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## An Analysis of the Leadership Practices of Selected Superintendents in Du Page County in Terms of Their Implementation of Transformational Leadership

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LOYOLA UNIVERISTY OF CHICAGO

AN ANALYSIS OF THE LEADERSHIP  
PRACTICES OF SELECTED SUPERINTENDENTS  
IN DU PAGE COUNTY IN TERMS OF  
THEIR IMPLEMENTATION OF  
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP  
AND POLICY STUDIES

BY

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The call for reform is as old as the educational institution. The initiative started in 1893 with the "Committee of Fifteen" and has continued through Clinton's Goals 2000 Plan in 1993. As society changes, the demands and expectations of the educational institution change. Evolution of the system is a continuous and progressive process that takes place in successive stages to meet the ever changing needs of the population the institution serves. Expectations regarding public education have always been high. Depending upon the perspective, the public school has served as an instrument or a deterrent to social mobility. The institution of public education has either enabled or prevented youth from varying social economic situations to find a place in society congruent with their potential. Regardless of perspectives, the institution of public education has and continues to generate controversy.

The superintendent of schools, serving as the chief executive officer, is the person responsible for the execution of the governance of the total school environment. The board of education and the community, which elects the board, rightly hold the superintendent accountable for the effective and efficient operation of the district. The superintendent must be concerned not only with all site activities, but also with the political and fiscal implications of these activities (Konnert, Augenstein 1990).



According to Konnert and Augenstein (1990), the superintendent has to possess a great deal of leadership skill, and a working knowledge of the change process. The role of the superintendent has emerged as a visionary leader who must be able to transcend current reality. The superintendent should be able to encourage participation by all constituents in order to effectively transfer the vision into observable goals and objectives. Followers must be motivated to accept and work toward the established goals for the well being of the school district. Job descriptions define the competencies that superintendents must be able to demonstrate these include: leadership, communication, decision-making, planning, goal setting, public speaking, law, finance, budgeting, personnel, curriculum, instruction, community relationships, policy development, regulations, transportation, and food management.

The call for excellence by parents and state legislators in education is a mandate for strong leadership from those serving as superintendents in the '90's. According to Bass (1990), significant amounts of literature written over the decades reinforce the fact that leadership is a crucial ingredient for all collective endeavors. James MacGregor Burns concluded after his probing analysis of the subject by saying: "The ultimate test of practical leadership is the realization of intended, real change that meets people's enduring needs" (Burns 1978, p. 461). The particular form of leadership as cited by Burns in 1978 was identified as transformational.

Recent literature about this form of leadership continues to come out of the world of business. Senge (1992), Covey (1991), Bennis (1989), and DePree (1992), to name a few, have written extensively on the topic. Bellon (1992), Sergiovanni (1992) and

Garner (1990), have conducted research and written extensively about the topic in the area of educational leadership.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Selected practices as defined by Kouzes and Posner have provided a valid, theoretical, and specific basis for analyzing the leadership practices of seated superintendents. Observable practices are the identified reference points for the study. The purpose of the study is to apply validated research to administrative situations in education. More specifically, the study seeks to investigate the application of specific leadership practices, namely: 1) challenging the process, 2) inspiring a shared vision, 3) enabling others to act, 4) modeling the way; and, 5) encouraging the heart. Both theoretical and research based sources support the use of these practices as effective in bringing about change in an organization.

The focus of the research is the analysis of leadership in terms of the practices of superintendents in the fifteen largest school districts in DuPage County in 1993, located in the suburban Chicago area. This study explored the answers to the following research questions:

1. Do seated superintendents demonstrate the ability to discuss the practices of transformational leadership as postulated in current research and theory?
2. Do seated superintendents utilize the practices of transformational leadership in their organizational setting?

It is through the analysis of the use of these practices by the superintendents as they execute their role and responsibility that the complexity of the leadership situation

can emerge. Therefore, leadership practices were analyzed in the context of on-the-job performance.

The procedure chosen for use in this study is qualitative methodology. The qualitative process was chosen because it is more appropriate than quantitative research to the nature and direction of the study. A description of the general procedure and specific methods employed in the study are presented in Chapter III.

