (2004). Participants reported benefiting from the opportunity to discover a commonality of issues faced as they discussed informally those challenges, and insights from the module discussions, QLP and other sources, during the program. Two examples include:

The networking..meeting other people was a great outcome of the overall program. It was really good to see that you are not “Robinson Crusoe”; we are all battling the same challenges...

The value particularly was mixing with some of the senior staff at different levels, looking at [the organisation] from their perspective, and understanding how they keep on top of the issues and remain current.

An improvement in personal confidence was another reported benefit. For example:

Interpersonally, it helped give me confidence and awareness to lift myself above petty issues to target the more strategic level ones. Now I've got the greater confidence to say 'let's work together to get the problem solved' rather than thinking that I have to fix the problem for them.

Another reported gains in strategic awareness and cross-university collaboration:

If you are trying to go for a leadership role you have to work across boundaries. Without this program you don't have that context. It broadened my understanding of how senior academic staff approach and think about various issues impacting university strategy and operations

The research interviewing process itself was reported by participants as a helpful means of pinpointing learning. Being invited to articulate their reactions and outcomes from the “360” exercise also was cited as helpful in reinforcing insights gained.

DISCUSSION

The views of participants attested to the importance of setting in place mechanisms whereby meaningful conversations can occur on shared challenges and potential action strategies. Evidence of self-efficacy in many of the comments suggests that with a supportive scaffold for a multi-source feedback exercise, participants believed in their ability to benefit from development. That a group of participants, confident in their ability to learn, reported the 360 exercise a positive learning experience concurs with the observation of Maurer et al. (2002) who said that “people who believe that they can improve their skills and abilities..feel favourably toward a feedback system that informs them of the skills or abilities that need improvement” (p. 91). Avolio, Bass and Jung (1999), Bland and Ruffin (1992) and Lepsinger and Lucia (1997) agree that providing supportive frameworks for reflection increases individuals’ interest in personal learning.

The overwhelming appreciation of the “human factor” associated with relationship-building and providing inspiration in many of the comments tends to affirm the importance of meaning-based, inspirational approaches to development (Healy, Ehrich, Hansford & Stewart, 2001; Lewis & Slade, 2000; London, 2002). It might be summarised from the study that 360 degree surveys of themselves do not produce learning or change but that, with sound facilitation, the 360 process is a vehicle whereby learning may occur. It is believed that institutional support plays a vital role. The findings of Rafferty and Neale (2004) concerning their analysis of open ended comments on the QLP and the findings from participants’ interviews concurred generally that staff seek supportive and developmental forms of leadership.

The findings concur that as more people in the organisation involve themselves in activities provided to sharpen reflection and action, favourable critical mass will develop. This was evident in the goodwill that research participants showed concerning the value of coming together to discuss shared objectives. It is consistent with claims in the literature that iterative use of reflective processes such as well facilitated 360 tools builds critical mass to embed desired behaviours over time (Drew, 2006; McCarthy & Garavan, 2001; Peiperl, 2001).

Overall, there was ample evidence to suggest that a supportive institutional context for a learning process adds to the potential for the process to be perceived positively and to be acted upon beneficially. The positive culture-building benefit of providing an adequate budget and resources for well-selected development activities was epitomised in one participant's comment: *I will be trying different things that I learned, not necessarily recognising that the ideas came from a particular workshop.*

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

It is acknowledged that the study took place in an environment when support for development existed. Whether participants would have felt so positive about the process had institutional support not been provided remains a question. It might be hypothesised that participants' positive recognition of institutional support in the subject case aligns with observations in the literature on the importance of providing such support for 360 ventures. Good practice, in fact, for sensitive 360 instruments would belie conducting such a process without a satisfactory framework, making deliberate comparison difficult. The findings positively affirm a place for 360 surveys as a useful tool in leadership development with the caveat that the process be supported by sound facilitation and, if possible, active institutional endorsement. The findings have implications for leadership development in universities and other knowledge organisations.

Nascent attempts at succession leadership development may have underestimated the importance of what is sometimes termed, somewhat tautologically, the "people" dimension in management roles entailing supervisory responsibility (Rao & Rao, 2005). It is suggested here that the vital element of "people engagement" is best tested through gaining systematic feedback. An implication from the findings is that senior staff as participants enter into a feedback process more willingly if they know that the process "counts" [is valued by] the organisation. The study suggests that, whether the feedback largely affirms current practice for the ratee, or identifies areas for improvement, it is most important that the ratee feels comfortable to gain the feedback and to act upon it.

This implies a duty of care for organisations using a multi-source feedback tool to ensure the instrument's relevance, contextual clarity, strategic positioning for the process, and a quality of facilitation capable of fostering self-efficacy and growth in participants. It is recommended, with Ramsden (1998), Scott et al. (2008) and others, that higher education organisations place budgetary resources and skilled professional assistance to inspire a positive leadership learning culture. Particularly in a time-poor environment, as the leader, in turn, models sound receipt of feedback response back to staff, situations may be resolved and new understandings reached through conversations which otherwise may not have occurred.

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Paper 7 – Submitted

Drew, G. Enabling or “real” power and influence in leadership.

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ENABLING OR 'REAL' POWER AND INFLUENCE IN LEADERSHIP

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ENABLING OR 'REAL' POWER AND INFLUENCE IN LEADERSHIP

Abstract

On the theme of personal development, this conceptual paper aims to provoke thought about power and influence in leadership via a short excursion into character depictions in J.R. Tolkien's (1966) *The Lord of the Rings*. It is said of mythopoeic literature, the genre of Tolkien's work, that the very simplicity of the lens "pares away distractions", "opens the way to unexpected connections, ...[and] draws attention to alternative modes of being and thinking" (Greene, 1994, p. 457). Taking the liberty of perceived applicability of Tolkien's literary genius to motifs on leadership, this paper proposes what might be viewed as alternative modes of thinking on what constitutes 'real' power and influence in leadership. It is contended that 'real' power and influence in leadership lie not in coercive tactics of wielding power over others but in withholding usurping power to work with and enable others to achieve worthwhile ends. Three suggested markers of enabling or 'real' power and influence in leadership are explored. Each one contains an element of paradox. The proposed markers suggest, in turn, that enabling or 'real' power and influence does not usurp but serves; that it 'dies to self' in order that the self might grow and achieve worthwhile ends, and denotes not weakness but strength and rigor. The paper concludes with a suggested research strategy to test empirically the proposed markers.

Background

The insightfulness of paradox

Barr (1973) asserts that "[a] poem, or a work of art, is not to be judged on the basis of what the author intended, but on the basis of what [the author] produced"; also that "any literary appreciation implies, or induces, or is related to, a general view of the world, a way of understanding life" (pp. 22, 32-33). This paper deploys the lens of myth and story to examine leadership as art from a reading of some of Tolkien's character depictions in *The Lord of the Rings*. The paper suggests that a key facet in thinking about leadership as art is to consider the paradox inherent in questions of power and influence in the leadership role. The paper proposes three markers of enabling or 'real' power and influence in leadership, and acknowledges the note of paradox that is inherent in each of these markers. Paradox, according to Kainz (1988), lies at the heart of any significant consideration in human experience, and the blending and countering function of opposite concepts, the unique strength of paradox, is argued by Kainz to be an insightful vehicle in examining aspects of the human condition, particularly in relation to notions of power and influence.

Pertinent to the theme, for example, McIntyre (1994) suggests that there are those in human society who get their own way and those who do not; however, the problem (McIntyre suggests) is that "the powerful – are not necessarily harder working, more intelligent or more admirable than the rest [rather that] the exact opposite is often the case" (pp. 4, 5). It is proposed that genuine power and influence reverses the power paradigm, where the leader focuses primarily on the vision ahead than (demonstrably) self, and partners with and enables others to reach shared goals. A

reading of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* suggests an inversion of conventional perceptions about power, with an implicit argument that "resisting the usurpation of power demonstrates strength and creates greater possibilities for achievement and personal freedom, while wielding power for selfish ends correlates with ultimate weakness and enslavement" (Drew, 1995, p. 13). Similarly, Drew and Bensley (2001) suggest that effective leadership is not founded on coercion, or, indeed, surveillance, but on the credibility of the leader to engage the willing involvement of others.

It is acknowledged that inevitably quotations from Tolkien's large and significant trilogy are selective. Authorial intent is simply to draw upon quotations as depicting particular themes, not purporting to reify the themes *per se*, not to seek to analyse Tolkien's work. The intent is to use the text as a vehicle to provoke thought while drawing on the work of other authors who note interesting paradoxical elements in questions of power, influence and leadership. By way of background to some of the themes drawn forth - In *The Lord of the Rings* [LotR] a Ring, representing the enervating effects of evil, entitles the holder to rule the world. The task of ridding the world of the Ring's self-serving, enticing but devastating power falls to the hobbit characters, Frodo and Samwise, at the behest of the aged hobbit, Bilbo, who is stretched and fatigued by his former ownership of the Ring and its claims on him. At the start of the trilogy, these characters are among the inhabitants of a peaceful Shire at the centre of Tolkien's story. It is from this comfortable and efficiently functioning place that Frodo sets off, albeit daunted by the responsibility of bearing the Ring to its destruction point at the cracks of Mount Doom. Frodo is quickly joined by his friend and 'helpmeet', Samwise, and the two set their course towards the goal in view.

Frodo and Samwise clearly are differentiated in their status. Sam's references to Frodo as 'master' and as 'Mr Frodo', even at the end of the trilogy, assure this. Yet an illustrative point which may be drawn forth proposes the efficacy of a style of leadership which readily sublimates notions of status and hierarchy to work ethically with others, serving and enabling others to achieve shared goals (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). The concept aligns with the views of Avolio and Gardner (2005), paraphrased by Wong and Cummings (2009) thus: "[e]merging from theoretical discussions on the moral and ethical foundations of leadership is a focus on distilling the core elements of positive approaches to leadership", resulting in the concept of "authentic leadership" (p. 7). This paper suggests that one of the core elements of positive or enabling approaches to leadership is the leader's perceived credibility to engage the willing involvement of others, part of which has to do with the values that the leader demonstrates in use of power and influence.

In Tolkien's story, the holder of the Ring is able to appropriate the Ring's power for self-aggrandisement. As did the aged Bilbo before him, Frodo battles with that 'strange desire' to use the power that could be his for self-aggrandisement, or to use that power for beneficial, greater good. Charged with the responsibility to rid the world of the Ring's tantalising and destructive power, Frodo knows the course that he should take but is deflected from his quest in the measure to which he uses the Ring for selfish gain. At the times when Frodo succumbs, he realises that he stands, in more important ways, to lose. This reminds, at base, that the ability to

reflect upon one's actions is a most vital leadership capability. Because Frodo reflects, and because he is committed to a greater, wider goal for good, Frodo recognises self-interest as vulnerability – as risk, in fact, for the self: “I am naked in the dark, Sam, and there is no veil between me and the wheel of fire [the Ring]. I begin to see it even with my waking eyes, and all else fades” (*The Return of the King* ch. 3, p. 258). Frodo acknowledges the pitfalls, acknowledges the greater benefits of maintaining integrity and self-control and achieves beyond himself. These motifs all may illustrate a principle that worthwhile fruition and greater personal fulfilment tend to mark power which serves, while vain power harms not only others but the usurper. It is in this sense that the term, ‘enabling’ (or ‘real’) power and influence is used.

The destructive effects of self-interest are most obvious in the fallen Gollum, whose earlier ownership of the Ring and his obsession to reclaim it has robbed him of his personhood and, with it, the ability to choose. Gollum's “grievous marks”, “lean, starved, haggard” (Tolkien, *The Return of the King* ch. 3, p. 266) are not the marks of strength but of weakness. Worn away with the Ring's claims upon him, Gollum is depicted as “maimed forever, becoming a mere spirit of malice that gnaws itself in the shadows” (*The Return of the King* ch. 9, p. 185). As Bacon (1968) reflects, “it is a strange desire, to seek power, and to lose liberty; or to seek power over others, and to lose power over [one] self” (p. 546).

