A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves. —Lao Tzu in the Tao Te Ching

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter, the reader will be able to do the following:

» Understand the characteristics and components of personal leadership in a profession.

» Define the role of the professional knowledge worker as a leader in the nursing profession and its impact on the role of members.

» Enumerate the behaviors and practices of the contemporary clinical leader and the skills necessary to support them.

» Outline some of the pitfalls and challenges affecting the role of the leader, and sort truth from fiction regarding appropriate leader skills.

» List at least five critical leadership practices that are unique to the leadership role within a knowledge worker frame of reference.

» State your individual personal characteristics and identify their potential for transformation during the development of your own leadership capacity as a part of a personal leadership development plan.

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Chapter

3

Person of the Leader: The Capacity to Lead

Leaders coordinate, integrate, facilitate, and provide a context for the performance of the people within an organization (Maxwell, 2010; O'Neill, 2013). They provide language used to describe the strategic direction of the organization, and in that translational capacity give real life to the work of others. Leaders really do little else other than create the context for work in a way that aligns this work to the mission and vision of the organization and ensure that this relationship is continuously played out in the activities of the people of the organization.

Leadership is a capacity all its own; that is, it is a particular skill set. Although it may reflect talents gained from other focuses or activities, its expression is unique to the leader's role. Leadership requires its own time. Cluttering the activities of leadership with responsibilities and tasks that rightfully should be assigned to others or including the accountabilities that belong to others as a part of the role of leadership both incapacitates the leader and impedes the legitimate expression of leadership (Watkins, 2004). It is often tragic to see how leaders are subsumed by the activities of others and become overwhelmed with the day-to-day pressures of doing work and just getting things done. Although such activities are important, for the leader they are a continuous and constant impediment to the legitimate and full expression of the leadership role.

Leaders can actually lose their legitimacy and the true value of the role by becoming too personally invested for too long a period of time in the busyness, chaos, and continuous intensity

CRITICAL THOUGHT

Leaders end up in serious trouble when they become too personally invested for too long a period of time in busyness, chaos, and the intensity of the day-to-day activities of work. Who will the staff depend on for seeing beyond the day's work and helping them find the meaning and sustainability in their work that can come only from rising above the day-to-day routine and looking beyond it to discover both its purpose and direction?

of the day-to-day activities of the workplace. Failing to pull away from the tendency to become buried in activity and function is perhaps the greatest single impediment to fully engaging the character and function of leadership in a way that will make a difference to the organization and people to which leadership is directed (Zedeck & American Psychological Association, 2011). If the leader is overwhelmed by the intensity of daily activity, the capacity to lead is compromised and the ability of the leader to make a difference in the lives he or she leads will be extinguished.

Self-Knowledge

Over time, leaders are simply unable to hide their true leadership capacity from others. Genuine connection to the real self and the emergence of leadership out of personal genuine self-expression is a critical centerpiece to the legitimate role of the leader. Having a refined level of self-knowledge facilitates a deeper insight into the character, needs, and expression of the person of the leader in a way that represents individual clarity, openness, and vulnerability. This vulnerability is always apparent in the disclosing and humane expressions associated with good leadership. The effective leader is personally available to others, to learning, and to change. He or she exhibits a continuous willingness to confront and engage the challenges of life and work head-on with a level of personal enthusiasm and excitement that is palpable to others. One of the real hallmarks of leadership is the willingness to visibly display the struggles and challenges associated with grappling with problems, intractable issues, the challenges of change, and the personal struggles in adapting one's own behaviors when the demands of change call for personal adjustment.

Good leaders are many things; they also play many roles. In the 21st century, the leader must fill all of the following roles:

- A transformer
- A visionary

- A translator of direction
- Communication central
- A pursuer of truth
- A generator of creativity and innovation
- A seeker of the very next thing
- A team expert and role model
- A model of the journey to excellence

The Continuous Journey of Becoming

Change is a constant. People do not create change, drive change, originate change, or own and control change. Rather, change is the condition of existence. Change is a constant more than an activity. It represents the framework of existence and operates at every level throughout the universe (Hawking, 1988). Furthermore, change is not an event. It does not come and go, though it does ebb and flow. It is consistent and constant, ever present as a part of the condition of living.

As an outflow of this understanding regarding change, personal growth, development, and engagement of the life experience across the continuum of one's life collectively serve as the clearest validation of the constancy of change and the demand to continuously engage with it so as to find meaning and purpose and to express value as a member of a dynamic human community. The leader is intimately familiar with these characteristics of change. He or she is able to resonate with this dynamic so that the leader is seen as positively disposed and consistently excited about the engagement of the journey of learning and growing as it applies to the leader's role and function in the system (Werhane, 2007). In fact, this individual is so in tune with the reality of change at a personal level that this connection becomes identified with the person. This congruence between the dynamics of change and the person of the leader, in turn, creates an image of availability, openness, engagement, and embracing the challenges of change as a normative part of the role of leadership. The resonance is so palpable that others who perceive the person of the leader in this way develop an intensity of relationships. All who share with the leader in this level of enthusiasm indicate their connection with the change dynamic and demonstrate the ability to incorporate it into their own practices and processes.

It should be evident to the emerging leader at this stage that the personal characteristics and attributes of generative leadership provide the prototype or model for personal leadership (Rondeau, 2007). They present it in a way that generates a community of interest and engagement from others, evidenced by

CRITICAL THOUGHT

The leader creates a context that frames the behavior of the organization in a way that helps the organization achieve its objectives.

people's ability to seek out, give form to, advance, and create new patterns of response to changing times and circumstances in the organization. This is the power of personal commitment and attachment to the role of leader.

The leader is able to represent within the leadership role a deeper level of understanding of life as a journey, not an event. This simply means that the view of the leader with regard to life experiences is developed from having stood on the "balcony," translating his or her view of systems, structures, and organizations in a way that better articulates the relationship between the system and the broader context within which it operates. The wise leader is fully aware of the shifts and flows operating at the intersection between the larger social environment and the internal environment of organizations and systems. He or she knows that as those conditions and circumstances adjust and change, the dynamics are altered between the external demands of the environment and the internal response of the system; the leader, in response, works to make sure that those new dynamics are sustainable (Guastello, 2002). The leader, understanding the constancy of these shifts, uses his or her predictive and adaptive capacity to translate that interface into meaningful language for the other members of the organization, explaining how these changes will affect the lives and work of the people guided by the leader.

Having a predictive and adaptive capacity simply means that the leader is able to quickly shift priorities, conversations, actions, and responses in a way that more aptly fits the present circumstances. The leader personally understands that what one knows at any given time is never permanent and does not represent a constant value. He or she understands that knowledge is mostly a utility, having value only to the extent that it is current and relevant and represents continuous growth (Wager, Wickham, & Glaser, 2005; Worren, 2012). The leader is able to surrender attachment to notions, ideas, past practices, rituals, and routines—indeed, anything that would impede the ability of people and organizations to better adapt to their work and value as the settings (the environment) within which they work change. The leader understands that these shifts are driven by so-called **emergent** conditions. These emergent conditions may be driven by new sociopolitical realities, economic changes, technological advances, evidence of best practices, and a host of related changes that demonstrate that holding onto current practices is an impediment to engaging in improved work processes and better serving the interests of the organization's customers.

WHO AM I AS A LEADER?

Good leaders constantly ask themselves questions that relate to their value and relevance and to the goodness of fit between their leadership practices and the changing demands of the organization:

1. Are my leadership practices consistent with the changing goals of the organization?
2. Do I focus my leadership practices on building strong relationships and creating a good fit between people and the work they do?
3. Am I aware of my own continuing developmental needs, always exposing myself to the challenges of changing developments and new learning?