Since the study was qualitative in nature, it focused on an in-depth inquiry into the leadership behavior of seated superintendents. The inquiry was guided by the verified theoretical base of the Personal Best Questionnaire developed by Kouzes and Posner (1987). While collecting information on exemplary leadership practices for their study, they asked leaders primarily in the field of business to write a description of one "personal best leadership experience." The leadership practices model was derived from an analysis of the common patterns and themes that emerged from the personal best experiences. More than 550 of the personal best surveys were completed; an additional 780 managers completed a shortened form of the survey.

Additionally, Kouzes and Posner conducted forty-two in-depth interviews, primarily with managers in middle-to-senior-level organizational positions in a wide variety of public and private sector companies. The case studies and the interview notes were independently content analyzed by two outside raters. The categories were identified and the fundamental patterns of leadership behavior that emerged were described by Kouzes and Posner by the following five practices, each of which consists of two basic strategies:

1. Challenging the process
  - a. Search for opportunities
  - b. Experiment and take risks

2. Inspiring a shared vision
  - a. Envision the future
  - b. Enlist others
3. Enabling others to act
  - a. Foster collaboration
  - b. Strengthen others
4. Modeling the way
  - a. Set the example
  - b. Plan small wins
5. Encouraging the heart
  - a. Recognize contributions
  - b. Celebrate accomplishments (Kouzes and Posner 1987, pp. 13-14)

Kouzes and Posner found that more than 70 percent of the behavior and strategies described in respondents' personal best case studies and interviews could be accounted for by these factors.

This research was guided by the theoretical base developed by Kouzes and Posner, as well as by the theoretical perspective advanced in the literature review. The specific practices served as the reference point for analysis. Most of the leadership research has been conducted in the area of business. Application of this validated instrument to the study of seated superintendents will enhance the findings in the area of educational leadership. The key questions of this study focused on the superintendents' ability to engage in the identified practices as they performed these duties in their respective organizational setting.

### **Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions apply:

1. **Open-Coding**--The analytic process by which concepts are identified and

developed in terms of the properties and dimensions (Strauss, Corbin 1990).

2. **Seated Superintendent**--The person identified by the board of education as responsible for the governance of the total school, serving as the chief-executive officer.
3. **Semi-Structured Interview**--An interview that is "built around a core of structured questions from which the interviewer branches off to explore in-depth. Accurate and complete information is desired with the additional opportunity to probe for underlying factors or relationships which are too complex or elusive to encompass in more straight forward questions" (Isaac Michael 1984, p. 138).
4. **Transformational Leadership**--"The transforming leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. But, beyond that, the transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transformational leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents" (Burns 1978, p. 4).

### **Limitations of the Study**

The major limitations of this study were:

1. The study was conducted in DuPage County in the State of Illinois in the fall of 1993. The results may not be able to be generalized over time or in other locations.

2. Only the 15 largest school districts were selected for the study. The conclusions might not be generalized to a larger population of superintendents.
3. The conclusions of this study are limited by the validity and reliability of the interview instrument used in the study.
4. The limitations and weaknesses of the interview process must be taken into consideration. Cooperation is essential, and some interviewees may not be willing to share all the information that is needed with the interviewer. Distortion of the data is more likely when interviews are used exclusively, as interviewers may interject personal biases. Finally, significant amounts of data may be obtained through the process, but such data may be difficult to analyze.

### **Organization of the Study**

This study is organized under five major headings. Chapter I introduces the research problems and states the purpose of the study, the definitions of the terms, and the limitations imposed by its design. Chapter II reviews the literature as it pertains to the call for educational reform, the superintendent's role, and leadership practices identified as transformational. Chapter III provides the methodology of the study, including a review of the purpose of the study, the sample chosen for analysis, the procedure used for conducting the study, and methods of data analysis. The data is analyzed with respect to the study's questions in Chapter IV, and Chapter V presents a summary, conclusions of the investigation, and recommendations for future study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The purpose of the review of the literature in this study was to provide the theoretical support for the validated practices that serve as the focus of this study, and to provide insight into the complexities of the leadership position of the superintendent. As stated in Chapter I, the purpose of this dissertation was to study selected seated superintendents in the DuPage County in terms of: their familiarity with the practices of transformational leadership; their ability to discuss the concept as it applies to their particular district; and to document the use of the practices.