The paradox put by Hoban (1980) that “the only power is no power” [paraphrased] (p. 197) assists an argument which may be inferred in Tolkien's work that self-aggrandising power, in its bid to grab power, ultimately reduces the self, while resisting the exercise of usurping power expands the self and increases one's potential for productive influence and authority. Frodo and Sam, to the measure that they sublimate self and concentrate on the goal before them, become freer, individuated and more capable of achieving greatness. The discussion that follows offers, from Tolkien's vibrant character depictions, three propositions as markers of authentic power and influence. Indeed, Clark (2000), Filmer (1992 a,b) and Head (2007) have drawn insightfully from Tolkien's imagery to consider various aspects of the human condition, including, if indirectly, the leadership relationship. Filmer (1992a) and Head (2007) have cited paradoxical elements in their readings and analyses of Tolkien's work. The author of this paper acknowledges bias and personal values inevitably in play in reading all literature, and that one's reading of a text, indeed one's viewing a word picture as ‘imagery’ is no more or less valid than another's. However, it is offered that in the discussion following the perceived imagery acts as a scaffold for considering issues of power and influence in leadership. Drawing from Tolkien's trilogy and other leadership literature, three markers of enabling or ‘real’ power and influence in leadership are discussed.

Enabling or ‘Real’ Power and Influence does not Usurp but Serves

It is said that leaders who serve - who put the interests of the goal before their own interests - are credible leaders capable of earning respect as they model the way and enable others to act (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). A juxtaposition between the empowering effects of serving others and usurping power of self-interest is well made in Tolkien's character depictions. It is contended that power that serves begets achievement, empowering and motivating others. Such a leader tends to act as

partner, steward or tutor; channelling, as it were, intellectual energy (Sveiby and Lloyd, 1987). In Tolkien's trilogy, realisation of goals for the common good is vibrantly illustrated in the service attitude of Frodo the "Ring-bearer" and his helpmeet, Sam. In the story, the two demonstrate energy in service and commitment which enlarges and fulfils the self, contrasting against the motif of self-interest as enslavement.

It is posited that a demonstration of power and influence that serves fosters the willing engagement of others. The relationship between Frodo and Sam suggests the idea of leadership vesting less in a role and more in an attitude of partnering and service, far removed from the notion of coercion. The relationship between the two characters is one of interdependent solidarity where imperfect personalities operating in mutually deferential relationship create a synergy correlating with wholeness and forward movement. Frodo and Sam are the verisimilitude of effective partnering, the more plausible for the flaws exhibited in both characters. Frodo bears the weight of responsibility, yet it is through a collapsing and, at times, a reversal of roles that success is achieved. Sam's commitment in support of the goal is maintained throughout the quest. The "helpmeet" becomes the leader at times to ensure that the pair retains a sense of mission: "Now for it! Now for the last gasp!", said Sam as he struggled to his feet... Sam looked at [Frodo] ... 'I said I'd carry him, if it broke my back,' he muttered, 'and I will!'" (*The Return of the King* ch. 3, p. 262). It might be said that passion for the goal and a serving, partnering attitude creates an effectual environment which, against odds, sees the victory won. That artful leadership involves creating an environment that supports participation and involvement is argued by Drew (2008), while according to Oliver (2001), leadership success is experienced as mutual support, inspiration and encouragement.

The problem with coercive behaviour in leadership (an oxymoron at best) is that others may acquiesce dutifully for a season but where no positive relationship exists, allegiance is likely to be temporary. Parry (1999) reports research in the Australian organisational setting that excessive monitoring and controlling is perceived to be ineffective, and that, rather, a supportive, rewarding and collegial environment is more felicitous to accomplishment.

The futility of leading by coercion is implied by Tolkien when Gandalf, wise elder and friend, observes: "Already you too, Frodo, cannot easily let [the Ring] go, nor will to manage it. And I could not 'make' you - except by force, which would break your mind. But as for breaking the Ring, force is useless" (*The Fellowship of the Ring* ch. 2, p. 90). Peck (1990) comments that "coercive tactics" will do more to "create than ameliorate havoc" (p. 271), and for all its apparent success, coercive power displays a hollowness which tends to leave little of value behind and demonstrates meagre genuine influence. It is proposed that genuine power and influence which serves and involves others is not founded on legalism or coercion but on credibility.

A reading of Tolkien may suggest that coercion aimed at trying to get others to 'perform' in a certain way wars against itself because it lacks credibility or ethical appeal, depending only upon the thin thread of a sinecure role to exert its authority. For example, in Tolkien's trilogy, Aragorn, perceived by some critics as prefiguring Christ, has true power but serves others. Aragorn tells Lady Eowyn, "there is a road

out of this valley, and that road I shall take” (*The Return of the King* ch. 2, p. 61). Lady Eowyn is filled with dismay at what it might cost the traveller to take such a course. Aragorn’s reply, “but at least I will adventure it. No other road will serve” (*The Return of the King* ch. 2, p. 61) are words of greatness and humility that bespeak credibility as he sublimates self to use (as it were) imputed power and influence to assist the greater good. This is resonant of “exousia”, a Greek word for “power” meaning “derived or conferred ‘authority’, the warrant or right to do something” (Douglas, 1970, p. 1017). Erwin (1988) argues a similar principle in the life and teachings of Jesus who reverses the power paradigm, putting “no pressure on the masses to submit to the leader” (p. 56); instead, the principle, “whoever will be chief among you, let him [sic] be your servant”, applies (pp. 55-56). Credibility, it is said, is the dynamic currency of leadership (Leavy, 2003), and is fundamental to building vital trust (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). It is said that credible leaders model the way and enable others to act (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Leader credibility lies at the heart of the paradoxical combination of strong professional will and humility found to be so effectual in organisational transformation in the large-scale research of Collins (2001). Unconcerned about who receives the credit, leaders in Collins’ (2001) research who took their companies from “good to great” (p. 188) were those who inspired and supported others, were listeners and learners, and who worked with resolution to see goals fulfilled. In *LotR*, the journeymen see the active engagement of others who join them at different stages of the enterprise and they nurture and value these fellow-travellers. At one point, Frodo says to his “most beloved hobbits” (his fellow companions), “You do not understand. This is no treasure-hunt, no there-and-back journey. I am flying from deadly peril into deadly peril.” “Of course we understand’, said Merry, ‘that is why we have decided to come’” (*The Fellowship of the Ring* ch. 5, p. 146). The evocation is that partnership and mutual encouragement fed their resolution and sealed their ability to succeed. One reads of their travail: “No listener would have guessed from their words that they had suffered cruelly, and had been in dire peril...or that even now, as they knew well, they had little chance of ever finding friend or safety again” (*The Two Towers* ch. 3, p. 71). The humility of learning from hardship and success in the leadership role, sharing these experiences with others, is said to be pertinent to growth in leadership. Adair (2008) implies that great benefits may be found in sharing experiences as leadership learners, reading about others’ experiences and applying learning from the shared life journeys of others.

Enabling or ‘Real’ Power and Influence ‘Dies to Self’ in order that the Self might Grow and Achieve Worthwhile Ends

The third hallmark captures an underpinning premise that enabling or ‘real’ power and influence in leadership, in a sense ‘dies to self’ so that worthwhile purposes, of greater value than those of self-interest, might be achieved. Kainz (1998) claims that any significant state in human experience cannot be understood apart from its opposite, as paradox insightfully works “to reproduce intellectually the actual reciprocity that obtains between opposites” (p. 44). The paradoxical proposition that genuine power results from giving rather than taking is articulated in “An Allegory Unveiled” by Filmer (1992a) who suggests that if *LotR* is seen to have “any significant apologetic message”, it is that of the “five-times-iterated message of the

gospel...that 'he that holds on to his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life shall find it'" (Luke 17:33) (p. 20). In Tolkien's trilogy, Frodo's 'helpmeet', Samwise, is the more effectual for being unimpeded by a need to satisfy his own ego. His focus is resolutely upon the mission rather than on himself. In a sense, he displays a quality of leadership that, in a sense, 'dies to self' so that greater purposes might be attained. Writing of Tolkien's trilogy, Lakowski (2002) observes a progression of Sam, suggesting that at the start of the story there has been little to challenge Sam who seems sure of himself and a little conceited, but the more Sam is challenged, the more he learns and grows and, in turn, the more humility he demonstrates. His support role becomes the role of leader as, at the last, he carries Frodo to the point of victory, carrying his master forward to dispatch the Ring. In contrast, Saruman, in a bid to become greater, and believing himself to be great, loses by his own hand the greatness that he once had (Head, 2007).

Lady Galadriel's character connotes the "real power" of resisting that which would subvert one's best ideals and goals: "I pass the test, I will diminish, and go into the West, and remain Galadriel" (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* ch. 7, p. 475). When Frodo entreats Gandalf: "You are wise and powerful. Will you not take the Ring?" (*The Fellowship of the Ring* ch. 2, p. 91), Gandalf's response is unequivocal: "No!..., With that power I should have power too great and terrible... The wish to wield it would be too great for my strength. I shall have such need of it [strength]. Great perils lie before me" (*The Fellowship of the Ring* ch. 2, p. 91). The implication for leadership as art is that of a moral dimension in that those who are truly great serve not themselves but others, and that therein lies genuine power, authority and influence. This also suggests the benefits of leaders being aware of how success is measured in particular contexts and frequently re-appraising perceived success through the filter of one's values. Manganiello (1992) infers from the text that Frodo's character also grows considerably in personhood or spiritual stature during the journey. In fact, the characters' disquisition seems to be set on a search for personal authenticity and growth which bears fruit beyond themselves. Frodo says: "I tried to save the Shire, and it has been saved, but not for me. It must often be so, Sam, when things are in danger: some one has to give them up, lose them, so that others may keep them, but you are my heir..." (*The Return of the King* ch. 9, p. 376).

The evocation is that when selfishness is put aside, integrity then may drive a process of wholeness so that not only the goal is reached but a denouement of growth and fulfilment occur for those involved. Sam rejoices that in his master's eyes there was "peace now, neither strain of will, ... nor any fear" (*The Return of the King* ch. 3, p. 271). While, of Sam, we read: "In all that ruin of the world for the moment [Sam] felt only joy, great joy. The burden was gone. His master had been saved; he was himself again, he was free (*The Return of the King* ch. 3, p. 271). A related point is that success did not require the adulation of others to produce fulfilment, suggesting again that leading for worthwhile purposes reaps its own rewards of success and growth. The Shire had fallen into self-involved legalistic bureaucracy while the vanquishing pair battled dangers to fulfil greater purpose. Simply the Shire did not notice the pair's return (*The Return of the King* ch. 8, pp. 336-365), being too embroiled in petty power battles to apprehend that a greater victory had been won. Referring to "the ancients", Chesterton (1955) sees the problem of humankind's fallen nature as "a thread of subconscious awareness", and

“the need for restoration” as a universal human hope and need (p. 96). These motifs are closely related to the notion of community. In the organisational context, Fredrickson (2003) argues the profound influence of a positive work environment for effective performance.

In *LotR*, rule-making and rule-monitoring had taken over the Shire, eroding ‘community’ spirit and sapping life and energy: “There are hundreds of sheriffs and as many rules. If I hear ‘not allowed’ much oftener, said Sam, I’m going to get angry” (*The Return of the King* ch. 8, p. 341). The “Old Grange” and the “Party Tree...under which Bilbo had made his Farewell Speech”, artefacts which symbolised meaning in community, had been torn down (*The Return of the King* ch. 8, p. 360). Trakman (2007) notes the damaging effects of deviating from a process of integrity where, for example, perceived impending crises relating to governance prompt governing bodies to institute exaggerated changes which, in fact, tend to protract poor governance practice. It might be argued that legalism forgets vision, cares little for growth and development of self and others, and perpetuates a litigious system that may become quite disconnected from the ends that it purports to serve. The antithesis of a ‘dying to self’ model – in such situations, instead of being empowered as the legitimate subjects of an institution or decision-making process, rather, as “subordinated subjects” (Fiske, 1989, p. 58), members become victims of the institution meant to serve them.