The Leadership Mirror

Leaders do not act in isolation. Indeed, one of the hallmarks of a leader is the ability to build and manage meaningful and sustainable relationships with a variety of others. Whether those others are executives, peers, or organizational members who depend on leadership (partners), the leader values and engages in intense relationships, recognizing that it is through this vehicle that effective work and change are accomplished. These relationships enable both the organization and its people to continue to work interactively and to achieve effective ends together. Leaders who deeply embrace and can clearly articulate the relational dynamics that drive contemporary network organizations are best able to maximize the energies that result from this knowledge (Bryman, 2011; Mackin, 2007).

The person of the leader serves as a mirror that reflects continuously emergent realities embedded in the leader's social relationships, in the cultural context, and in the business practices involved in the collective work organizations. Increasingly, technology is driving much of the functional work in organizations and systems. Technology causes systems to move away from more traditional and outdated manual systems and structures that, in the contemporary world, because they are manual and functional, limit the

CRITICAL THOUGHT

If leaders want to know which kind of leaders they are, they need only look into the faces of their staff; reflected back will be the quality of their leadership.

ability of systems and people to be relevant and viable in a more just-in-time, fast-paced technological environment. The new paradigm for work includes specific characteristics and elements that directly and radically impact the role of the leader, causing him or her to reflect more deeply on the circumstances that inform effective and legitimate expression of the role. Some of these elements to consider might be the following:

- There is an acknowledgment of and an increasing and abiding dependence on both understanding and valuing collective wisdom when making decisions and setting priorities.
- Accessing the collective wisdom of diverse work partners helps discern value characteristics of sustainable work. Leaders must recognize that organizations are systems and networks. These structures serve as the foundation or context for all work and represent the interconnections that drive decision making and the actions of people in the system.
- The industrial age has long since passed; as a result, the world in which the leader operates is no longer mechanistic, linear, and vertical in its orientation. The new age represents, instead, a great relationship that is continuously dynamic, interrelated, interdependent, and continuously in motion.
- The leader remains servant to the system and its people. The context drives the work of the leader. It is the task of creating this good fit between the context of work and the content of work that gives the leader's role focus and value. The leader coordinates, integrates, and facilitates this intersection with the intent of creating convergence between systems and people, such that the congruence and effective relations work together to sustain both the system and its people.
- Meaning is always informed by purpose. The leader is continually reminded that all people seek meaning in their lives and work, and that they want to see that purpose reflected in the character and quality of their work in a way that represents the contribution of each person to advance the sustainability and success of the organization as a whole.
- Leaders understand the constancy of change in their own lives. They are able to translate this into the lives of others and into whole systems. Leaders seek the seamless intersection of change events and manage each stage of the change process in a way that ensures engagement of people, their movement in concert and response to meaningful change, and their collective success in advancing their own lives and the organization's interests.

- Leaders make time for self-reflection. If the leader's capacity and confidence in discerning, questioning, and translating change remain stagnant and unrefined, this inertia will be reflected in late-stage engagement, reticence, and ineffective response. Furthermore, peers who witness this incongruence will be negatively affected with regard to their own response to change. The availability to self-reflection, environmental scanning, strategizing, and translating reality is a personal leadership attribute. These reflective skills contribute to advancing the broader value of the organization and its people. This outcome happens only when the leader as an individual has engaged these practices as a personal performance expectation.
- Good leaders are transparent and become exemplars of what is valuable and right. They visibly display their own personal commitment to engagement and transformation. They recognize that they are constantly being observed, and that there are no accidental conversations, moments, or occurrences. Instead, every level of interaction has meaning, value, and impact on others. Good leadership communication is a representation of leaders' commitment, as well as their connection to others, their capacity for change, their willingness to address change, and the effectiveness of how they engage it.

Each of these components of personal leadership briefly describes the expectation of the leader in terms of self-reflection, role expression, and relationships to others. Leadership is a role, not a condition. Expressing leadership is intentional work. Leaders make a conscious choice and commitment to the work of leadership. They recognize within their own personhood certain characteristics that must converge in a way to demonstrate leadership and they make a commitment to appropriate and effective leadership behavior (see **Table 3-1**).

Leaders Versus Managers

Leadership and management are two distinct competencies. This text focuses on the development of leadership, not on functions of management. **Managers** have subordinates; leaders have partners.

By definition, management is an organizational position and function. Managers require subordinates. Managers generally have a vertical relationship to those they manage. Management is considered a particular position with vested authority given to these individuals by hierarchical organizational management. Traditional employees work for managers and largely do what the managers suggest is appropriate to their work. Management style is largely transactional or transformational, such that the manager generally informs or encourages

Table 3-1 Leadership Characteristics of the 21st Century

Conceptual Competencies	Interpersonal Competencies	Participation Competencies	Leadership Competencies
Systems thinking Acclimation to chaos Pattern recognition Synthesis Continuous learning	Receptivity and similarity Immediacy and equality Integration Facilitation Coordination Coaching Framing new leadership language	Partnership Equity Accountability Ownership Investment Involvement Empowerment	Vulnerability and openness Systems skills Emotional maturity Self-management Transformation skills Group process skills Change management Fluidity and mobility

employees regarding the nature of the work, the direction in which that work is oriented and how it impacts the organization, the functions that are critical to the activities of work, the motivation of the worker, and the training and performance expectations necessary to do the work well (Rippin, 2007; Simmons & Sharbrough, 2013).

Leadership has little to do with traditional notions of management. Leaders specifically do not have subordinates or subsequent roles. They tend to influence others by virtue of their relationship skills and by advancing the effectiveness of their relationships in a way that supports the collective work of the stakeholders and the effectiveness of their outputs (Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005). Leaders use well-researched principles of relationship, interaction, behavior, and communication to engage others in mutual commitment that advances the value of all and achieves the purposeful ends of their collective work. Leadership is essentially about the person rather than simply about the work. When focusing on the person of the leader, role expectations relate to group interaction, influential characteristics between leaders and colleagues, innovation and creativity, interactional skills, team dynamics, and personal characteristics that inspire confidence, competence, commitment, engagement, and the support of others. Leadership is generally not located in a fixed position; instead, it characterizes a role. These role characteristics need to more clearly articulate leaders' ability to effectively interact, intersect, and engage with others, stimulating ownership of their contributions, coaching and developing new insights and skills, and leading others to new insights and understanding about their work system, relationships, and outcomes. Leaders can be found in both the clinical and management ranks of any organization. Indeed, as this text strongly infers, clinical leadership is as important to the success of the healthcare organization as is management leadership.

Managers direct from legitimized hierarchical positions, exercising a locus of control derived from their formal authority in the system. Leadership can be exercised from any point in the system. Indeed, if utilized appropriately, it can change the whole system regardless of where the leader may be located in it. Confidence and capacity are critical elements of the good exercise of leadership, not position. Managers do not necessarily have to be good leaders to perform their functions appropriately, but leaders do not have that same opportunity. Leaders relate by influence, not by control. Northouse (2007, p. 10) distinguished management and leadership in particular ways (Table 3-2). The key distinction between management and leadership is that management is about function, whereas leadership is about movement. The central focus of the manager's role relates specifically to functions and activities often associated with particular skills.