The research gleaned from theoretical and research-based sources has served both to strengthen and further the validity of the five practices that have been identified by Kouzes and Posner (1987) as effective in bringing about change in an organization. This dissertation will focus on the superintendents' ability to discuss the five practices and document evidence of the engagement in terms of strategies employed and resources used.

The general structure of the literature review followed a threefold division. The first section provided an overview of the era of educational reform. The second section provided a review of the research completed on the leadership position of the superintendent. The third section summarized the leadership research used to identify and support the five transformational leadership practices under study.

Using the five general practices cited by Kouzes and Posner (1987), 1) challenging the process; 2) inspiring a shared vision; 3) enabling others to act; 4) modeling the way; and 5) encouraging the heart, this study will address the following questions:

1. Do seated superintendents demonstrate the ability to discuss the practices of transformational leadership as postulated in current research and theory?
2. Do seated superintendents utilize the practices of transformational leadership in their organizational setting?

## **Section I An Era of Reform**

Since the mid 1960's more than 300 major school reform studies and/or reports have been completed. No attempt was made to do justice to the scope or validity of all of them. However, several studies were highlighted to document the research that calls for the transformation of the institution of American public education.

Fullan (1993) considered four district themes of change that challenged education over the past four decades. According to Fullan the four themes include:

1. 1960's Adoption of Reform
2. 1970's Implementation
3. 1980's Multiple Innovations
4. 1990's Systemic Reform

The pressures of social change initiated federal programs for improving education for the disadvantaged. This movement was signaled by the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. An array of "compensatory programs" were developed: Head Start, Title I, the Job Corps, to name a few. These programs were de-



veloped in an effort to deliver the extra services believed necessary to launch disadvantaged youngsters on the path of upward mobility. The U.S. Office of Education commissioned John Coleman and a team of scholars to conduct a major study of the equality of educational opportunities.

The 1966 report produced by Coleman provided the knowledge to alert the public of a "crisis" in American public education. According to Finn (1990) the celebrated Coleman Report was perhaps the "single greatest source of the tectonic movements that have generated today's earthquake" (Finn 1990, pp. 587-588). The Coleman Report forced educators to rethink the way they viewed and evaluated the educational process.

"The major virtue of the study (Coleman) as conceived and executed lay in the fact that it did not accept that [traditional] definition, and by refusing to do so, has had its major impact in shifting policy attention from its traditional focus in comparison of inputs (the traditional measures of school quality used by school administrators: per pupil expenditures, class size, teacher salaries, age of buildings and equipment, and so on...) to focus on outputs, and the effectiveness of inputs for bringing about changes in output" (Coleman 1972, pp. 149-150).

These factors forced educators to rethink the way they looked at and evaluated the educational process. This study planted the accountability seed for the institution of public education to move toward "accountability for learning outcomes."

The reform movement of the 1970's included the creation of a new federal agency to conduct educational research called the National Institution of Education. President Nixon authorized the agency because the institution of public education did not comprehend the process of providing disadvantaged youngsters with equal opportunity. "The best available evidence indicates that most of the compensatory education programs have not measurably helped poor children catch up" reported President Nixon. This he

opined, was because the "old answers" to what makes a good school had turned out to be an illusion. (Nixon 1970)

"As we get more education for the dollar", Nixon stated in 1970, "we will ask Congress to supply many more dollars for education." Educational theorists and practitioners produced a great amount of research and analysis. It was evident that students in some schools learned more than those in other schools. These differences could not be explained by comparing plans, intentions, or material resources. Investigations into the "why" were conducted by Michael Rutter, Ronald Edmonds and many others. Educators started to look at education in terms of learning.

Around 1970 innovation received a bad name according to Fullan (1993). Educators were adopting innovations without asking why, and they were giving no forethought to follow through activities to support their change. The 1970's were a decade of acknowledged failure. The initial implementation studies told us what not to do. After 1975, implementation research and practice, school improvement, effective schools, staff development, and leadership studies all more or less documented success stories. These studies provided lists of key factors and processes associated with key accomplishments. Researchers were in a position to identify key factors for putting chosen innovation into practice.