A critical value demonstrated in the partnership of Frodo and Samwise is that of humility and fierce resolve to act: “But I will always help you”, said Sam, “I will help you bear this burden, as long as it is yours to bear. But we must do something, soon. The Enemy is moving” (*The Fellowship of the Ring* ch. 4, p. 92). It is noteworthy that leaders who took their organisations from “good to great” (p. 188) in the large-scale research project reported by Collins (2001) were action-takers who engendered a rigorous environment and who possessed uniquely this paradoxical combination of “humility and strong professional will” (Collins, 2001, p. 39). Filmer (1992b) writes that “all readers might be encouraged to hope that they might share with...Frodo the qualities of Pity, Mercy, Humility and endurance which contribute to the success of the quest” (p. 31).

At multiple levels, the idea of ‘dying to self’ is a proposition about seizing a quality of life which, paradoxically, allows an ‘enlargement’ of the self – an expansion of one’s world for learning, discovery and growth. The image is one of self-awareness and self-development and is reminiscent of Peck’s (1990) proposition that it is only through a process of questioning and reappraisal that we begin to become aware “that the whole point of life is the development of souls” (Peck, 1990, p. 200). Drawing illustratively finally from *LotR*, a point was made earlier in this paper concerning the clear differentiation of status in the characters of Frodo and Sam in Tolkien’s trilogy, yet the sharper evocations, at least to this redactor, are sublimation of status to the achievement of wider good. Sam takes the leadership role on many occasions during the quest and, as Filmer (1992a) puts it, was highly instrumental in reaching the goal. The motif obviously enough suggests the richness of individual and collaborative accomplishment through a preparedness to ignore status and work together as a team, but signals, to this reader a subtly wider message that leaders do not thrive in isolation but in community with others. It is sometimes said that leadership ‘at the top’ is a lonely role where it is difficult to confide in others. Peck

(1990) argues, high order leadership patterns can thrive only when leaders are “emotionally sustained in community” (p. 324) and that leaders do not thrive in “a climate of competitive isolation in which idealism and humaneness are crushed” (p. 324). Leaders, at their best, are facilitators who harness the talent of others.

Wondra (2009) points to talent management in leadership studies which focus on acknowledging and measuring the contributions which individuals make to reaching key organisational success. It is here that thinking on leadership as art, and a century of theory and writing on the subject of leadership, meets the incisiveness of Tolkien’s (1966) literary work to inspire personal development in leadership, regardless of whether the mantle of leadership is carried in formal or informal ways. In organisational settings, it is said, positive and enabling leaders contribute to building positive and enabling cultures as they reward constructive, ethical behaviours, recognise others’ contributions and seek to develop staff at all levels of the organisation (Drew, 2009). Ideally, then, “the real ‘power’” of leadership is the “power to empower”, vesting in “ostensibly valuing and truly ‘engaging’ staff in the advancement of organizational goals,..sharing knowledge capital appropriately and freely, and..exploring flexible work modes that maximise efficiency while recognizing staff members as ‘whole persons’” (Drew & Bensley, 2001, p. 68). The motif here is that usurping power and self-interest tends to stultify and deny useful result, while a vigorous, rigorous culture begets action for collective achievement. In fact, vigour, rigor and action are bywords of the third proposed marker of enabling or ‘real’ power and influence in leadership, next discussed.

Enabling or ‘Real’ Power and Influence Denotes not Weakness but Strength and Rigor

The final paradox proposed is that enabling or ‘real’ power and influence eschews ‘soft’, uncritical approaches in favour of rigor, working towards building what Collins (2001) describes as a “culture of discipline” (p. 130). Collins (2001) argues: “[f]ill the culture with self-disciplined people who are willing to go to extreme lengths to fulfil their responsibilities” (p. 124). In Tolkien’s trilogy, the questing characters are fully committed; they communicate honestly and openly, reflect on failures and learn from their errors. The characters knew dejection, deflection from task and the defection of co-workers but they mitigated the stress of those events by attending to developing (it might be said) a culture of discipline. They remained persistently within the “flow” of their mission, held, in the words of Chopra (2006), by the “balance” of shared goals and by the “oars” of their “core values” (pp. 5-95). It might be suggested that leadership was experienced in terms of a disciplined ‘patterning’ which formed as members dealt with day-to-day issues, handled conflict and resolved setbacks.

Such ‘patterning’, argues Barnett (2004), is a critical first principle in successfully navigating change, and useful patterning is assisted when leaders and teams consciously attend as much to ‘ontological’ [way of being] factors as to epistemological [knowledge-based] factors in carrying out their roles. Collins (2001) asserts the importance of getting the right people into the organisation, pointing to “the degree of *sheer rigor* needed in people decisions in order to take a company from good to great” (p. 44). Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008), researching the university leadership environment in Australia, find that capabilities around self-

organisation and self-regulation in the leadership role are vital. Similarly, Schein (2003) points to positive behaviours within organisations gradually creating a “common set of assumptions... forged by clear and consistent messages as the group encounters and survives its own crises” (p. 438).

The proposition, here, is that within a culture of discipline, people are encouraged to act in ways that are conducive to reaching the goal. Collins (2001) proposes: “Build a culture around the idea of freedom and responsibility, within a framework” (p. 124). Concomitantly, in *LotR*, responding to Frodo’s fear, the gracious Lady Galadriel’s words are empowering, and her faith in Frodo is based on predictability that he will freely choose to take responsibility. Lady Galadriel says to Frodo: “I do not counsel you one way or another... you may learn something... Seeing is both good and perilous. Yet I think, Frodo, that you have courage and wisdom enough for the venture, or I would not have brought you here. Do as you will!” (*The Fellowship of the Ring* ch. 7, p. 471). It may be said that Frodo and Sam grow in their capacity to make sound decisions and to meet and conquer challenge. Also, their capacity to achieve is fuelled by the confidence that others place in them.

In a research study of a sample of leaders in one Australian university (Drew, Ehrich and Hansford, 2008), the question was asked – what, in their experience, constituted the most effective leadership. Many participants spoke of beneficial interactions with leaders in the past who had taken them out of their comfort zones (Kouzes and Posner, 2002) and had provided background support in challenging situations. Some reported that going through difficult team situations, with the support of their leader, had gradually built their resilience and confidence to lead (Drew et al., 2008). Further, Undung and De Guzman (2009) report research involving a group of Filipino academic administrators. The findings showed that empathy played a pivotal role in successful educational leadership practice, and the findings demonstrated the importance of demonstrating, as a leader, the humaneness of caring, listening, interacting; of, in effect, journeying together with staff. This suggests the merits of paying attention to the personal development of self and others in organisations, gradually building resilience including the capacity to change and grow (Wheatley, 2003). In Tolkien’s trilogy (1966), gradually, Frodo and Sam learn to rely more on building their own capacities to surmount difficulty than depending upon the circumstances to be favourable.

In turn, it is suggested that part of self- and organisational development is developing a culture of discipline (Collins, 2001). It is suggested, this involves preparedness to appraise situations rigorously and to tackle the core issues rather than the superficial, convenient ones. Collins (2001) offers that, in the organisational environment, this includes critically appraising work priorities, identifying what is important and what activities are not adding value. From Tolkien’s word picture, Frodo, preparing himself for his assault on Mount Doom and the destruction of the Ring, discards his shield, belt and helmet to rid himself of weight instead of confronting the real weight that he bears in his love/hate relationship with the Ring. One might posit that, with similar avoidance, humankind, as for leaders in organisations, may tackle the ‘convenient’ superficial issues and fail to address the underlying, core issues. Gandalf cautions Frodo not to lean upon false solutions and risk missing the best: “A mortal, Frodo, who keeps one of the Great Rings, does not

die, but he does not grow or obtain more life... And if he often uses the Ring to make himself invisible, he ‘fades’... and walks in the twilight...” (*The Fellowship of the Ring* ch. 2, p. 72). This motif is reminiscent of the risk of falling to mediocrity in the organisational leadership context. A related motif from Tolkien illustrates the hollow, vacuous nature of usurping power.

In *LotR*, the questing characters relinquish self-serving power, win a great goal and experience fulfilment, while the individuals intended to benefit from the triumph wield power over others and disintegrate into chaos. In the trilogy, when the victors return to their home, the Shire is in disarray. The ruffians – the feisty rule-makers of the embattled Shire - for all their protestations about their own power, are no match for the hobbits who have been imbued with strength born of unselfish determination in order to see equity and peace again abound: We read: “Scaring Breeland peasants, and bullying bewildered hobbits, had been their [the ruffians’] work. These fearless hobbits with bright swords and grim faces were a great surprise” (*The Return of the King* ch. 8, p. 346). The words, “And there was a note in the voices of these newcomers that they [the ruffians] had not heard before. It chilled them with fear” (*The Return of the King* ch. 8, p. 346) are (to this reader) some of the most searching in the text. The tone in the hobbits’ voices which the ruffians heard and which caused their attitude to change is suggested as the sound of true power - genuine and alive with hard-won authority - against which cheap, usurping power could find no measure. That the ruffians “turned and fled” and “blew their horns as they ran” (*The Return of the King* ch. 8, p. 346) is somewhat metonymic of vacuous, self-inscribed dominance. It might be proposed that rigorous cultures have little place for self-inscribed dominance, for fatuous, empty claims or ‘quick fix’ approaches, but are geared to action, capability building and achievement. It might be inferred from Tolkien that, paradoxically, self-absorption reduces and enervates the self while giving of oneself expands and invigorates the self.

Conclusion

Le Guin (1979) argues that the mythopoeic genre communicates through words much the same way that music communicates through sound; that myth and story “short-circuit the verbal reasoning [and]... are profoundly meaningful, and usable – practical – in terms of ethics, of insight, of growth” (p. 62). A reading of *The Lord of the Rings* has attempted to exemplify some proposed markers of positive power and influence in leadership. A central theme has been posited that “the downward submission of the greatest” to become as servants is the place of genuine authority, influence and credibility (Erwin, 1988, pp. 55-57), arguing a paradoxical principle from this literature that the world of the self expands the more it gives, and, conversely, narrows the more it centres on self alone. It has been interpolated from Tolkien (1966) that leadership is effective when it invokes the engagement of others, consistent with the notion that “genuine power that influences society for good serves not self but *others*, and..therein [in fact] lies genuine, authoritative influence” (Drew, 1995, p. 15).

Further, it has been implied that a usurping, legalistic style, while tending to reproduce a similar legalistic response in people, may inhibit useful result, whereas

leadership that is generous, outwardly focused and contributing to its environment, invites others to engage and reciprocate in the same spirit. The discussion noted Tolkien's character depictions in the demise of the Shire which contrasted the hollow 'horn-blowing' 'noise' of usurping power against the truer rigor of genuine authority, credibility and action. Indeed, it has been argued that leaders who are not focused on wielding power but on empowerment invest in relationships and may leave a legacy. Such leaders, committed to the realisation of their own and others' potential, in a sense 'reproduce themselves' as they "take others to *their own* places of independent and unique capability and critique, operating on a platform that is not endlessly upheld in a spirit of frustration or exhaustion" (Drew & Bensley, 2001, p. 64).