Another contemporary differentiation between management and leadership is that management focuses on analysis, whereas leadership focuses on synthesis. **Analysis** is often defined as breaking down the components of a problem or issue into parts or elements (Tilley, 2008). **Synthesis** works in the opposite direction: It is the act of combining and integrating numerous complex elements or components so as to view the system as an integrated whole (Cowen & Moorhead, 2011). Although synthesis may include analysis as a part of its infrastructure, the ultimate goal is to observe the system acting and interacting as a whole in a way that represents the desired state (Ford, Seers, & Neumann, 2013). Management tends to look at activities and functions over a short-term, sometimes immediate time frame; leadership observes longer trajectories of time and deals in

Table 3-2 Management Versus Leadership Competencies

Management Produces Order and Consistency	Leadership Produces Change and Movement
Planning and budgeting Establishing agendas Setting timetables Allocating resources	Establishing direction Creating a vision Clarifying the big picture Setting strategies
Organizing and staffing Providing structure Making job placements Establishing rules and procedures	Aligning people Communicating goals Seeking commitment Building teams and coalitions
Controlling and problem solving Developing incentives Generating creative solutions Taking corrective action	Motivating and inspiring Inspiring and energizing Empowering subordinates Satisfying unmet needs

CRITICAL THOUGHT

Leadership requires a strong sense of self. It is next to impossible for a tentative leader to influence the lives and choices of others. A context of competence and confidence can sometimes be the only difference between encouragement and failure.

broader-framed circumstances related to creating conditions essential for long-term sustainability rather than short-term returns. Management often focuses on efficiency, function, and process emphasis. Leadership, in contrast, focuses on the relationship, interactions, and confluence of forces that contribute to complexity and how they can be intercepted to advance effectiveness or a trajectory of success rather than any moment of success. Leaders tend to embrace risk and experiment with trial and error. Managers tend to eliminate or reduce risk and build on the tried and tested.

The Personal Attributes of Leaders

Although leaders have many different personalities and personal characteristics, they share a consistent network of attributes that characterize leadership (Leader to Leader Institute, Hesselbein, & Goldsmith, 2006; Simmons & Sharbrough, 2013). Emerging leaders should ask some basic questions early in their career trajectory to address some of the basic attributes of leadership. Some of those questions—and the rationale for them—might be as follows:

- *Do I genuinely like people?* My leadership will bring me in contact with many people, and I may have to lead in directions others may not be interested in going at any given time. I need to be willing to relate to a wide variety of personalities, demonstrate sensitivity to their differences, be aware of their needs, and accommodate these differences in my relationships. I genuinely must like doing this work.
- *Am I able to live with a high degree of ambiguity and uncertainty?* I will be constantly working through a large number of changes. I need to be an example of willingness, openness, excitement, and engagement of change. I must be able to demonstrate a will to embrace change in my own life and demonstrate my life as a change in motion before I ask others to embrace change.
- *How well developed are my communication skills?* Communication will be the centerpiece of my leadership expression. I will be constantly communicating with others at every level of the system.

I need to demonstrate competence and confidence and communicate articulately. My communication with others must show that I have been informed in my knowledge and expressions. It must be understandable, and I must be seen as competent and trustworthy.

- *Do I have the courage to have crucial conversations and confrontations when required by my leadership?* Can I be tough and disciplined regarding decisions and courses of action? Have I dealt with fear and uncertainty, and am I comfortable with my ability to cope with it and move ahead?
- *Am I able to stand alone and encourage support for a position that others are not embracing?* I must be able to be firm with regard to a position that is evidence based, ethical, and appropriate under the circumstances; I must defend it clearly and with firmness. I can address others' concerns and insights and develop my position as it becomes positively informed by others.
- *Am I an effective team player?* As a leader, I see my opportunity to make a contribution to the planning and implementation of critical processes. I can assume leadership in translating necessary decisions to others. I can help others refine their responses to decisions, overcome their concerns, restate their goals, and renew their direction in a way that advances integrity, effectiveness, and sustainability.

Leaders must have the ability to move others to act together. As a person, the leader must be able to connect with both heart and head. The leader helps others find a deeper purpose in their work and connect that purpose with the collective energy necessary to advance their work and the system to which it is directed. The leader understands the value of emotional and psychodynamic connection to work, to others, and to a cause greater than oneself. Leaders create a culture of ownership and investment in the collective action of work, helping to build a community around the purposes of work and deepening the understanding of the relationship among individual work activities, the collective convergence of that effort, and its power to make a difference (Miner, 2005; Sohmen, 2013).

The leader constantly dances with credibility. To maintain long-term viability and relationships with others, the leader must be able to reflect values of honesty, transparency, personal integrity, and leadership discipline. These values form the foundation of lasting relationships with others in the workplace. Through the exercise of these values, each person to whom the leader relates develops a special connection to the leader through his or her own efforts and personal representation of those same values. In the struggle to act consonant with those values, individuals look to the leader as a mentor and validator in a way that keeps

them in touch with their own needs and struggles to keep these values at the forefront of their own lives. The leader models these behaviors by demonstrating personal integrity and living his or her values, using them as the vehicle for self-expression and presentation to others. The leader best communicates these values by maintaining consistency in personal behavior, thereby generating the understanding that integrity is a way of being, not simply a reaction to a single circumstance or event.

SCENARIO

Many leaders are promoted into a leadership role from staff positions. Often, their selection is a reflection of the good work that the individual did as a staff person. In the staff role, this individual became an expert at his or her work. This expertise and effectiveness then ultimately led this individual into the role of new leader. The greatest problem with this process relates to the conflict between really great preparation in the work process and the demands of a good leader: Often they are not aligned. Leadership skills are unique to the role. Staff expertise may be an indicator of potential competence, but there is no guarantee it will be transferred into the leader role. The emerging leader must understand this differentiation from the outset. Failure to do so skews the new leader's understanding of the role and affects the quality of how the role is applied.

You have been selected to lead the development of the practice council in your clinical department. Your manager saw strong leadership potential in you as evidenced by your commitment to care, your ability to influence your colleagues, and your willingness to help make decisions on the unit. You have never been asked to be the leader before or to organize something as important as a practice council. You are eager to perform this role well but are a little concerned about your ability to carry it off.

In an effort to get ready for your role, you have gathered some of your colleagues together to help you with some initial questions. How might you respond to the following questions?

Discussion Questions

1. How many and what range of diversity of staff members do you want to gather for the initial council?

2. What are the first personal activities related to your leadership that you need to address before establishing a council meeting time?

3. Which specific types of mentorship would you look for from your manager to guide you through your initial leadership experiences with the council?

4. Which kinds of reactions from your colleagues on the staff should you anticipate and plan for as you assume this important role?

5. As you prepare for the first council meeting, what might be some of the first agenda items to establish a firm foundation from which the council can launch its work?

Courage and Leadership

Leadership is not easy work. Invested and committed leaders see themselves as though leadership and their own person are one and the same thing. Leadership is intentional work, and leaders are fully conscious of the implications, meaning, and value of their personal actions. Without this awareness of intentionality and the requisite clarity around the impact of the role in the organization and on others, the leader can slip into a sort of passive functionalism that reflects more the characteristics of the management of functions and processes than the leadership characteristics of vision and direction (Kellough, 2008).

Often in nursing, leaders are promoted into management roles out of need rather than because they have clearly demonstrated the skills and capacity necessary for managers. Just as often, the individuals promoted into roles of management leadership are excellent practitioners who are tapped for these roles because of their quality of and passion for patient care. The problem inherent in this process is that clinical work excellence is a poor predictor of management or leadership success (Winkler, 2010). This statement is not meant to imply that excellent clinical practitioners cannot be good leaders. If they are good leaders, however, it is often the result of other circumstances not directly aligned with their excellence in clinical practice. Leadership comprises a specific set of competencies with unique characteristics and content. The evaluation of the elements and components of leadership suggests different characteristics are needed for success in this role than for success as a clinical practitioner. Whether an individual is a clinical leader or a management leader, the leadership characteristics and skill sets are precisely the same:

- Solid self-perception
- Strongly self-directed

- Ability to relate to others well
- Effective verbal skills
- Willingness to interact
- Able to clarify issues
- Unafraid of ambiguity
- Willing to face conflict head-on and early
- Embraces the noise of creativity
- Allows others to be innovative and to break the rules
- Not good at avoiding anything
- Lands running
- Can live in the reflected glory of others' accomplishments
- Does not mind a little chaos
- Demonstrates empathy
- Loves to celebrate others' successes

One of the unique ingredients to effective and sustainable leadership is the leader's ability to demonstrate reasoned and careful judgment when making especially difficult and challenging decisions. The leader's relationship with colleagues is often complicated and involves a myriad of patterns of interaction and communication. Sometimes decisions that are appropriate and correct are not universally acceptable or agreed to. It is at this point where leadership courage becomes especially important. Those times when the current runs counter to the correct or most appropriate decision become the true test of one of the leader's most critical skills. There are a number of elements related to courage that are important to manifest in the personal exercise of the leadership role, as discussed next.