Educators were making progress, but we still had nagging doubts about change. First we didn't know enough about the dynamics of change. Educators had a list of factors but didn't know how the factors interacted and were unsure about successful change projects. Secondly, educators came to the realization that knowing how to imple-

ment innovations, one at a time, was not the full story. Schools were in the business of implementing multiple innovations simultaneously (Fullan 1993).

The National Commission on Educational Excellence, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, conducted a two-year investigation. The findings were set forth in the report, A Nation At Risk, in 1983. The Carnegie Forum's (1986) A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century and the National Governors' Association's (1986) A Time for Results were among the nationwide mandates for action.

"Establishing educational goals is a critical step toward instituting a performance-oriented accountability system and restructuring education for higher performance. The process of setting goals is essentially that of defining the performance and results that are required from schools. Without such goals there is no effective way of holding schools accountable for required results" (National Governors' Association 1989, p. 9).

Reform bills mandating change were passed at the state level across the United States. Everyone was in agreement that comprehensive reform was urgently needed. Study after study called for improvement in the teaching and learning environment, establishing educational goals, the development of performance-oriented accountability systems and the restructuring of education for higher performance.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching provided the funding for chronicling the movement to reform public education. Tom Toch visited 60 schools nationwide and interviewed hundreds of educators and others involved in educational reform. The results were published in the book "In The Name of Excellence: The Struggle to Reform the Nation's Schools, Why It's Failing and What Should Be Done." The book reported the failure of the reform movement to meet its mandate. The reform

movement challenged ill-prepared teachers to teach serious academics to less-able unmotivated students. The other major failing of reform was the obsession with standardized tests. Toch (1991) found that the tests were depressing instruction in many schools.

"The National Education Association has resisted virtually all major teacher reforms. After three decades of reform efforts the union supports impediments to teaching reform. The movement to professionalize teaching must spread if public education is to attract the number of talented teachers needed to fulfill its new academic mission. It is clear that teachers can not reach white-collar status as long as traditional union policies pervade the organization (Toch 1991, pg. 17)."

Researchers agree that the imposition of many "top down" educational reforms upon particular school districts has often been less than enthusiastically received and/or implemented. The process of change has been found to be very complex, if meaningful change is to take place, educators will have to carry out systemic reform. Assessment, curriculum and instruction, staff development, personnel selection and promotion, and state/district/school action have to be systematically linked according to Fullan (1993).

Fullan (1993) points out that really important changes cannot be mandated, and neither centralization nor decentralization works in and of itself. One of the major constraints to real school reform has been the lack of consensus about why reform is badly needed and what changes are most central to the issue. The pressure for school reform will continue as we struggle to serve all students more effectively and prepare them for their futures. The institution of public education will continue to need leaders who will respond to social and technological change. The institution will need people who can lead others in reaching consensus on the issues of purpose and procedure. The

position of superintendent has been cited by many as the person responsible for bringing about institutional change.

### **The Role of the School Superintendent**

What exactly is the superintendent's role in school reform? The literature on reform doesn't clearly define the primary function of the superintendent. A recent RAND Corporation study found that to make reform movements successful, the superintendent had to create a public mandate for school improvement. He had to join forces with community power brokers in this effort. In other words, the superintendent of the 1990's has to be a visionary, a hands-off bureaucrat, and a coalition-builder, if school reform efforts are to be successful. The modern day superintendent must know what it takes to create and sell a vision of educational excellence. He has to skillfully assess student and school performance, ensure meaningful professional development for teachers and principals, and pull together community resources to meet the needs of children and youth (Fullan 1993).

A recent report from the Danforth Foundation notes that researchers and policy makers "keep coming back to the essential ingredient in change...administrative leadership of schools" (Danforth 1989, p. 2). According to Murphy (1992), "Superintendents have a key role to play in school reform, even as districts--quite appropriately--become more decentralized." The superintendent has to possess the leadership skills to build coalitions, encourage new ideas, experimentation and collegiality.