The limitations of this conceptual paper, supported by limited theoretical literature, are acknowledged. In drawing from Tolkien, the author has not purported to analyse Tolkien's work as a whole, nor to explicate theoretically the notion of 'positive' human behaviour. Those discussions are left to others in other contexts. However, this reading of selected themes from Tolkien's trilogy, supported by some theoretical text, is intended to provoke thought on some of the paradoxes in leadership relating to power and influence. In support of using unconventional means such as drawing upon myth and story to explore concepts. The United Kingdom Leadership Foundation, for example, supports deploying a variety of modes, including use of stories and theatre, to build self-awareness on concepts relating to increasing 'other-engagement' capability in higher education leadership (Middlehurst, 2007). Middlehurst (2007) states: [t]he intention is. to challenge traditional approaches and conceptions of leadership and management development in the higher education sector in order to increase levels of engagement, demonstrate the personal and professional benefit of such development, and highlight (and test) different pedagogical approaches (p. 54).

This paper invites a follow-on empirical study to test the proposed markers of positive power and influence in leadership by conducting research on what a sample of organisational constituents view as demonstrations of enabling or 'real' power and influence, where leaders are perceived to use the power or imprimatur of their roles in a demonstrably positive manner. Findings could be compared with empirical research undertaken on caring, empathy and humaneness by Undung and De Guzman (2009) who suggest that empathy "creates and maintains a sound and dynamic interpersonal milieu" (p. 1). Such investigation might usefully twin with research to explore empirically Wondra's (2009) reference to the "special gifts of knowledge, skills and personal characteristics that individuals bring to organisations" (p. 1), to determine what these might be and whether they relate to the proposed markers of enabling or 'real' power and influence in the workplace. The investigation could link also with the empirical research results from a study of a small sample of university leaders to develop a 'leader identikit' (Drew et al., 2008).

Why are these understandings important? One infers from Adair (2005) that there is no 'one way' to lead effectively; that context and situation play a large part in how leadership is enacted; but that leadership is best understood at a personal level, and leaders must know themselves and be clear about what they are aiming to achieve in order to be effective (Miller, 2006). Testing the three proposed markers of enabling

or 'real' power and influence and comparing the data with such other relevant findings would have implications for considering personal development to assist leaders in the process of better 'knowing themselves' as a first premise to motivating and engaging others.

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CHAPTER 4 – SUMMARY DISCUSSION

Introduction

The overarching research problem investigated in this PhD by Publication study was: *What are the key elements informing effective executive and organisational leadership development for universities in a changing operating environment?* In answering this overarching research problem, it was recognised that the bureaucratic, complex nature of contemporary universities poses a challenge for leadership development. A possible dilemma identified was that universities are caught in multiple domains, for example, advancing knowledge through research and teaching and operating as businesses to remain viable in a changing external environment of market forces, globalisation, mass education and concomitant funding crises. At the strategic organisational level, it was found, some writers in the field of leadership are calling for universities to marshal their incredible potential networks of knowledge and expertise to recognise relentless global change and threats to society of various kinds and to be at the frontline of responding to these opportunities and challenges (Carlin & Neidhart, 2004).

Thus, in investigating the research question, it was found that an integrated, rather than “ad hoc” approach to addressing executive and organisational leadership development issues was required, together with an artful approach to broaching change leadership and building positive organisational cultures. It might be summarised from the empirical research part of this PhD study which involved a cohort of senior university staff, that the higher education environment was seen as ambiguous and constantly changing; there was a keen awareness of the challenges faced; but there was an overwhelmingly positive spirit to succeed. Similarly, the study of Scott et al. (2008) noted the “strong commitment to the ‘moral purpose’ and mission of higher education held by academic leaders” (p. viii).

The literature review acknowledged relevant work carried out in the Australian setting to identify most relevant capabilities for leadership development, but noted that while considerable efforts have been made, globally, to identify a constellation of most significant development challenges in the university sector, there is much work yet to be done in this regard. The study noted the observation of Middlehurst (2007) that, at year 2000, higher education yet lagged behind other sectors “in its attention to management and leadership development and research on the running of the business [of the university]” (p. 45).

A perceived gap which the study sought to address was the paucity of research and writing on succession leadership development. This gap was perhaps surprising given the accelerated attrition anticipated to erode the leadership ranks in universities over the next five years. The study, hence, sought to fill a perceived gap in knowledge as to the most important capabilities to be developed in the contemporary university environment, and to explore some strategies for developing the capabilities identified as most critical. In the study, note was taken of leadership development thinking and practice over a ten year period, culminating in some of the most current work.

In addressing the overarching research question, then, key elements and perceptions in relation to appropriate leadership development were sought from the literature and from empirical research. All of the research subquestions pointed to exploring the overarching research question. The papers were the result of addressing research subquestions that were derived from the literature review as useful aspects to explore further. The papers linked together under the Lantern model. The model itself, drawn from the literature and research, was an original contribution of the study. This became the underpinning

theoretical framework for the study. An explanation of how these papers linked together was provided under the “Dimensions of Development” section of the literature review. The dimensions of development identified were “transpersonal”, “interpersonal” and “intrapersonal” dimensions. The papers addressed the key subquestions emerging for particular consideration under those dimensions.

In considering what appeared to be the most important aspects for development under the three dimensions, it was clear that leadership development activities in universities should be informed by the following: a recognition of complexity and ambiguity; that concentrating on skills and knowledge acquisition alone is not enough, and that building towards a combination of human centred and strategic and operational capabilities will assist leader support, development and preparation. It is perhaps noteworthy that participants’ responses to research subquestions on their perceptions of the key challenges they faced, and on how leaders learn, suggested the value of setting up mechanisms for leaders to voice their learning experiences and share their challenges (correlating with the views of Adair, 2005, and others). This presupposes a supportive institutional environment able to see the benefits of informal and formal networks and of putting in place a structure for these interactions to take place.

The literature review and research empirical findings from this study suggested that an integrated whole-of-organisation approach is required if succession leadership development is to be meaningfully and systematically undertaken. Just as elements of an ecological system interact with each other and change, executive and organisational leadership development might see some elements receiving more attention than others at various times. However, a sense of connectedness, clarity and the ability to adapt are to

be prized. The conclusions drawn from the study are set out in broad summary below as findings from the research subquestions, in turn, addressed in the seven papers that form this PhD by Publication submission. Following this is a discussion of the recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

Subquestion Answered in Paper 1: What are the Key Elements Involved in Balancing Academic Advancement with Business Effectiveness for Contemporary University Leaders?

This research subquestion explored the contextual environment in which university leaders are operating. The paper entitled, “Balancing academic advancement with business effectiveness? – The dual role for senior university leaders” has been published in *The International Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Organisational Change* (2006) 6(4). Identifying contextual issues which would appear to impact upon effective organisational and relevant succession leadership development, the paper noted the complex role of academic and business accountabilities for today’s senior leaders in higher education. It identified a number of key challenges for organisational development from the literature and practice. It recognised that leaders in universities today need to draw upon a wider range of skills, knowledge and capabilities than before, given the increased accountability requirements that run alongside their core business of research and teaching.

The subquestion linked to the overall research question in that knowledge of the

contextual operating environment is critical to identifying development issues and needs. In the case of academic leadership, as the literature review for the relevant paper revealed, there are considerable overlapping and potentially conflicting demands confronting academic leaders. The paper suggested some strategies to help ensure as much clarity possible on organisational and individual priorities in order to deal most effectively with balancing academic advancement and business effectiveness. Those strategies concerned aligning organisational systems with the organisation's vision and objectives for core business achievement so that, in a time-poor environment, core business is advanced by the systems deemed to support them. Secondly, discovering the extent to which the organisation "listened" to its stakeholders emerged as important because of the need to be relevant, responsive and well-connected to key external stakeholders in a rapidly changing environment.

The third and fourth strategies, respectively, were whether the organisation was preparing itself with succession planning and leadership talent development (Byham, 2002, Clutterbuck (2004); Kesler, 2002, Wondra, 2009), particularly given complexity, change and increased attrition rates with an ageing workforce (Jacobzone et al., 1998; Marshall, 2007), and was it fostering ethical behaviours and governance (Gayle et al., 2003). These aspects related to achieving and embedding a sound and productive organisational culture. The paper argues for a need to approach leadership development from a systemic organisational development perspective in which ethical dealing and constructive leadership behaviours were assisted with feedback processes and similar developmental initiatives. It was unmistakably identified that to engender such a climate reaps rewards (Collins & Porras, 2003), but requires a conscious act of will of an organisation's people, modelled by its leaders, to operate in certain desired ways. Accordingly, the second subquestion, leading to Paper 2, addressed the issue of ethics and organisational culture.

Subquestion Answered in Paper 2: What Does it Take to Build an Ethical, Sound Organisational Culture, and What is the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Team's Role in This?

The paper entitled “Leadership and organisational culture: Can CEOs and executive teams in bureaucratic organisations influence organisational culture?” has been published in *Academic Leadership*. This paper is based on a proposition from the literature that developing a positive and amenable culture is a vital, if somewhat tacit aspect of organisational life. The question was that if universities are developing leaders, can those leaders at executive level affect organisational culture? This subquestion bears upon the overarching research question in that consciously developing desired organisational culture places organisations in a stronger position effectively to meet their strategic goals as these efforts potentially offer greater consistency of approach, patterns and behaviour over time. It was suggested that a well-developed sense of organisational culture can be a source of stability of a kind amidst the shifting sands of external and internal change.

The subquestion was addressed by exploring in the literature the effect that the chief executive officers and leadership team may have in influencing positive organisational culture in bureaucratic organisations such as universities. Significant challenges were noted with distributed leadership models and the patterns of habitual behaviour which form in organisations. There was evidence from Schein (1997, 2003), Trakman (2007), Pratt, Margaritis and Coy (1999) and others, however, that it takes a conscious act of will to model, reinforce and establish organisational culture. While limited studies were reported, there was evidence from Maurer et al. (2002) and Collins (2001) that the chief executive

officer and executive team play the most significant roles in influencing organisational culture because of their more prominent positions to model, support and reward desired behaviours. A Culture Investment Portfolio was proposed from the literature as a framework of principles by which chief executive officers and executive teams might seek to mould a positive organisational culture. Culture Investment Portfolio items were as depicted in the following table:

Table 2

Culture Investment Portfolio

<i>Reframing positively the concept of change</i>
<i>Acknowledging competing interests and uniting people in vision</i>
<i>Acknowledging the interdependency of “people” and “processes”</i>
<i>Attending to both “knowing” and “being”</i>
<i>Welcoming divergent views</i>
<i>Pursuing a positive climate</i>
<i>Combining a listening, learning disposition with personal persistence</i>
<i>Influencing via personal credibility rather than by coercion</i>

It was acknowledged that organisational culture takes time to build, but, as research shows, it is influenced in subtle and less subtle ways mostly by what is modelled from the top of the organisation (Locke, 2007).

Subquestion Answered in Paper 3: How Might Organisations Increase Consultation and Engagement around Strategic Change?

The paper entitled “An Artful Learning Framework for organisations” has been published in the *Journal of Management & Organization*, 14 (2008). The paper acknowledges substantial evidence that ongoing change is a critical capability for senior leaders in the higher education environment. This research subquestion addressed the overarching

research problem to suggest that a key element informing executive and organisational leadership development for universities is finding ways to consult with and engage staff more effectively in change processes that concern them. Exploring this subquestion resulted in developing a wave metaphor model of Artful Learning in Change which suggests predicating and underpinning a change leadership exercise with a number of strategies designed to leverage personal learning in a consultative approach to change. The Artful Learning Framework's suggestions for a meaningful, artful process of consultation via cross-organisational groups, role exchange and deeper questioning is intended to foster engagement, reflective practice, richer solutions and transfer of learning about effective participation processes to apply to other settings. For example, fostering the willing engagement of others was identified as a far better approach than leading by coercion, particularly in academic environments delivering complex challenges (Shattock, 2003) and where values and independent thought are prized (Stiles, 2004). Related issues of power and influence in leadership were dealt with as a separate subquestion in the study.