The Courage to Initiate and Act

Often the leader will need to push the walls of current practices, rituals, and routines of work in favor of implementing new evidence-based processes, practices, or initiatives. Some of these changes will not be popular. Yet, the leader must act consistent with the obligation to make sure that clinical action is evidence based and reflects the state of the art. This will often mean challenging colleagues and raising the bar for performance and impact. If the leader has a need for a great number of personal friendships at work, that individual should not seek the role of leadership because it will often call into question these more personal relationships in the interests of making right decisions.

The Courage to Stand up for What Is Right in Others

Occasionally in the work setting, relationships among colleagues may be stressed, stretched, or otherwise subjected to a high level of tension. The leader must be willing to enter the intensity and fray of challenged relationships, and with courage and clarity sort through them to identify common ground and to build essential partnerships. The work of the leader focuses on the integrity and effectiveness of the team. To ensure that team-based processes and practices remain fluid and consistent, the leader often will need to confront barriers, boundaries, and perceptual relational differences between members of the team. It is here where skill, courage, and the energy necessary to work through differences become critical in the role of the leader. Establishing group norms, clarifying challenges among individuals, building effective relationships, and confronting issues and concerns head-on are acts of personal courage evident in the day-to-day leadership of every system.

The Courage to Trust

Often leaders are seen in terms of their capacity to control things. This notion of control is a viable constituent of leadership capacity, but is frequently overrated. In fact, the effective leader often is the one who is best able to let go of personal control and to trust in colleagues that they will act in the best interests of the profession, the organization, and those whom they serve. Trust is evidence of the quality of the relationship between members of the team. A significant role of the leader is to ensure that expectations, accountability, relationships, and performance are clear for team members, so that each person understands his or her role obligations in terms of contributing to an effective work environment and quality practice and patient outcomes. Showing confidence and trust in colleagues and team members best demonstrates the effectiveness and positive characteristics and the application of the leadership role. Trust reflects the existence of effective relationships, clearly understood expectations, consistent and well-articulated accountabilities, and performance results that reveal the best in clinical practice.

A Personal Connection to Leadership Courage

Courage is palpable and visible. Others can see courage present in the person of the leader. Through all of the small daily activities of the expression of leadership, the personal courage of the leader becomes evident. The way that the leader interacts with others, the voice the leader gives to issues, the leader's personal pattern of behavior, and the critical choices the leader makes in times of

challenge or difficulty all express the leader's courage. It is in these small daily events where courage becomes most visible. Some exemplars of daily personal courage include the following:

- Speaking up when the individual knows his or her views will not be popular
- Receiving critical feedback from others regarding personal behavior, positions, or expression
- Saying no when it is easier and more acceptable to say yes
- Publicly accepting responsibility for one's own behavior and for the behavior and outcomes of the team
- Walking away when passions generate childishness, create polarization, or lead to unprincipled language or behaviors
- Speaking with firmness and commitment on issues of principle, best practice, personal rights, and integrity, and in the interests of the patient
- Seeking reflective time when precipitous action may be more expedient or acceptable
- Defending disadvantaged, discriminated-against, aggrieved, or repressed individuals and groups, especially when it is not popular to do so
- Giving passion and language to vision, innovation, and creativity, especially at points where it is not universally acceptable
- Admitting error and personal failing with full ownership and accountability
- Listening deeply when one wants to talk and asking when one wants to tell
- Easily giving credit to others, especially when it is easier to take it oneself
- Finding potential in others and working diligently to develop it

Courage is not reserved solely for those times of great significance or importance where the gestures of courage can be grand or sweeping. In fact, courage is most often evident in the small and unrecognizable daily acts of integrity, honesty, and commitment to truth. Effective leaders see courage simply as one of the elements present in their exercise of the leadership role. Courageous behavior for the effective leader is no big deal, and it is evident in the usual and ordinary behavior of daily leadership. It is the leader who can make courage ordinary and reflect it in every decision and action who best exemplifies the meaning, value, and impact of courage in the act of leading (Harbour & Kisfalvi, 2014).

Leaders Engage Stakeholders

Good leaders know that they are not the center of the organization and that they do not have all of the answers to the myriad questions generated by organizational work. They recognize that they are agents in complex organizational systems (Bergmann & Brough, 2007). While there are many agents in the system, the leader is an unintentional agent located at the intersection of various levels in the system and serves to create opportunities for linkage, interface, and synthesis in the system. In essence, the intentional leader is a catalyst for action rather than the action itself.

The leader as organizational agent recognizes some fundamental elements in the leadership role that are necessary to incorporate so as to best exercise the role of the leader. Some central themes with regard to the role of the leader in the work community are as follows:

- Instead of looking for answers, the leader seeks the right question. This quest ensures that subsequent activity undertaken by organizational members will address the issues that best align with the critical requisites of goodness of fit between the organization and its environment.
- Leaders create the circumstances that make it possible to fully engage all stakeholders with regard to issues, processes, and problem resolution. The leader does not so much seek the resolution of the problem as he or she directs the problem to those who have ownership for its solution.
- The leader as agent does not try to be the locus of control for decisions, processes, or actions. Instead, the leader attempts to find the legitimate locus of control for a decision or action to ensure that the right stakeholders who have direct ownership of the issue are invested in leading the response to it.
- The leader continually questions who the stakeholders are, so as to shape the focus on particular issues, concerns, processes, or problem solving. The leader's primary role in this scenario is to set the table with the right players who have ownership and competence in addressing the issue or resolving the problem.
- The leader seeks to use the correct language to describe a priority, issue, or concern of the organization. The goal is that, through appropriate dialogue, stakeholders will align the right effort to the right issue and devote the right resources to addressing it.
- The leader serves primarily as a catalyst for issue owners to address and resolve problems, processes, or concerns. The leader makes sure

that the right players, tools, processes, and expertise are appropriately aligned to support decision makers in a way that facilitates the best possible problem solving.

- The leader acts as circuit rider to the deliberation and decisional process, ensuring that the right people, processes, tools, and data are available in a format that best supports arriving at the right solution and undertaking the best action.

Wise leaders never put themselves at the center of the deliberative or decisional activities of stakeholders. Instead, they see that the stakeholders have what they need to exercise full ownership of their issues and to fully invest resources and effort in the appropriate deliberation and decisions necessary to address particular issues and concerns (Winkler, 2010). In this way, a leader ensures that ownership of the resolution of issues remains in the hands of those people who will be most strongly impacted by those solutions. As part of this effort, the leader ensures that stakeholders develop the right skills, talents, insights, and applications necessary to address the issues of concern over which they exercise ownership. Although it might be easier for the leader to undertake these activities unilaterally and to be the center of problem solving in his or her area of accountability, that is not always the wisest course of action. Research has shown that the closer to the point of service a problem is dealt with and resolved by those who have direct ownership for it, the better the process and the better the solution (Barker, 1990; Edwards & Elwyn, 2009). However, it is important to the leader that those who have ownership of problems and issues undertake the processes directed toward addressing those problems and issues, and that they have the essential tools necessary to do so. The leader is responsible for seeing that needs and resources converge in a meaningful way, and that through the application of these resources, issues are addressed, problems are solved, and change is advanced.

The Leader Stays in the Question

Wise leaders know that given any opportunity, the locus of control for an issue or concern will always seek to move from the higher-intensity and more-volatile environment from which it emerged, to a level in the system where the volatility, intensity, and anxiety are less concentrated. This basic law of entropy also applies to human dynamics and behavior. If they are left intentionally unaddressed, most problems will arrive at the manager's desk or in the leader's hands, whether they belong there or not.