Current data on the American superintendent of schools appeared in the Spring 1991 issue of Agenda. The profile of the superintendent, according to the American

Association of School Administrators (1992), the National Center for Educational Statistics (1987), and Market Data Research (1991) included the following facts. There were a total of 15,902 superintendents in the United States in 1991, 93% of the superintendents were 41 years old and over, 96% were male, and 95% were white. The average years of experience was 15 years; 47% held a doctoral degree or beyond. The national average salary was \$75,425.

The role of the superintendent was affected by the size of the school district. The role of the superintendent in Chicago, who is responsible for over 20,000 teachers and who oversees so many schools that he or she could not visit them all in a single year, has a fundamentally different job than the superintendent who manages a single school building and 20 teachers. The American Association of School Administrators, in its longitudinal study of superintendents, realized this and divided the superintendency into four groups. **Group A** includes those superintendents with pupil enrollment of 25,000 or more. **Group B** ranges from 3,000 to 24,999, **Group C** is 300 to 2,999, and **Group D** is under 300. This study examined superintendents in districts with 2,400 to 12,000 students. They fall in the lower range of "B" and the upper range of "C".

Throughout its existence the superintendency has had ambiguity regarding its primary function. Throughout its history, the issue of primary function has been debated as to whether the superintendent was an educator (philosopher-statesman-innovator) or business manager (efficiency-expert) (Griffiths 1966).

Griffiths determined that the development of the superintendent took place in three stages:

**Period I (1837-1910)**--The superintendency was established as a position limited to instruction and advisor to the board of education, it evolved to that of being the executive officer of the board with responsibilities spanning the whole spectrum of school activities.

**Period II (1910-1945)**--The "business man" superintendent, the executive officer of the board of education emerged. Educational decisions were based upon business criteria. The school administrator adopted the tenets of "scientific management."

**Period III (1945-1966)**--With the intervention of the Kellogg Foundation into education, the beginning of theories of administration became apparent. Though little change in practice could be observed, much research took place (Griffiths 1966).

With the emergence of the information age, the role and function of the school system dramatically changed. The leadership of the superintendent has also changed. Today, the superintendent must possess a great deal of leadership acumen and a working knowledge of the change process. With the advent of the information age, the role of the superintendent as a visionary leader has emerged. According to Konnert and Augenstein (1990) the superintendent has to transcend current reality; he has to be able to encourage participation by constituents in order to convert the vision into observable goals and objectives. He has to motivate followers to accept and work toward the established goals for the common good.

Cuban (1985) asserts that "to exercise real leadership, a superintendent must play three roles, often simultaneously (p. 29). In Cuban's terms the superintendent is: politician, manager, and teacher. The political role includes public relations, community

leadership, and school board and policy setting activities. The role of manager requires knowledge of business, budgets, facilities, transportation, and organizational management. The superintendent, as teacher, informs the school board, makes presentations to the community, sets district objectives, and provides instructional management for the improvement of student performance. Cuban goes on to say that "the current strong interest in having superintendents exert leadership in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment acknowledges anew the historic role of superintendent as teacher. Indeed, the teaching role provides the focus for the superintendent's political and managerial skills" (Cuban 1985, p. 30).

The job of the superintendent is shaped by the expectations and directions of the school board. The school board, consisting of lay persons with little knowledge of contemporary educational thought, usually understand something about the importance of fiscal management, building maintenance, and the threat of lawsuits. Since these are the areas of greatest concern of board members, they develop job descriptions which reflect these concerns.

According to Konnert and Augenstein (1990), the superintendency role expectations are the specifications established for the position by the individual occupying the position and by others who interact with the position. Those expectations "define the limits or range of tolerated behavior" (Sarbin and Allen, 1968, p. 501) and comprise "the rights and privileges, the duties and obligations, of (the position) in relationship to other positions" (p. 487) in the educational and community structure.

The superintendent's role is determined by the culture of the organization. "An organization... has a personality of sorts, often referred to as an organizational culture..."



(which) conveys important assumptions and norms governing membership, values, activities, and aims" (Louis 1989, p. 232). The superintendent can influence and is influenced by the system and community that he serves.