It was argued that, under the Artful Learning Framework, outcomes for a successfully navigated change process were more assured because of a built-in learning and evaluation process which attends as much to process or maintenance goals as to goals relating to task and outcome (Barker, Wahlers & Watson, 2001). The Framework recognised that an "artful" approach is needed when navigating change, and that the experience may be used as a way of harnessing valuable learning to apply in other applications in the organisation. In attempting to answer this subquestion, the value of reflecting on one's behaviours and decision-making responses and acting upon that learning (Avolio, 2005) was noted. It was outlined that individuals acting in self-reflective ways may help situate the team,

collectively, to act for the interests of the group and of the corporate goals in view. It was argued, in effect, that exploring issues more thoroughly with deeper questions and using a mixed representative group consultative process when navigating change may forge understandings about the real issues at hand, challenge assumptions, mitigate self-interest, and have a profound effect on the quality of strategic outcomes.

The concepts and strategies offered in the Artful Learning Framework paper addressed a need which clearly emerged from the literature review. As noted by Miller (2003), “the need for understanding how organisations learn and accelerating that learning is greater today than ever before” (p. 14). While some might be concerned that fast-paced organisational life leaves insufficient time to invest in such approaches, there was a groundswell of theory that such an approach safeguards a higher quality, sustainable result (Knight & Trowler, 2001; Undung & De Guzman, 2009; Wondra, 2009). There was less evidence, however, that organisations put effort into a genuinely consultative, learning approach to navigating change. It was argued in this paper that more research and application of research to practice is needed in this area.

Subquestion Answered in Paper 4: What do Current Leaders See as the Main Challenges over the Next Five Years for the Changing Tertiary Sector and, Hence, for Them as Individual Leaders?

This research paper entitled: “Issues and challenges in higher education leadership: Engaging for change” has been accepted in press to the *Australian Educational Researcher*. The paper reported comments of a research participant group on what they saw as the main challenges for university leaders in the tertiary environment over the next

five years. The study sought to discover what this sample group of current senior and near senior leaders in the university context identified as the key challenges for them as leaders. (Participants also were asked what they recognise as effective leadership; how they believe they best learned to be leaders; and how they describe their experiences of undertaking a 360 degree feedback survey exercise for development purposes as part of a program in which they had engaged – all findings reported, respectively, against the two further related subquestions / Papers 5 and 6).

While the sample for the study was relatively small, it was a representative sample of individuals currently occupying academic and non-academic roles at one Australian university. Their in-depth views, yielded from interviews of one hour each, shed valuable light on aspects important to leadership and leadership development. Research participants had undertaken a senior succession leadership development program entitled “Leading in the New Era” at a university in Australia. Participants were in almost equal proportions academic and non-academic members of staff at the university, holding supervisory positions such as head of school or department or associate directors of non-academic university support areas. The university had acknowledged the leadership development implications of higher anticipated staff turnover, the result of high age-related attrition anticipated over the ensuing five years. While the study was set in Australia, it was argued that the findings of the study may translate to a much wider setting, given the commonality of issues derived in a review of the international literature as a separate part of the study.

The key issues identified by participants’ responses on what they saw as their main issues and challenges as leaders were:

1. fiscal and people resources;
2. need for flexibility and change-readiness;
3. responding to competing tensions and remaining relevant;
4. integrity in managing and maintaining academic quality;
5. need for sound strategic leadership.

The findings of this part of the study revealed that academic leaders were spending larger amounts of time attracting funding than before. This was the most significant challenge identified in conversations. The study found that staff retention and succession planning were key needs consistent with an ageing population registered in workforce demographics. A recurring theme was the need for courage in leadership to think and act creatively; personal confidence to lead within uncertainty, to take considered risks and to help staff deal with the realities of the impact of change and how they might strengthen their ability to deal with change, as was gaining a balance around teaching and research, administration and academic work, and intellectual quality and affordability. Maintaining academic quality while responding to governmental policy changes were cited as challenges. These views resonated with much of the writing in the literature review, including the findings of Scott et al. (2008).

All these findings suggest overall that the most salient challenges are managing increased accountability for business effectiveness while not sacrificing academic values, intellectual independence, and the ability to take a vision. Specifically, it was noted, academic knowledge and knowledge of the university context, while important, were insufficient. There must be, as Scott et al. (2008) write, “a capacity to inspire others to action taking by sound-decision making, integrity and enthusiasm...to engage and support

people in making it happen in a way that is both tactical and responsive” (p. 11). The perceived importance of action-taking (“making it happen” as in the above statement) came through consistently in the triangulated findings of Scott et al. (2008) and the findings of this doctoral study (see Drew, Ehrich & Hansford, 2008). Similarly, the research undertaken to develop the question set of the Quality Leadership Profile 360 leadership feedback survey (Drew, 2006; Drew & Kerr, 2003) saw “decision making” and “follow through” as critical elements of leadership behaviour.

Findings from the empirical part of the doctoral study emphasised taking an integrated and balanced approach to academic planning so that academic values and quality were not sacrificed to business efficiency. Collaborating regarding resources was seen as vital to maintaining academic values and vision. Sound strategic leadership, in particular change leadership, leadership that fosters innovation, collaboration and interpersonal influencing, and ability to take and communicate strategic vision emerged in a number of comments. Further key issues were streamlining processes to spend more time on core work as concern was expressed at the time increasingly absorbed by administration.

Overall, the prevailing tenor of the conversations with the sample of new leaders in the university environment was one of commitment and confidence about the future. This was consistent with the findings of Scott et al. (2008) whose research evidenced the strong sense of mission, moral purpose and commitment noted amongst academic leaders concerning their roles in higher education. Similarly to the Scott et al. study (2008), the findings suggested a belief that current and future leaders will need to work increasingly amidst change, and hence will need to be flexible and innovative, capable of engaging

and helping others to handle the ambiguity of new, sometimes competing tensions and changing priorities.

This paper supported the idea also that informed, relevant organisational and leadership development is required to prepare future leaders for the types of challenges they may face. The views of the cohort of current senior staff tended to confirm the importance of university executive management providing time-economic opportunities for leaders and potential leaders to network and learn from each other. The findings of the research study aligned with the literature review findings depicted in the Lantern model. The alignment is summarised in the following table.

Table 3
Key Challenges for University Leaders

Key challenges reported in Research study	Key challenges reported in literature review depicted in Lantern model
Fiscal and people resources	Recruiting people to desired culture, strategy and values
Need for flexibility and change-readiness	Adapting strategy to changing influences
Responding to competing tensions and remaining relevant	Ensure organisational landscape is illuminated by relevant data and feedback
Integrity in managing and maintaining academic quality	Ethical management platform; Communicating strategy and embedding desired culture and values; academic leadership development

A common theme across these findings and literature review was the need for universities to remain informed with relevant data and feedback as essential to flexibility, responsiveness and developing strategy and the capabilities associated with achieving organisational goals.

***Subquestion Answered in Paper 5: How Do Leaders Learn and What Constitutes
Effective Leadership?***

Investigating this subquestion gave rise to a jointly authored paper (Drew, Ehrich & Hansford) entitled: “An exploration of university leaders’ perceptions of leadership and learning”. The paper was published in *Leading and Managing (2008)14 (2)*. The paper reports the views of a sample of new leaders in the university environment on what characteristics of leaders or conditions created by leaders foster and inspire their best work and what they would identify as their most significant leadership learning event, experience or activity. As “new and emergent” leaders, these leaders had occupied their current roles for one to four years and were seen as potentially meriting accelerated development for, potentially, further leadership roles in the university. It is claimed that discovering what this representative group of contemporary senior leaders viewed as effective leadership helps understand what constitutes relevant succession leadership development in the contemporary university. This speaks directly to the overarching research question in that a key element informing executive and organisational development is learning how current leaders like to be led, and how they believe they best learn as leaders. For this part of the study, participants were invited to comment on what characteristics of leaders, or conditions created by leaders, they considered to be most effective, and how they learned to be leaders. The paper reported what the research participants, as leaders occupying senior supervisory university roles, saw as effective leadership conditions or practices that constitute high performance. The findings resonated with the literature and with the Lantern concept model to suggest that, ideally, a

mixture of human-centred capabilities and strategic organisational skills and understandings was the most fitting foci for leadership development.

In the research study's individual interviews, participants saw effective leaders as persons who have people skills; who promoted an environment that fostered growth of leadership in others; opened doors for staff and helped create opportunities; were credible and engendered trust; acted as role models; were ethical, inclusive and collaborative in their practices; were strategic and took responsibility for decisions; communicated the goals and vision of the organisation; understood organisational priorities; and had adequate resources and connections. These views were equally distributed across academic and general senior staff. Two overarching categories emerged from the data analysis: interpersonal people skills and engagement, and strategic thinking and operational effectiveness. Both of these broad leadership practices are said to be complementary and necessary for effective leadership (Kotter, 1990). Leadership that fosters and empowers others and lets others grow (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Ramsden, 1998a; Wondra, 2009) emerged as critical. Participants spoke of beneficial interactions with leaders in the past who had taken them out of their comfort zones (Daloz, 1986; Kouzes & Posner, 2002) and had provided background support in challenging situations. Some participants reported similarly that going through difficult team situations had gradually built their experience and confidence to lead.

Participants referred to leaders who have the trust and respect of their peers and staff. Credibility in the role was a recurring theme, viewed by Leavy (2003) as the dynamic currency of leadership since it depends on performance of the leader. Trust was seen as essential in the presence of integrity and a "hallmark of environments in which people

feel respected, valued and appreciated” (Filan & Seagren, 2003, p.26). Participants referred to effective leaders as those who set an example, acted as role models for staff, and who engaged in ethical, inclusive and collaborative practices. This was consistent with recent writing on the moral and ethical dimensions of leadership (Duignan & Collins, 2003; Preston & Samford, 2002) and human-centred practice (Ehrich & Knight, 1998) said to be needed in organisations. Participants referred to the importance of leaders not only making sound decisions but following through on their decisions, reported as important if those decisions are to result in thinking, action and change (Filan & Seagren, 2003). Participants referred to the importance of leaders communicating vision to staff, part of which is helping staff to “own” that vision, allied to the notion of empowerment (Sergiovanni, 1992). The study also sought to discover how these leaders identified that they mostly learned about leadership.

Formal programs of study such as leadership development programs and post-graduate study, program activities discussing university strategic mission and goals, and experiential learning promoting reflection were cited. Learning by experiences of different kinds was most mentioned by participants – whether through experiential learning program activities, taking risks “on the job” to try different approaches, learning from others including formal and informal mentoring relationships (the latter espoused, for example, by Clutterbuck (2004) and Kram (1985)). It was noted that experiential learning activities may develop skills of collaboration, promote risk-taking in a supportive environment (Kaagan, 1999; Hornyak & Page, 2004) and may challenge leaders to think again and see a situation differently (Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001). The formal programs of study described by participants fell within both the more traditional and academic

approaches (Mitchell & Poutiatine, 2001) and experiential approaches (Kaagan, 1999; Hornyak & Page, 2004).

Results reported in this paper revealed that, from the perspectives of eighteen new leaders from one university in Australia, demonstration of interpersonal, relationship-building, inspiring trust in staff, and motivating and enabling attributes were most central to successful leadership. The descriptions of what, for these leaders, constituted most effective leadership in a university context, aligned with the ideas of “transformational leadership” (Burns, 1978, and other writers). Results revealed the need for a combination of both human centred attributes and sound strategic thinking and knowledge of organisational issues. These findings concur with the reported findings of Collins’s (2001) large research study into leaders of highly successful companies in the United States where the somewhat paradoxical, overlapping combination of humility and strong professional will were found to be the differentiating characteristics of leaders at the helm of the most successful organisations (Collins, 2001).

The perceived interdependency of interpersonal skills and strategic and operational competence was an important finding of the study, echoed in the findings of Scott et al. (2008). These authors identified from academic leaders surveyed in Australian universities that relationship-building qualities of engagement were most potent in leadership roles. According to Scott et al. (2008), academic leaders are responding to improve their skills of interpersonal engagement through a variety of measures including use of relevant feedback instruments such as the Quality Leadership Profile 360 degree leadership survey. While Scott et al. (2008) support the use of 360 degree feedback

systems for development purposes, they caution that these should be valid and relevant to the sector in terms of the capabilities that they measure.