The leader recognizes that virtually all problems belong where they originated and seeks to return them there to ensure the problems' legitimate and effective

resolution. Because the leader does not own the problem, if he or she attempts to resolve it, the resolution is likely to address only the symptoms—not the root cause—and the problem is likely to recur. If a permanent solution is to be sought and obtained, the problem must return to its point of origin, where those who own it can resolve it in a way that permanently addresses the issue. It is the leader's obligation to see that the issue returns to its legitimate locus of control and is handled by those who own it (Malloch, 2010).

Good leaders know that they are not the answer to all the questions that others raise. Indeed, they must recognize that accountability for answers always rests with the questioner. The minute the leader answers the question, a transfer of the locus of control for the answer moves to the leader, essentially absolving the questioner of any ownership of the solution to his or her own questions. This transfer occurs thousands of times every day in the life and role of the leader.

The wise leader recognizes that the accountable answer to any question is the next question. He or she recognizes that ownership of the issue should remain with the person who brings it, and that person must be encouraged and enabled to respond and seek the best, most sustainable solution. The leader seeks to have the questioner do the following:

- Retain ownership and control over the issue.
- Identify the resources necessary to pursue a solution.
- Name the barriers impeding a solution.
- Identify the best deliverables related to a sustainable solution.
- Enumerate a mechanism for selecting the best alternative.
- Outline the process steps necessary to address the issue.
- Indicate the impact of the selected approach.
- Evaluate the results of the approaches selected.
- Undertake corrective action related to an effective solution.
- Validate the action of the staff.
- Celebrate the success for the staff in resolving their own issues.

To make sure that a legitimate locus of control is maintained in problem solving, the leader takes a step back when issues that belong to others arise. The leader sees that he or she is not the source of the solution of the problem. Although the leader can access resources, support decision making, provide skill opportunities, and gather the right stakeholders, the leader cannot resolve the problem in any sustainable way on behalf of those who own it. Instead, those parties must resolve it themselves.

In the interests of ensuring this appropriate alignment, the leader stays in the question. This means raising the right issues, engaging appropriate stakeholders,

helping others to find the core of the issue or problem, discerning the right agents for problem resolution, and creating the right format and forum for addressing the issue in a way that produces viable and sustainable solutions. In short, the leader stays focused on the *context* of problem solving; the staff stays focused on the *content* of problem solving. This context–content set of parameters helps clarify and distinguish between the elements of the role of the leader and those of the stakeholder. Leaders firmly stay within the context obligations of their role and support stakeholders in addressing their ownership of the content of their issue or concern.

Leaders who stay in the question will find the personal skill set needed for this role to be challenging at best. Put simply, leaders must develop personal attributes that make it comfortable for them to refrain from being the centerpiece or the control point for managing, deciding, and directing resolution of issues that belong to the staff. People who express leadership potential, however, are not often shy, passive, or wilting lily personalities. The unique leadership characteristics evidenced by high energy, strong sense of ownership, creativity and innovation, clear direction, and desire to problem solve, therefore, often trip up these individuals when they need to transfer the locus of control for the answer. Often, they assume that the sometimes much more effective leadership characteristics that remove them as the centerpiece of the action and move them to the side are less meaningful and valuable than being at the "center of the action" (Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2010a).

Some self-reflection with regard to leadership capacity is critical for leaders to remain in touch and to assess the competence required for any particular leadership action. Understanding motive, leadership role content, and personal attributes is important to the appropriate self-development of the leader in leading a team of equals (knowledge workers/professionals) in ways that best engage them, prevent the illegitimate transfer of ownership, and create the conditions for effective problem solving. Some of these self-characteristics are as follows:

- Self-confidence and clear awareness of personal ego challenges and reward needs
- A sense of self-direction and the ability to meet one's own needs without depending on the reflected praise of others
- Assertive skills that make it clear to others the locus of control for obligations and accountability
- A strong ability to articulate and clarify issues in a language that can clearly be understood by others, especially those who may own the issues
- A capacity to face the potential for conflict head-on and early enough to help people engage it and translate it into purposeful action

- An ability to embrace the noise of initially chaotic, often creative efforts at aligning stakeholders and undertaking deliberations resulting in creative solutions
- The ability to obtain equal satisfaction and personal reward in the reflected light of the team's accomplishment and in colleagues' recognition of the leader's contribution to creativity or effective solutions
- The capability to celebrate others' success and to make celebration a consistent part of the life of the unit or department in ways that acknowledge successes and other individual contributions toward attaining success

Recognizing Personal Needs for Self-Development

Effective leaders appreciate the value associated with being an effective leader. They believe that through the development of their effective leadership skills, they will themselves become better leaders. Leaders also believe that they can develop and through personal self-development can grow and become even more effective. They also know that a good foundation in self-awareness is essential to anchor the foundations of this leadership development.

Every leader, no matter how experienced, must be aware of the need to continually develop and grow in this role. Competence in the leadership role is neither static nor ensured. Each leader must recognize how dynamic change is, constantly shifting the work landscape and calling all who work to continually reflect on the value of their contribution and the currency of their skills. This means participating in an endless assessment of competence and the need to adjust and grow in the role as it responds to new demands. Such a self-assessment includes questions such as the following:

- Am I able to see the whole picture, not just the part that applies to me?
- Do I focus on systems models and not merely reflect a process orientation?
- Am I able to look past the current issues and see where I am?
- Can I envision the journey and reflect on where I am in it?
- Am I good at translating reality and change so that others understand?
- Am I willing to face issues first before others must contend with them?
- Do I anticipate the needs of the system and of others in it?
- Do I explore different ways of seeing things and expand my thinking?

- Will I experiment with and evaluate options to current routines?
- Is there a place in my life for the uncertain and the chaotic?
- Can I find the energy in stress and use it to good advantage?
- Am I disciplined in my work and my life without being limited by it?
- Can I see the pain and noise in others and respond with empathy?
- Do I push others into their own challenges and support them in it?

Awareness of some of the common pitfalls that prevent leaders from developing their skills is in the person's own best interest in developing a stronger capacity for leadership. Many simple situations and occurrences contribute to the incapacitating or early destruction of leadership effectiveness. Developing leadership skills is a lifelong process that demands a continuous level of awareness of the leadership journey, its pitfalls and promises, and the individual hooks and traps that impede one's movement along the leadership trajectory. Some of the more common issues related to effective leadership are ones that are most frequently overlooked; they are highlighted next.

Some new leaders have an early tendency to self-destruct. Sometimes egos are fragile, and new leaders can often come to believe in their own sense of self-importance and thereby lose perspective with regard to their leadership role and impact of the organization. It is not uncommon to see leaders begin to believe that they are more important, capable, and valuable than is truly the case. Often this occurs when they receive recognition or praise for a singular accomplishment. The individual gets lost in the praise and begins to lose his or her center and believe his or her own value is far than it actually is. Allowing his or her personal ego to run rampant creates a condition that threatens the value and viability of the leader's role; it also tends to make the leader as much of a problem as the issues to which he or she directs attention. When the leader fails to exercise the same restraint in regard to his or her ego that the leader demands of others, the leader actually tends to stop the very activities that made him or her successful. A humble but balanced recognition of the leader's contribution to creating a positive context for good team relationships, effective problem solving, and advancing creativity is the best countermeasure to an uncontrolled ego and to misappropriation of the leader's role in making meaningful change in attaining sustainable success.

Some leaders fail to accommodate and manage the stress that inevitably accompanies the leadership role. Burnout is the most common occurrence in leaders. Burnout reflects the loss of personal balance, an eroding support system, too much emphasis on the role of the leader, and the diminishment of the moral and ethical center to leadership expression. Often these leaders failed to pay attention to their personal and family supports and the development of close friendships.

CRITICAL THOUGHT

Self-awareness ensures that a leader is able to confront the challenges that lie within and adjust for the conflicts and challenges that will move the individual to grow and develop in a way that takes the person beyond his or her limitations and into the arena of true innovation and creativity. Today most organizations are hungry for just such people.