Participants in the study described learning experiences that encompassed learning about self, learning on the job through critical incidents and dilemmas, and learning that was provided by the system or university leadership programs. Similarly, Ramsden (1998a) suggests different levels of leadership learning such as the self at a personal level, the department level where much of the on-the-job learning occurs, the system/university level and beyond. That learning from others, whether through mentoring arrangements or in the context of leadership development programs or other means, left a lasting impression on participants, suggests the importance of providing opportunities where leaders can share “in principle” challenges with each other and learn from each other in a safe environment.

It is recommended from the study, with Marshall et al. (2000) that any type of leadership program should include interventions at the three main levels identified previously in this discussion, recognising that learning takes place in both formal and informal situations. Hence, the value of putting in place a means of accelerating personal reflection for leaders was reinforced in the study. This was consistent with the Lantern model’s premise to create an illuminated environment within the organisation including a way of assessing how one’s leadership practices are perceived by others in order to effect improvements, as posited by Avolio (2005), Marshall et al. (2000) and others.

The personal/professional support nature of leadership was identified by research participants as most significant in their experience, with similar themes emerging under

how they best learn as leaders. Given this, there is little doubt that leadership development activities should aim to support and develop leaders in being, first and foremost, reflective learners, so that a reflective, learning approach ideally integrates through all dimensions of leadership development and application.

Subquestion Answered in Paper 6: How Effective is 360 Degree Feedback Surveying Using the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) for Assisting Individual Development for Current and Future Leaders?

The relevant paper has been published: Drew, G. (2009). A “360” View for Individual Leadership Development. *Journal of Management Development*, 28 (7), 581-592. This paper reports the views of a sample of new leaders’ experience undertaking the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP), a 360 degree leadership feedback instrument, for developmental purposes. These leaders had occupied their current leadership roles for one to four years. The QLP was researched and developed by the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and was launched as an instrument fully automated for responding and reporting in 2000.

This subquestion addressed the overarching research question by recognising through the study the importance of reflective practice to leadership learning. Hence, the study sought to gain views on the efficacy of a 360 degree feedback process where some of the group of research participants had undertaken the QLP to gain perceptions on their leadership behaviours from 360 degree feedback. It was recognised that undertaking a 360 degree

feedback initiative in such a setting can yield useful base-line data from which to target development more specifically, and that in using the QLP, all ratees are able to benchmark their own scores against the aggregate scores of others in similar roles (Drew, 2006).

The study found from the group undertaking the 360 degree feedback process that, in equal proportion, participants reported receiving (i) no surprising feedback but reinforcement and affirmation, and (ii) new insights, with developmental strategies identified to effect change as a result of feedback. The findings of the study and of the relevant literature acknowledged the importance of institutional support for the feedback process, including provision of sound facilitation. The results of the semi-structured conversations held attested to the importance of self-efficacy (being belief in one's capacity to learn and develop) on the part of ratees to act on feedback gained, and of the organisation's role in assisting self-efficacy in 360 degree feedback programs. The participants saw the feedback exercise as an opportunity to improve their capabilities and pursue learning goals over time by acting on development items suggested by the feedback. Maurer et al. (2002) avow the significance of institutional support for feedback exercises. It is posited that support received by participants in undertaking the feedback activity as part of a program of development contributed to the positive response. While there is a reasonable body of literature about 360 degree feedback processes from a theoretical standpoint, this qualitative study, albeit using a small sample, addressed a relative gap in the literature by exploring how participants described their experience of undertaking a 360 degree feedback exercise. The study acknowledged the wide variables in how 360 degree feedback interventions are deployed in organisations and submits that there is clear scope for future research in this area. The study acknowledged that 360

degree feedback processes must be handled with care as, inevitably, sensitivities are associated with the giving and receiving of feedback (Atwater et al., 2000; Atwater et al., 2007; London, 2002; Maurer et al., 2002; Rao & Rao, 2005).

It is important to determine whether the 360 feedback process is being used for summative or formative purposes; for example, whether respondents are torn between being supportive or critical judges in respect of providing peer appraisal in respect of their colleagues (Peiperl, 2001). The reported benefit of ratees sharing their feedback with others was noted (Smither, London, Reilly, Flautt, Vargas and Kucine, 2004). There was a perceived gap in the literature concerning precisely what contextual settings appeared to be the most conducive to making 360 degree feedback processes worthwhile. This element of the study addressed this gap also.

In the literature review, two major caveats for success of 360 degree feedback interventions were identified. These were the importance of top-down modelling / rewarding of desired behaviours for the process itself, and institutional support for the 360 degree feedback process. That all research participants interviewed for their comments on undertaking the Quality Leadership Profile had reported the exercise as a positive experience was somewhat surprising, as not all 360 degree feedback exercises flow smoothly or reap development benefit (London, 2002; Smither et al., 2004). However, the fact that all participants reported the exercise as a positive one suggested the value of ensuring sound facilitation of 360 degree feedback processes and opportunities to share learnings with others, as had occurred in that case. This agreed with authors such as Reilly, Smither and Vasilopoulos (1996) whose studies suggest the importance of institutional support for development interventions including 360 degree

feedback processes. The findings agreed with the notion of empowering leaders as learners through well-conducted 360 degree feedback processes (Atwater et al., 2007; London, 2002; Maurer et al., 2002; Snyder et al., 2007). The findings tended to affirm the role of a well-constructed feedback interview in maximising the learning outcomes for participants (Lewis & Slade, 2000; London, 2002). In the subject case, all 360 degree survey participants had received constructive feedback interviews and all participants knew that they were supported by the organisation in their development undertakings. All eight participants reported that follow through for learning and development had occurred from the 360 degree feedback process. Whether participants would have felt so positive about the process had institutional support not been provided remains a question. That the feedback interview was deemed by participants to play an important role in interpreting the data meaningfully concurred with the review of literature. Overall, the study confirmed that a duty of care exists for the appropriate handling of 360 degree feedback interventions. The findings positively affirmed a place for an appropriate and relevant 360 degree feedback survey as a useful tool in leadership development with the caveat that the process be supported by sound facilitation and positive institutional endorsement. The findings have implications for leadership development in universities and other knowledge organisations.

Subquestion Answered in Paper 7: What Constitutes “Real” Power and Influence in Leadership?

The paper entitled: “Enabling or ‘real’ power and influence in leadership” has been submitted to the *Journal of Leadership Studies*. The subquestion of the paper linked to the overarching research question in that a key element informing executive and

organisational leadership development is how leaders deal with the question of power and influence in their roles. In the study, a recurrent theme that emerged was that leaders who put self-interest aside and serve the greater goal, and assist others in pursuit of that goal, are enablers who demonstrate power and influence of a positive kind; typically they are also interested in learning and growth for themselves and others.

It was noted from the research of this and other studies that effectiveness as a leader calls for the ability to build a disciplined, rigorous culture (Collins, 2001), beginning with being organised and self-regulated in following through on strategic and operational matters (Scott et al., 2008). It was noted that effectiveness as a leader calls also for empathetic and empowering qualities in dealing with others (Scott et al., 2008). A range of researchers identify critical enabling characteristics relating to the conditions in which humans flourish (Barnett, 2004), including the apparent importance of supportive leadership (Rafferty & Neale, 2004) and a credible approach to decision-making (Hyndman & Eden, 2001), as telling in leadership effectiveness. Collins (2001) implies the benefits of fostering mutual commitment and trust in organisations when he posits: “Build a culture around the idea of freedom and responsibility, within a framework” (p. 124). On the note of the somewhat paradoxical concept of freedom and responsibility, the concept of paradox was explored in considering what might constitute genuine power and influence in leadership as the final subquestion in the study. The discussion at this point recognised that the subject of leadership has a quite personal dimension and that one’s approach to leadership may turn, in part, on one’s attitudes to power and influence.

The subquestion was deemed relevant to the university environment because as universities have drifted closer to enterprise models, there is a groundswell of interest that

universities do not lose their unique place to contribute to the good of society (Ranasinghe, 2001). Can society look to universities to operate trustworthily with knowledge, data and partnerships, for example, in a way that demonstrates integrity and moral value? As noted, authors commenting upon higher education, from Ramsden (1998a, 1998b) and Lamond (2001) to current times (Barnett, 2004; Parcell & Bligh, 2000; Scott et al., 2008; Snyder et al., 2007; Whitchurch, 2006 and others) look for personal credibility and a range of personal qualities capable of engaging, coaching and supporting staff for best outcomes. It follows that contemporary succession leadership development strategies usefully may consider personal credibility issues such as demonstrable values and use of power and influence. Indeed, these somewhat tacit considerations well may lie at the heart of leader effectiveness. It is said that leaders' personal values affect organisational values and, in turn, that these personal values ultimately play a part in the positioning of universities as a force for good, overall (Ranasinghe, 2001). As claimed by Scott et al. (2008), their study showed "how personal capabilities and values can both model and help build organisational capabilities and values" (p. xiv). The Bradley Review (2008) registers concern that the university system in Australia currently is "unable to fulfil its ambition of being the best higher education system in the world, supporting the world's best educated and most innovative, cohesive and sustainable society" (p.5). The Bradley Review (2008) cites reduced resources and contextual issues of forced competition as partly responsible for this. The ambition to "be the best we can be", however, forces recourse to the "individual and collective" of universities to act in the most conducive ways to support positive contributions to society in incremental, difference-making ways.

To respond to the subquestion, it was decided to inspect notions of power and influence through the lens of mythopoeic literature. Such a lens, it is said, tends to strip away all that may be trite and familiar about a subject in order to perceive a clearer view. It was recognised that how power and influence is used by leaders pertained very much to the personal values of the leader (Barnett, 2004). For the purposes of the framework for this study, the issues related most to the “intrapersonal” (self-awareness) dimension of leadership. A juxtaposition of ideas was posited - power which demands others follow, on the one hand, and power which enjoins the contribution of others and serves others, on the other, was seen as the place of genuine power and influence. The motifs drawn from a reading of Tolkien’s (1966) *The Lord of the Rings (LotR)* suggested some inherent paradoxical elements in notions of power and influence.

As Kainz (1988) suggests, if an issue seems to be completely one-dimensional it is wise to be suspicious of it because it may fail to take into account another side of the story (Kainz, 1988). Kainz advances the salience of paradox “to reproduce intellectually the actual reciprocity that obtains between opposites, where”, he states, “form and content, subject and object are collapsed into one, in an ultimate insistence upon the unity of being” (pp. 44, 37). Thus, it was interpolated, to serve and partner with others may seem a less powerful position than a more remote, coercive approach but the latter may be less likely to achieve because it fails to engage and mobilise others productively. Bacon (1968) reflects, “it is a strange desire, to seek power, and to lose liberty; or to seek power over others, and to lose power over [one] self” (p. 546). The paradox put by Hoban (1980) that “the only power is no power” [paraphrased] (p. 197) assists an argument which may be inferred in Tolkien’s (1966) work that self-aggrandising power ultimately

reduces the self, while resisting the exercise of that kind of power expands the self and the self's potential for genuine, productive influence and authority.

A reading of Tolkien's (1966) trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* suggests an inversion of conventional perceptions about the real locus of power for the accomplishment of worthwhile goals, with an implicit argument that "resisting the usurpation of power demonstrates strength and creates greater possibilities for achievement and personal freedom, while wielding power for selfish ends correlates with ultimate weakness and enslavement" (Drew 1995, p. 13). If, as Carlin and Neidhart (2004) assert, education must be in the frontline of responding to opportunities and challenges relating to issues of the public good, what are the implications for leadership in educational settings? It was noted that Ranasinghe (2001) emphasises the need for university leaders to return to a consideration of values and to ask the hard questions about the kind of culture that universities are developing, pointing to the potential of universities to operate in a way which "makes the world a better place" (p. 1).

Ranasinghe (2001) states that "[i]t is time for those of us who care about the future of humanity to give serious thought to how genuine education may be preserved and renewed" (p. 1). Authors such as Allen (2005) and Cranston et al. (2004, 2006) identify an emergent need to create a positive, ethical environment that "nurtures effective communication, healthy relationships, empathy and trust" (Singh & Manser, 2007, p. 1). The way in which educational leaders approach these tasks is critical in the current period of increasing pressure from a variety of stakeholders (Singh & Manser, 2007). Part of this process is building change-capable, ethical leaders within the organisation where knowledge and skills of more experienced staff were shared with those newly taking up

leadership positions, and where new leaders are encouraged and nurtured to consider new ways of thinking, learning and acting. Learning neighbourhoods thus created within the organisation may help ensure a prepared and effective future leadership bench for the organisation.

Conclusion

This study, overall, speaks a narrative about leadership in its many forms, dimensions and evocations. It confronts the collective potential of leadership to improve society, and recognises a conflict for university leadership to satisfy concomitantly both academic and business drivers. It suggested that when leadership is effective it is recognised as a satisfying and fulfilling experience for both the leader and followers/partners, and that leadership is, ideally, a mutually serving experience dedicated to serving wider strategic goals than those that are immediate and operational in nature. The study suggested that it behoves universities, as organisations more broadly, to identify and consciously to foster the capabilities that promote positive engagement amongst people, within the university and beyond its walls.

The study suggested that effective university leaders are self-aware and interpersonally capable, and that they have a global frame of reference. They take cognizance of the changing contextual environment in which they operate and are aware of the challenges that they face. The study suggested that sound succession leadership planning should focus on fostering these attributes and skills in leaders, as well as focusing on ability to collaborate to enact core and support business, flexibility and the ability to lead others through change.

The following conclusions are drawn as contributions to knowledge in response to the principal research question and subquestions of this study. The theme of connection or engagement emerged as a unifying imperative for executive and organisational leadership development throughout. The results emphasised the importance of achieving clarity at organisational level so that leadership development is approached in an integrated manner in cognizance of the main factors expected to influence the organisation, and of needs revealed by the gathering of relevant data. These data may include workforce planning information, perceptions on organisational culture and perceptions on leadership behaviours, aimed at assisting continuous improvement.

It is recommended that the chief executive officers and senior teams of universities have a vital role to play in positioning universities as positive agents for good in local and global society, and to promote positive organisational culture in their organisations. Evidence suggested that relevant values and goals have a better chance of embedding when these are signalled “from the top”. Consistent with the integrated whole-of-organisation approach to organisational and succession leadership development recommended, recruitment *and* development strategies should work in harmony to leverage desired strategic goals and values, building critical mass. In terms of the type of development required, the following summarises the study’s findings as key development emphases for sound executive and organisational leadership development initiatives in universities. They reflect the concepts of the Lantern model.

. *Contextual awareness* - Executive and organisational leadership development in universities should take account of increased complexity and the competing challenges

and interests which mark university life; make linkages contributing to the overall value of the university to society.

. *Connectedness* – Have in place a means of gathering relevant information affecting strategy and operations; listen to staff and external stakeholders on strategic and operational effectiveness matters, issues of organisational climate and on individual leadership practice to remain relevant and to continuously improve; have in place a safe mechanism where leaders may discuss challenges.

. *Culture-building* - The study proposes a Culture Investment Portfolio as a checklist for building desired culture and values, best modelled from the top of the organization recognising that a positive, communicative organisational culture bears upon the ability of the organisation's flexibility to adapt to change.

. *Change capability* - The study suggests a suite of strategies for enhancing participation and involvement, including engagement in change.

. *Clarity and openness* – Communication for clarity, top down, should underpin strategy and operations, activating the involvement of others via honesty and leadership credibility.

While the literature review yielded themes across “transpersonal” (organisational/contextual), “interpersonal [engagement]” and “intrapersonal” (self-awareness) considerations in leadership, the empirical study and the review of literature found constant combinations and re-combinations of those dimensions. This overlapping recombination effect suggested that personal attribute dimensions and the strategic organisational/contextual dimensions of leadership are interdependent and equally important. In fact, the findings of the study suggest that a human centred approach is vital to both dimensions and that, as in all aspects of leading and managing, an ability to

engage people is inescapably important. Investigating the research subquestions with research participants revealed a valuing of supportive and empowering kinds of leadership as being, and having been, the most useful to them for learning and developing their own leadership capabilities.

Narratives from research participants about how they perceived effective leadership from the beneficiary perspective, and how they believed they most learned as leaders, were highly individualised. Most spoke of leaders having had a positive influence and impact upon them because of the way in which those leaders dealt with people. This typically entailed a combination of personal attributes and ability to take a decision and to follow through. Similarly, in recounting how they best learned as leaders, most referred to the positive and enabling influence of leaders they had known whose positive contribution had assisted them to take on new challenges and to grow professionally and personally.

Overall, the participants in the study confirmed that people think about leadership as being about both personal development and knowledge about how the organisation works; how the organisation is influenced by external factors; and developing the skill sets that people need to carry out operational activities. While the themes were found to be highly overlapping, in that “transpersonal” considerations of the wider context necessarily co-existed with interpersonal and “intrapersonal” (self-awareness) aspects, nevertheless, the groupings yielded a natural thematic scheme for the overall study. The set of key development emphases recommended as best supporting sound executive and organisational leadership development in universities, outlined above, spawn the summary below as a “leader identikit” which may inform executive development and succession leadership capability building in contemporary universities. It is proposed,

then, that leaders best equipped to lead in the “new university” are able to:

- confront the collective potential of leadership to improve society; and that of universities to contribute to the common good;
- respond to universities’ wider, changing operating environment as action-takers within complex situations and foster succession development aligned with key needs;
- see the link between positive organisational culture and the organisation’s ability to navigate change and achieve strategic vision;
- share knowledge and engage and inspire others to participate;
- display courage in leadership to think and act differently and creatively;
- systematically build self-awareness into their practice;
- blend sincerity/empathy and follow-through;
- work alongside others, forming those *consistent* patterns of fairness and ethical dealing;
- support and empower others, being invested more in empowerment than in wielding power, influencing others via personal credibility.

Credibility for leaders emerged as the most compelling tacit dimension of leadership strength that can be earned only at a personal level. It is perhaps noteworthy that the study of Scott et al. (2008) reports that their study and others in other contexts identified “a particular set of personal and social aspects of emotional intelligence and a contingent and diagnostic way of thinking, which are critical to successful leadership in higher education” (p. xv). Many challenges for leaders, and the possible causes of those challenges, were identified in the study.

Given the key elements and perceptions concerning university leadership issues identified and discussed in the study, it is recommended that timely succession leadership development for universities occur via a concerted, multi-faceted approach to capability building. This ideally entails senior executives consistently modelling sound communicative and supportive practices, and requiring the same of the next level of senior staff so that all members receive feedback and are informed on key issues affecting their roles. The study suggests that a connected, well illuminated and supportive environment is a productive, amenable one able to foster the best in staff and attract talented others, and that this, in turn, best equips the university to meet challenge and change positively.

It is anticipated that these key findings, in particular the contribution of the Lantern model, the dimensions of development and the strategies identified to support development, will provide some useful directions for universities and planners of leadership development programmes. It is anticipated also that these contributions may have application to other organisations interested in leadership and succession development. The final part of this chapter considers some recommendations for further research.

Recommendations for Further Research

The final part of this section of the chapter provides recommendations for future research, building on from the study that was the focus of this thesis. In this study, the Lantern model offered a framework for the consideration of executive and organisational leadership development matters. All of the papers of this PhD by Publication study covered aspects identified in the Lantern model. The Lantern model, in turn, was derived from the literature review to determine what might be the most important elements as a “checklist” for executive and organisational leadership development.

It is recommended, therefore, that further research be conducted to test empirically the efficacy of the Lantern model to create an alleged “whole-of-organisation” approach to executive and organisational leadership development. For example, research could be carried out to explore the benefits of organisational areas connecting and integrating with each other, as the Model proffers. Future research could explore whether it is (a) feasible and (b) useful to connect the areas of recruitment and development, respectively, so that these functions demonstrably share a mandate to build desired strategic capability, organisational culture and values. The initial question could be posed: “Are these functions, typically, separately or concertedly addressed in (a) universities, and (b) other organisations?” The Lantern model’s proposition to illuminate the organisational landscape systematically with relevant data and information on aspects of culture, workforce/succession planning and leadership effectiveness therefore could be explored.

It is recommended that the Artful Learning Framework strategies be explored empirically to see if the approaches suggested are successful in assisting levels of engagement in

organisational change processes. Similarly, with the preponderance of research and development centres in universities, research could be carried out to investigate the efficacy of the alliance platform in enacting and sustaining productive alliances.

The researcher believes that there is considerable room for further research on how 360 degree feedback interventions are implemented and facilitated. She acknowledges that an important limitation of the current study was that it focused on senior leaders in one university only. It is recommended therefore that future studies be conducted with groups of participants undertaking the same kind of feedback process, using the same instrument, and having in place similar conditions for supported learning, in two or three universities in order to investigate similarities and/or differences in participants' reaction and responses to the 360 degree feedback process.

Another limitation of the current study was that it focused on a small sample of university leaders. It is recommended therefore that future research target a much larger sample of new senior leaders across several universities in Australia to glean a better picture of the extent to which the issues raised in this study are significant for leaders in other parts of the country. As noted, Middlehurst (2007) cites academic autonomy and individualism as distinguishing features in university contexts, and these, among other aspects, might be anticipated to affect the university leader's approach to pursuing change management and strategic alliance. Gaining a view from a wider research sample on particular challenges faced by leaders in the university environment could yield further guidance for leadership development in universities including succession leadership preparation.

Another area for future research would be to identify similarities or differences between executive and organisational leadership development needs in universities and other education leadership or public sector settings. Exploring notions of “service” and of values, inter-sectorally, may be useful in contemporary times when universities are straddling somewhat divided worlds where pecuniary issues relating to competition and resource acquisition vie with the more traditional mandates of contributing to learning and the community good (Ranasinghe, 2001; Rothwell, 2006). Such insights are consistent with the Lantern model’s approach to ensure an illuminated, well-connected landscape for university organisational health and relevance, and executive leadership development in contemporary times.

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APPENDIX 1

Letter of Invitation to Research Participants

Date:

Dear

Research Project:

Investigating emergent university leaders' perceptions of leadership as a contribution to succession leadership development in the university/key knowledge environment

Researcher: Glenys Drew

I have pleasure in inviting you to participate in a research study which is designed to gather insight on how current and future senior leaders view leadership to help determine which strategies are most conducive to senior leadership and management development in the university setting.

This study is part of a PhD by Publication, titled above, conducted by myself, as both the researcher and Co-ordinator of the Senior Management Development Program at QUT. As Co-ordinator HR (Organisational Development), I lead a team designing and delivering strategically aligned development programs and support initiatives for professional, academic and senior staff. I also facilitate the Quality Leadership Profile "360 degree" leadership survey at QUT, debriefing result reports to senior staff at QUT and at other organisations upon invitation and occasionally consult to other universities, research centres and the national AVCC Senior Development program co-designing and -presenting communication and leadership development initiatives. The research study will help inform appropriate succession leadership development which is timely for the Australian tertiary leadership sector currently.

You are invited to participate in my research as a highly regarded senior staff member nominated to complete QUT's senior succession leadership development initiative, "Leading in the New Era".

Your views on some specific open questions on notions of leadership and leadership development will make a valuable contribution to the study.