They lose the ability to manage their time effectively, become overwhelmed with work, and have an inflated sense of their own value to others. Failure to obtain appropriate leadership peer support and mentorship often contributes to growing leadership stress. If these issues are left unaddressed long enough, they can lead to a lack of self-awareness that directly increases impending levels of personal burnout.

Excessive focus on task and function diminishes leadership effectiveness. Because of the pressures to perform and to achieve outcomes, leaders can become overly focused on short-term functions and results at the expense of long-term viability and sustainability. Leadership over the long term is about more than achieving short-term goals; it is emphasizes maintaining continuous levels of satisfaction and performance. The task-focused leader descends into the middle of the fray and becomes a part of the problems that ensue. The distance, objectivity, and long-range view expected of the leader diminish, and the individual fails to maintain the context or environment necessary to advance creativity and to recognize value in others.

Treating everyone the same can lead to problems for the leader. **Equity** does not mean **equality**: One is a measure of value; the other is a measure of condition. Everyone should be treated equally; that is beyond question. However, equity indicates that different roles contribute different kinds of value to the organization, such that each role must be respected within the context of its unique value contribution. Simply treating everyone the same ignores the uniqueness that each person brings to his or her role, confuses the specific contribution that each role makes, and eliminates the value of diversity to the mosaic of contributions necessary to the life and energy of the workplace. Recognizing and honoring role differences and individual contributions also advance the life and vitality of the leader.

Admitting personal error does not lead to a lack of credibility; in fact, it advances personal credibility. Regularly making mistakes as a leader is a problem, and it must be addressed as such. However, effective leaders do not generally make frequent and significant errors. When errors or mistakes have been made, the wise leader owns up to his or her part in the error and demonstrates

personal transparency with regard to its disclosure. By so doing, disclosure of errors becomes a safe and credible step for everyone, which in turn reduces the intensity and pressure that often accompany the discovery of errors. Setting the example of self-disclosure creates a safe space for those behaviors and helps eliminate the personal stress of hiding inadequacy, failure, and personal error.

The desire to be liked and to be a friend to staff can create significant leadership trauma. In the unique exercise of leadership, friendship is not a part of the quotient. With tongue firmly in cheek, one can say, "Leaders have no friends." Although this is potentially an overstatement, the truth of this principle lies in the fact that leadership is not a constituent of friendship, and friendship is often an impediment to the exercise of good leadership. Leaders need to be honored, respected, and even loved for their excellent exercise of leadership. However, this should not be mistaken for personal friendship with respect to role and performance excellence. Leaders who develop particular friendships within the context of the team format encourage stress, crisis, inequity, and personal problem generation. The wise leader develops a balanced view with regard to the role requirements of leadership as distinguished from the personal requirements of friendship. Failure to work through this misalignment and set clearly demarcated boundaries in this arena creates a volatile mix that results in diminishing leadership effectiveness and leads to considerable personal harm to both leaders and colleagues.

Leaders need to be available to each other and to their staff. Leaders who isolate themselves or wall themselves off from communication with other leaders and their own staff or colleagues create conditions that facilitate the development of self-harm. Leaders need to be visible and available to one another and to staff in ways that advance communication, dialogue, interaction, and problem solving. This high level of visibility and interaction creates a relational dynamic that improves the strength of the interaction between the leader and staff colleagues. The leader's exposure to other leaders and the constant interaction that this person maintains with other leaders helps keep the leader centered, expands the opportunities for new insights, encourages sharing of new tools and resources for self-development, and provides opportunities for mentorship and role clarification. Leadership isolation creates the exact opposite scenario, and diminishes both the support and the effectiveness of the leader's role, increasing stress and limiting the leader's viability.

Staying out of touch with the personal and professional issues of colleagues and staff can create emotional isolation for the leader. If the leader becomes so enmeshed in his or her own management or functional activities and becomes captured by them, boundaries between the functional activities of the leader and the relational demands of the staff can accelerate into leadership isolation and

stress. Becoming overwhelmed with function and activity is a common condition for leaders. Although many leaders use this condition as a vehicle for identifying with staff concerns, they fail to recognize the part they played in creating staff concerns; thus they do not have the objectivity essential to help staff deal with their concerns. Availability to problem solve with the staff is critical to building effective staff relationships and preventing leadership isolation. However, the gift the leader brings to the staff and colleagues is a balanced attitude toward problems and issues that often cannot be attained while being inside the problems or issues themselves. Staying in touch with the issues and the staff connects the leader to the staff's concerns, while enabling the leader to maintain some measure of objectivity and lend insight from a new perspective—that is, from the outside looking in—to support the staff's resolution of issues and concerns.

This sample of common pitfalls that impact leadership effectiveness suggests that the leader must understand his or her own personal needs and attributes and develop a deeper awareness of those boundaries and traps that can limit leadership effectiveness and weaken relationships with colleagues. Leadership development builds on a continuous awareness of the needs for individual growth and the range of competencies embedded in the role of each leader (**Figure 3-1**). Leadership self-development is a lifelong process that becomes deeper and more enriching as the individual leader increasingly commits to and expands self-awareness and continuous need for growth and development. Seeking out mentorship and leadership colleague relationships helps create a trusting and safe space for the leader to explore personal issues of leadership growth and capacity and provides a place to discuss the angst and struggles associated with personal growth as a leader (Porter-O'Grady & Malloch, 2010b).

Figure 3-1 Contextual influences

Personal Transparency and Openness

There is nothing more important to a community of people and their relationship to a leader than a real sense of the personal presence of the leader. Much mythology swirls around the role of the leader, who is sometimes even imbued with notions of supernatural or special characteristics. Of course, this is emphatically untrue. Leaders are people who, through growth development, role, and position, assume important roles in relationship to others. Frequently this role is formal and structured within an organizational frame of reference, but just as frequently it is not. The expression of the role of the leader should be consistent regardless of whether the position is formal or informal. The leader role is differentiated by the context in which it unfolds. Beyond simply being a position title, a leader must not forget her or his personal humanity; this aspect of the person essentially defines the character of the leader role, its relationship to others, and, ultimately, its impact on others. At a personal level, the leader must be able to communicate effectively with others in a way that honors their own essential humanity, supporting in others a sense of personal identity that allows colleagues to more fully engage and embrace the leader in a way that enriches their own personal work journey (Malloch & Porter-O'Grady, 2009).

In this regard, it is important that the leader represent and express a highly developed level of openness and availability to colleagues in a way that helps members of the professional community to identify with one another and with the person of the leader. Contrary to what was believe in the past, the leader should never be identified as separate and unique from those he or she leads. In fact, more often than not, the leader should be identified as a partner in the team and should exemplify for colleagues the best human characteristics that affirm the value of each role and the integrated purpose of all team members. The leader's openness and availability should enable members of the team to become more integrated, evidenced by their connection to each other and to the leader, and through it clearly identify their purpose, value, and commitments.

SCENARIO

Leaders must always remember that their primary role is to create a supportive context for the action of change in the organization. This means that the leader recognizes the forces influencing the leader's own expression of encouragement and facilitation of the change process. Understanding the issues of fit between the leader's practices and the conditions that affect them is critical to the good selection of approaches

that make change successful. The leader is always aware of this need for good choices and best represents those good choices in his or her own behaviors and practices; in this way, the leader becomes a model for the staff and a signpost of how best to respond to the inevitability and engagement of continual organizational change.

Some questions related to the individual leader and his or her commitment to organizational goals follow.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you know the mission, vision, and strategic priorities of the organization, and do they influence your actions?
2. How are organizational goals incorporated into departmental priorities and the actions and measures that relate to the department's role in fulfilling them?
3. How do you make sure that the staff's personal priorities fit tightly with the organization's goals, such that their personal action is an expression of their commitment to fulfilling those goals?