The intent to explore the notion of leadership and leadership preparation in the higher education context to inform senior succession leadership development has the following broad aims:

- a. to gain feedback on the "Leading in the New Era" initiative;
- b. to learn more about how leaders learn to be effective leaders and managers;
- c. to understand how effective leadership is understood from the perspective of current and emerging leaders; in other words, I would like to discover what are

- the conditions created by leaders or qualities possessed by leaders which in your view are most enabling; and
- d. (applicable to participants completing the QLP) to assess the usefulness of undertaking the QLP 360 feedback exercise for insights on individual development.

The process of contributing to the research data will entail one interview with me. If you are willing to contribute, the open questions the subject of the interview would be provided to you in advance; a transcript of research participants' responses at individual interview will be provided to you following the interview, asking you to confirm or, if wished, amend any aspect. Compilation of results will be undertaken by the researcher, with responses recorded without attribution to the source and with any potential identifiers removed. Participants will be invited to view the narrative text resulting from the analysis of the results before any paper is submitted for publication.

Your contribution as an invited participant will be much valued and appreciated. Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary. As you will appreciate, research such as this undertaken through the university is guided by strict ethical procedures. As a researcher and a staff member of the university, I am, therefore, obligated to follow these carefully at all times.

I hope that you will agree to contribute. If you are willing to do so, please complete the attached Consent Form. In the near future I will follow up on this letter to determine your interest and willingness to participate. Alternatively, you might like to contact me directly (telephone, email) and let me know of your interest, or you may complete and send me the attached Consent Form.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require clarification about the research project. If your concerns relate to ethical issues, or the ethical conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Secretary of the University Human Research Ethics Committee, telephone 07 3864 2340 or ethicscontact@qut.edu.au.

Yours sincerely

Glenys Drew
HR (Organisational Development) Co-ordinator; and
Principal Organisational Development Consultant, HR

Tel. 3864 4082; Mobile 0419 643 626. Email: g.drew@qut.edu.au

APPENDIX 2

Statement of Consent to Participate in Research Project

Investigating emergent university leaders' perceptions of leadership as a contribution to succession leadership development in the university/key knowledge environment

Researcher: Glenys Drew (Tel. 07 3864 4082; g.drew@qut.edu.au)
Queensland University of Technology

Statement of consent

By signing below, you are indicating that you:

- have read and understood the summary sheet about this research project;
- have had any questions answered to your satisfaction;
- understand that if you have any additional questions you can contact the researcher;
- understand that you are free to withdraw at any time, without comment or penalty;
- understand that you can contact the researcher if you have any questions about the project, or the Secretary of the University Human Research Ethics Committee on 3864 2902 if you have concerns about ethical matters relating to the project; and
- agree to participate in the research project.

Name										
Signature										
Date		/		/						

APPENDIX 3

Overview of Methodological Approach Used in the Three Research Based Papers Constituting the Study

Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 1, the principal research question posed in this study was, “*what are the key elements informing effective executive and organisational development for universities in a changing operating environment*”. The question was divided into seven subquestions each of which was addressed in a corresponding paper that comprised the doctoral study. The study resulted in four literature based papers (papers 1, 2, 3, and 7) and three research based papers (papers 4, 5 and 6). As discussed in Chapter 1, the aim of the literature based papers was to provide an overview of the extant literature relating to landscape factors which appear to influence succession leadership development in the higher education environment. Moreover, the intent was that these papers would set the scene for the empirical component of the study designed to illuminate the key elements of engagement for effective leadership development.

This section of the study provides an overview of the methodological approach that underpinned the three research based papers that constitute this study. It achieves this by identifying the three research subquestions; outlining the qualitative research design; locating the researcher in the study and identifying the research participants who constituted the sample; justifying the data collection analysis methods; and discussing the limitations of the empirical component of the study.

Research Questions

The empirical component of this study sought to gain the perceptions of a sample of new senior leaders (having occupied their current roles for between one and four years) in an Australian university on a range of leadership and leadership development issues to inform effective leadership development practice. The three subquestions posed were:

- What are the main challenges for the changing tertiary sector, and hence, for individual leaders? (addressed in paper 4)
- How do leaders learn and what constitutes effective leadership? (addressed in paper 5)
- How effective is 360 degree feedback surveying using the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) for assisting individual development for current and future leaders? (addressed in paper 6).

Research Design

Qualitative research tends to be used when a rich understanding of perceptions about phenomena is sought. A qualitative research approach (Heron & Reason, 1997; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000) was deemed appropriate for this study which sought the views and understandings of participants regarding challenges facing leaders, what constitutes effective leadership, and the effectiveness of 360 degree feedback.

Researcher and Research Participants

The researcher of this study is a leadership and organisational development practitioner particularly concerned with senior leadership development as part of her role as (then) Co-ordinator of Organisational Development (now Senior Leadership Development Consultant) in Human Resources Department at a large university in Australia. As such, the views and (voices) of new leaders on matters closely related to their practice are of significant interest to her professional work and to the focus of this study.

The research participants were drawn from three cohorts of a program which the researcher co-facilitated at the university at which she is employed. The Program entitled “Leading in the New Era” (LINE) was designed as a succession leadership development program linked to workforce planning. Approximately eighteen individuals completed the pilot LINE Program in 2004; fifteen completed the 2005 Program; and twelve completed the 2006 program. Research participants for the study were drawn from these three cohorts of LINE. As such, research participants represented academic and professional (general/administrative) senior staff who had been nominated by their supervisors to engage in these targeted senior leadership development programs from 2004-2006. Given that the participants of LINE had been identified for accelerated development as potential candidates for more senior positions, the group constituted an excellent research resource to investigate views in relation to leadership issues in the tertiary sector.

Following the completion of the third program (comprising eight half day sessions over a period of one year), participants were issued with a letter of invitation (see Appendix 1) to determine if they were interested in participating in the research study to explore leadership

issues within the higher education environment with the researcher/co-facilitator. Out of a potential pool of some forty-five participants, eighteen agreed. Ten of the participants held academic supervisory roles and eight held administrative supervisory roles. Of these were eleven women and seven men. Ethical clearance was obtained from the university in which the study was conducted and the necessary protocols were adhered to throughout the course of the study. Participants indicating their wish to participate did so by signing the Letter of Consent provided (Appendix 2). It was made clear to participants that their involvement was completely voluntary and that if they had questions regarding the study or any ethical issues relating to its conduct, they could contact the Secretary of the Human Research Ethics Committee. No ethical issues or problems were encountered during the course of the study.

Data Collection Methods

Two key methods of data collection were utilised by the researcher to answer the three subquestions. The first was an hour long interview with the eighteen participants that addressed the first two research subquestions; and the second was another shorter interview with eight of these eighteen participants who had completed the Quality Leadership Profile 360 feedback survey, to gain their response to the remaining subquestion relevant only to that process.

An interview was deemed a highly appropriate method of data collection for this study because it “lays emphasis on depth, nuance, complexity and roundedness in data” while the two-way interaction with a series of open-ended questions prompts reflection and may “help approach ... questions from a different angle” (Mason, 2002, pp. 65-66). Moreover, interviews are an effective data collection method as they enable dialogue and

conversation for researchers and educators “eager to grasp new ways of knowing” (Greene 1994, p. 454).

A set of questions was sent to the participants prior to the interview to allow them time to think about the questions beforehand. A more elaborated set of questions can be found in Table A at the end of this overview. At the outset of the interview the researcher aimed to create a safe environment for participants to share and reflect on their responses and thoughts.

During the interview, a laptop computer was used by the researcher to record participants’ responses and these responses were confirmed with participants individually. This process was seen as critical to ensure accuracy of the data and to ensure the intent of the research participant is faithfully portrayed (Easton, Fry McCormish & Greenberg 2000). Identifiers were removed to separate their names and positions from the data. All participants were assured that any reporting of the data would not reveal their name or position. In keeping with the university’s protocols for data storage, all summaries of data were stored in a secure location, contained in unmarked files, locked in a filing cabinet in the office of the researcher.

The second data source was an interview with senior staff who had completed the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) 360 degree feedback survey. It is important to point out that all participants who undertake the LINE program complete the QLP survey as a matter of course. Administering these surveys and providing debriefing reports, discussing action plans on development items and providing coaching are part of the researcher’s professional role in the university. Eight of the eighteen research participants were eligible to complete the QLP (having a significant leadership dimension to their current role). All eight agreed to participate in the research interview which asked them to reflect on the 360 degree survey; to share some insights they may have gained from the exercise; and if and how they

were able to use any of the feedback they received to work in a different way. Similar to the previous interview, participants were asked a series of questions which they received before the interview (see Table A at the end of this overview). The researcher recorded their responses via typing these responses into her laptop at the time of the interview to record participants' comments with utmost accuracy. Participants were sent a summary of the interview to check and amend where necessary.

Data Analysis

As indicated earlier in this section, three research papers were formulated based on the interviews conducted with participants in the study. A similar process of data analysis was carried out to analyse the interview data that pertained to three key areas (challenges for the tertiary sector – paper 4; how leaders learn and what is effective leadership – paper 5; and the effectiveness of 360 degree feedback for current and future leaders – paper 6). Data analysis took the form of constant comparative analysis (Cavana, Delahaye & Sekaran, 2001) whereby themes were identified and coded as they surfaced. As new themes emerged, these were compared with the previous ones and regrouped with similar themes. If a new meaning unit emerged, a new theme was formed (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

The researcher took an inductive approach to data analysis. In other words, data were collected relating to a focus of enquiry and were not grouped according to predetermined categories (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Inductive reasoning as espoused by Patton (1990) was chosen for its insistence on listening, allowing categories in content of responses, patterns of association and any key terms to emerge freely.

Limitations of the Study

All research approaches have limitations and the approach used in this study was no different. There were three main limitations of the study. Firstly, the sample size was small comprising only eighteen participants. For this reason, the findings of the study that were reported in each of the three papers cannot be generalised nor can laws be yielded and therefore the findings must be read and interpreted with some caution. This issue of not being able to generalise from the findings tends to be one of drawbacks of following a qualitative research approach.

Secondly, the participants in the sample were drawn from one university and one university program. It is possible that participants from other universities may have yielded different insights and raised different sets of issues in relation to the broad topic of leadership succession and development which is the focus of this study.

Thirdly, the limitation pertains to the researcher's position as an 'insider'. Merton (1972) describes an insider as "a member of the group, and one who holds that particular status" (p.21). In this study, the researcher played the role of co-facilitator of the leadership program from which the participants were drawn and knew them in this capacity. While this was advantageous as it allowed access to the research participants, it had the limitation of potentially exacerbating the potential for bias. The researcher endeavoured to minimise this bias by constantly reflecting on the data during the data analysis, allowing participants to verify the summary of the interview and therefore make amendments if necessary, and keeping a journal that recorded her personal values and biases.

Summary

This section provided an overview of some of the methodological considerations for the three research papers that constituted this PhD by Publication. Further discussion of aspects of the methodology can be found in all of the three research based papers (papers 4, 5, and 6).

Table A

List of Interview Questions

What are the main challenges for the changing tertiary sector, and hence, for individual leaders? (addressed in paper 4)

What do you see as the most significant challenges for university leaders over the next five years?

How do leaders learn and what constitutes effective leadership? (addressed in paper 5)

What are the conditions – either a set of characteristics of a leader, a set of environmental factors created by a leader or a blend of both - which most foster high performance for you?

Can you describe the most significant learning event for you as a leader; one which you might describe as a defining experience in your learning as a leader?

How effective is 360 degree feedback surveying using the Quality Leadership Profile (QLP) for assisting individual development for current and future leaders? (addressed in paper 6)

In respect of your respondents' perceptions on your leadership and management performance, have the results of your 360 leadership survey using the QLP (Quality Leadership Profile) provided (a) no new insight; or (b) new insight? If (b), can you briefly summarise that insight? Please offer any comment on the usefulness of the QLP debrief and on your overall reaction to the QLP exercise

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