Connection implies support for collective wisdom. Good leaders recognize the value of the whole aggregate of individual insight, knowledge, and experience. This collective wisdom serves as a powerful force for informing deliberations, effective decision making, and advancing the critical clinical value of the discipline. As mentioned earlier, good leaders move past the need for control in relating to others and make meaningful decisions and undertake appropriate action. The difficulty, however, is that organizational control was the cornerstone of management and leadership over the course of the 20th century. As systems begin to apply newer and deeper understanding of the complexity and characteristics of organizations, a more profound understanding of how organizations work and change has emerged that reflects a new set of principles of interrelationships and interdependency. The impact of complexity thinking and quantum applications in organizations has led to a new understanding of leadership, which emphasizes the shifting understanding of relationships, interactions, and management of life mostly operating at the intersections of systems and networks. Thinkers in this arena now recognize the importance of network relationships and the synthesis of team action (Ang & Yin, 2008). In turn, traditional vertical control infrastructures and behaviors are no longer serving as the central capacity driving stability and organizational life in greater

CRITICAL THOUGHT

The effective leader always prefers chaos over stability. Stability is a momentary respite in the endless movement and creativity of essential change. Although occasional stability is necessary, stability over time is the enemy of creativity and movement.

work networks. The contemporary leader recognizes the emergent skills related to addressing issues of good fit, functional linkage, relationship and interaction, and convergence and synthesis, all of which are critical elements of human dynamics in complex systems.

Contemporary leaders now recognize that building effective relationships that interface and interact well with one another requires constant attention and continuous reflection on their connection to the greater intersection and interaction of all elements and components in the system, especially those that relate to the human dynamics of that system. Organizational leaders seek now to build a prevailing infrastructure that is predominantly grounded in relationships. This emphasis on the relationships between people and systems calls for leaders who understand patterns of individual behavior and their interface with the behaviors of the larger system. Such leaders can effectively manage the many junctures of organizational networks and the human relations and behaviors that occur in response to them. They can successfully coordinate the linkages necessary to advance and sustain personal relationships and the systems with which they interact. Such leaders reassure staff that they possess the essential skill sets that are necessary to lead equitable and value-driven stakeholders collectively and congruently in fulfilling the meaning, purpose, and values of the organization as it seeks to grow and live in an ever-changing external environment.

The leader's personal attributes and skills work together to ensure that there is consonance between individual purpose and meaning and the organizational value and direction as the leader fulfills his or her role and makes a contribution to the obligations of the broader social network. The leader develops the relationships and interactions necessary to advance, through the aggregated work of individuals, the purposes and values of the organization in the larger social environment. At a very personal level, the leader fully engages both self and others in the dynamic interaction that invests everyone in the high level of commitment represented in the convergence of personal talents, capacity, and skills connected to the purposes and value of the larger organization. In this way the leader helps ensure that both personal and collective purpose, meaning, and value are demonstrated in the contributions of all members of the system. Through the collective aggregation of every personal skill and ability,

REFLECTIVE QUESTION

How many times do we hear, "If we could just get to the end of this and know it was done and over with"? Although there is certainly some truth to the incrementalism implied in this statement, there is no truth to its substance. Nothing is ever really done. Everything is always and forever in movement. If the movement of the universe should stop, so would everything in it. We may achieve specific objectives, but they are really a small component of a much larger journey—one that never ends. What is your best way of communicating this reality to your colleagues? What story can you tell that reflects its truth to them in a meaningful way?

the interests and purposes of the organization are advanced. How can this synthesis be obtained and sustained? A continuous invitation, gathering, inclusion, contribution, and demonstration of the best and most vital in everyone who participates in the concerted effort to advance the health of those they serve is necessary (Ulh-Bien & Marion, 2008). It is to this end that the activities, talents, and commitment of the leader are directed. The leader's constant and consistent focus on creating an environment of ownership, engagement, investment, and expression creates the milieu necessary for the caring network to make a sustainable difference in the health of those it serves. The personal attributes of the leader are what best represents the character of the organization. The clearer the system is regarding those attributes and expectations and the better those aspects are demonstrated in the person of the leader, the clearer and more effective the role they play in sustaining that contribution.

SCENARIO

Joan Black, RN, BSN, had just returned from a national conference on care redesign in healthcare reform. At the national conference, she had learned about the AAA game of ensuring patient satisfaction, consistently meeting quality metrics, and managing the price of care given the drivers of the next stage of health transformation in the United States. She also learned that the centerpiece of healthcare reform was assuring and advancing the health of those served—not just treating and curing illness and disease. Indeed, Joan was excited to learn that the focus of the future of health care was to help citizens achieve the highest level of personal health possible and thereby avoid high-cost, high-intensity illness care.

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SCENARIO *(continued)*

Joan realized that a good many of the elderly medical patients served on her unit could have a better health experience if the focus of care was on prevention and early engagement of these patients with many of the lifestyle and behavioral issues that often contributed to their illness.

Joan was excited to begin addressing some of these care issues with the medical unit nursing staff as a way of initiating dialogue and action that would alter the care delivery model so as to better serve the medical unit's patient population. While Joan was considered a clinical leader among the staff, she held no formal management leadership position. Nevertheless, she felt she could play an important role in helping drive examination and testing new approaches to delivering care. Joan realized that the medical unit staff could not transform all aspects of patient care for every patient, but she recognized that there were key groups where change in nursing practice priorities and emphasis could alter the patient's illness experience and even perhaps provide a higher level of health within the population. Joan knew that by taking a new approach to caring for these patients, nurses could have an impact on the triple aim of satisfaction, quality, and affordability. She knew she would need to involve and engage the nursing staff and manager on her unit to make this practice change a reality. Joan began to reflect on how she might approach making this change.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think Joan's next first step should be as she begins to plan an approach to address this issue and engage nursing colleagues and managers in it?

2. Engaging her manager will be Joan's earliest addressed, most important issue. What do you think Joan should do to engage and excite her manager in identifying an opportunity to transform nursing practice and improve patient care?

3. Nursing staff already feel overwhelmed with the activities they are currently undertaking in rendering care. What is Joan's best approach to informing, exciting, and engaging staff colleagues in embracing this change in approaching patient care?

4. Nurses have not historically had to confront issues of financial and service value directly in their practice. How will Joan help staff move

from notions of how much care they render (volume) to issues of how much difference they make (value) in the health of the patient?

5. Working with your colleagues in a team effort, consider what might be the planning stages or steps in outlining a step-by-step process for changing nursing practice from focusing on rendering illness care to focusing on population health activities that emphasize prevention, education, early engagement, patient involvement, and improving health status.

SCENARIO

Steve Kelly, RN, BSN, had just completed his critical care nursing certification and was promoted to clinical team leader on his nursing unit. Steve had never played a formal leadership role at any time in his life. He was nervous and concerned about how well he might perform his new obligations as unit clinical team leader. Steve had done well in his leadership course in the final semester of his BSN program and had worked hard to achieve certification that verified his high level of clinical competence. In his role as a staff nurse, he had gained the respect and trust of both long-term and new nurse colleagues as well as members of the medical staff and clinical partners and other disciplines. However, he had always kept his focus on providing good personal clinical care and advancing the standards of practice generated by the unit's Patient Care Council. Steve had even served as a member of the Patient Care Council, making some good recommendations with regard to improving care and demonstrating his ability to be a good team member in making decisions and applying them in the unit.

As Steve was preparing to meet with the unit manager for the first time in his new role, he overheard a couple staff members talking about him. They wondered aloud what kind of a clinical leader Steve might become. The staff members mentioned in the conversation a number of previous nurses who had become "snotty" or "lorded it over staff members" in their new clinical leader position. Steve certainly did not want to be perceived in that way; he wanted to start off on the right foot so that staff colleagues would be comfortable with his approach to exercising the clinical leadership role. He was also eager to be successful in the role.

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SCENARIO *(continued)*

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think will be important to Steve as he begins to exercise the role of clinical team leader?

2. Do you think Steve should disclose his concerns to the unit manager? What would he say to her? What should he be able to expect from her in return?

3. What might be some things that Steve could do to both address and disclose his sense of vulnerability without "losing face" with clinical staff? How can vulnerability be identified and used as a strength for Steve as he begins to undertake this new role?

4. How might Steve begin to engage staff colleagues in a way that maintains—and even advances—their feelings of equity and value? What are some ways that Steve might affirm staff members' importance and value while maintaining his own integrity and unique contribution?

5. What do you think might be some of the first things that Steve needs to address as a new clinical team leader? What might be some of the initial concerns of the staff that need to be addressed by Steve as soon as possible? How might Steve approach addressing these issues in a way that affirms his leadership, yet engages and embraces the value and role of the nursing staff?

CHAPTER TEST QUESTIONS

1. It is better to adhere to generally accepted leadership principles than to develop an individual personal leadership plan. True or false?

2. Leadership means providing specific and clear direction to others so that they understand your intention and have a clear idea of your individual leadership vision. True or false?

3. Leadership courage indicates a specific level of self-understanding and personal knowledge about individual motivation, principles, and ethics. True or false?

4. In working with teams, it is important for the leader to let the team know about the decisions they need to make and to provide the team with the appropriate direction necessary to get to the right solution. True or false?

5. One of the differences between the management function and the leadership function is that managers are more accountable for staffing, whereas leaders are more accountable for engaging. True or false?

6. The leader works hard to create trust and does everything to make sure that his or her personal principles of trust are apparent to colleagues so they can work in a trusting environment. True or false?

7. Leaders are always interested in finding answers to problems and directing colleagues to seek the most right answers or solutions. True or false?

8. A contemporary differentiation between management and leadership is that management focuses on analysis, whereas leadership focuses on synthesis. True or false?

9. Friendship is not a critical element to leadership. Therefore, the wise leader is reserved about transparency and realizes that self-disclosure can create problems between the leader and those whom he or she leads. True or false?

10. The leader must set aside time for formal leadership reflection about personal skills and development needs and should develop a strong relationship with the leadership mentor. True or false?

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Appendix A

Old Versus New Leadership Skills

Old	New
Managing people	Managing mobility
Analyzing processes	Synthesizing systems
Setting direction	Reading the signposts of change
Using technology	Synergizing technology
Motivating others	Helping others identify their work relevance

Appendix B

Checking off Basic Leadership Attributes

- *Do I like people?* I will be leading many people, sometimes in directions they may prefer not to go. I must be willing to relate to many types of people and will need a positive sensitivity to the needs of others. I must like this work!
- *Can I live with a high degree of ambiguity and uncertainty?* I will be dealing with a great amount of change. I will have to be an example of excitement and engagement of this change and demonstrate a will to implement it in my own life before I ask anyone else to implement it.
- *Are my communication skills well developed?* I will be communicating with others almost constantly and will need to be informed and articulate in my expressions. Others must understand me and must respect the validity of the information I communicate.
- *Do I have the courage to handle the discipline issues that my leadership role will demand?* Can I make tough decisions and follow through with action when required without fear and uncertainty?
- *Can I stand alone on an issue when it appears that others are not embracing it?* If the position is ethical and appropriate, can I defend it with clarity and firmness, incorporating others' concerns in my own development and positions?
- *Am I a good team player?* I can make a contribution to the planning and implementing processes and then take leadership in translating

decisions to others and helping them act in concert with the goals and direction others may have developed for them.

Appendix C

More Leader Core Behaviors

- Leaders reflect flexibility in their approach to all problem solving and in confronting all issues.
- Leaders describe the changes that will affect the staff well in advance of the staff actually experiencing them.
- Leaders translate the goals of the system into a language that others can understand and apply to their own work.
- Leaders represent in their own behavior the patterns and practices they expect to see in others.
- Leaders anticipate the changes that staff will have to make in their work and carefully design approaches to guide staff in accepting and implementing change.
- Leaders recognize the chaos embedded in all change and are not afraid of it, demonstrating engagement of it to others, mentoring acceptance and use of its energy.

Appendix D

What Staff Want from Their Leader

- Honesty
- Trust
- Clarity or role
- Opportunity
- Open communication
- Good problem solving
- Personal caring
- Engagement
- Respect
- Meaning in their work

Appendix E

Leadership

Leaders Moving Past the Age of Control

It has been said that control was the cornerstone of organizational leadership in the 20th century. As organizations seek to function in the 21st century, many of the characteristics of change are driven by a different set of principles. Recognizing the impact of complexity thinking and quantum theory, organizations are looking at an emerging significant set of relationships and intersections that require coordination and synthesis. This means that control is no longer the central issue of stability and organization in systems. The good leader recognizes that issues of fit, linkage, interaction, and relationship are the critical elements of all human dynamics.

Leaders recognize that building complex relationships requires constant attention and continual reflection on interaction of all elements in an organization, including the people who make up the organization. Building an infrastructure for relationships calls for leaders to understand linkages and intersections and to provide staff with clarity of meaning and purpose. The leader ensures those people who are led that there is value in the work and relationships necessary to advance the organization's purposes and values. In doing so, the leader fully engages the participants in an interaction that invests them in committing their work to the purposes of the organization, advancing the meaning and value of their contributions, and growing and improving their own personal skills and participation. This can be done only through invitation, gathering, inclusion, and encouraging the best and the most vital in all who participate.

Leaders can eliminate the focus on control as follows:

- Help people understand what is happening to them.
- Engage others in defining the content of their own work.
- Reduce the hierarchy to its lowest necessary levels.
- Involve stakeholders in setting their own goals.
- Eliminate secrets—disclose whatever is necessary to help others do their work.

The leader who must control others is expressing a basic insecurity that ultimately results in negative forces and behavior impeding achievement of the organization's goals.

The Leader's Commitment to Learning

The leader cannot expect to find in others what he or she is not willing to find within. When considering the role of leader, it is important to recognize the value of continuing commitment to personal change. The leader serves as a role model of the general commitment to continuing development—a pursuit that is fundamental to competence and effectiveness. Like all members of the organization, the leader cannot be competent and static at the same time. The leader must demonstrate a willingness and ability to expand the skill set necessary to exercise the leadership role and serve as a role model to others.

An endless commitment to learning is fundamental to the role of the leader. Three things are critical:

- A good assessment of leadership skills and needs
- A good plan with strategies for action and implementation
- A 360-degree evaluation of the effectiveness of the application of leadership skills:
    - Reading the signs of change
    - Translating the language of change for others
    - Guiding others in adapting to change
    - Applying change in the process of work
- Entering into dialogue regarding change impact
- Evaluating the results of change
- Renewing energy for the very next change

A Leader Is Inspired and Is Inspiring

The ability to encourage others and to continue supporting their efforts through modeling, motivating, and personal commitment is critical to good leadership. The inspiring leader always recognizes that who one is, is as important as what one does. This leader always remembers the following points:

- Individuals need to know that their work has meaning and value.
- Individuals hope that their work makes a difference and has a positive effect on the lives of others.
- Everyone wants to know that they are personally valued and that they have a place and play a key role in the world.
- Everyone seeks, at some level, to make a difference and to hear that difference in the words and language of others.
- People want to know that they matter—that their lives have personal value, and that they have an opportunity to express that value in their work and actions.

- The leader always seeks what is good in others, identifies it, and makes other team members aware of the value that an individual brings to their efforts.
- The value of collective wisdom is shared between and among all team members so that their collective impact is recognized by all.
- Nothing is sustained without the concerted effort of all stakeholders committed to a common purpose.
- The leader creates the context within which others live and work in a way that encourages engagement, stimulates creativity, and builds commitment.

The leader's commitment must be such that others can sense it, and from its energy, be encouraged and able to continue their own journey.