Wolf (1987), in her dissertation, researched the role of the school superintendent to ascertain what the superintendent was actually doing. The review of literature and research documented the lack of research on the role of the superintendent. Seventy-five superintendents from the state of Washington provided the data for the role analysis study completed by Wolf. The group was a representative cross-section of school districts having senior high, middle/junior high, and elementary schools. The superintendents presented their perceptions of the relative importance of 30 specific role activities. They clearly identified the establishment of a good working relationship with the school board and a team approach to goal setting and management as the most important activity in which they engaged. School Board Relations was clearly the most important category of activity for the responding superintendents and Improving Educational Opportunity ranked lowest of the six categories.

According to Gross, Ward and McEachern, (1958) six experts in educational administration rated the activities of the superintendent for importance. The experts agreed with the superintendents that the most important activity was establishing mutual understanding and a good working relationship with the board. The experts ranked Empowering Others to Excel, and Building the Capacity for Improvement activities, much higher than did the superintendents.

In their study of the superintendent, Murphy and Hallinger (1985) focused on the instructional leadership segment of the role. They found that the superintendents in the 12 instructionally effective districts in their study were personally involved in managing and directing the core activities in the area of curriculum and instruction. These superintendents were considered instructional leaders because they: controlled the development of goals at both the district and school levels; were influential in the selection of staff, personally supervised and evaluated principals, and established and monitored a district-wide instruction and curricular focus.

Wolf (1987) postulated that the superintendents in her study "when making choices between activities competing for their time and attention, gave a very low ranking to those pertaining directly to Improving Educational Opportunities. Since one of the demands of the reform movement is a commitment to educational leadership, more direct, personal involvement in the areas of curriculum and instruction and staff selection, greater attention to empowerment issues, recognition and reward for performance for the specialists in these areas, and clearer focus by superintendents on themselves as improvers is necessary.

### **Transformational Leadership**

James MacGregor Burns (1978), professor of government at Williams College and author of *Leadership*, concluded his probing analysis of the subject of leadership by saying "The ultimate test of practical leadership is the realization of intended, real change that meets people's enduring needs" (p. 461). Burns identified this type of leadership which he labeled "transforming." According to Burns, the transformational leader asks

the followers to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the group, organization, or society; to consider their long-term needs to develop themselves, rather than their needs of the moment, and to become more aware of what is really important. Through this process the "followers are converted into leaders." Burns conceived leaders to be either transformational or transactional, but through research, Bass (1985a, 1986) modified this idea. Bass proposed that transformational leadership augments the effects of transactional leadership on the effect, satisfaction, and effectiveness of subordinates. According to Bass, many of the great transformational leaders were transactional as well as transformational. Waldman, Bass and Einstein's (1986) analysis of surveys of senior military officers and business managers confirmed the fidelity of the model.

According to research completed by Tichy and Devanna (1986), the nature of transformational leadership is a behavioral process capable of being learned and managed. It is a process of leadership that is systemic in nature, consisting of a purposeful and organized search of change, through systemic analysis. The leader has the capacity to move resources from areas of lesser to greater productivity. Transformational leadership contains the elements of leadership that people have in mind when they describe their ideal leader. The transformational leader is more likely to provide a role model with which subordinates want to identify (Bass and Avolio, 1988).

According to Gilbert (1984), the leader develops in their subordinates an expectation of high performance rather than merely spending time praising and rewarding or reprimanding them. Bradford and Cohen (1985) defined the leader as a developer of people and a builder of teams. Zaliznik (1977) developed a portrait of the transforma-

tional leader from clinical evidence. Zalznik's leaders attracted a strong feeling of identity and intense feelings about the leader; send clear messages of purpose and mission; generated excitement at work and heightened expectations through images and meanings; cultivated intense one-on-one relationships and empathy for individuals. The leaders were more interested in ideas than in process.

According to Burns, transformational leaders can be categorized as intellectual leaders, leaders of reform or reevaluation, and heroes, or idealogues. Transformational leaders, postulates Burns, raise consciousness about higher considerations through articulation and role modeling. Aspiration levels are raised, legitimized and turned into action (Burns 1978).

Most experimental research, unfortunately, has focused on transactional leadership according to Bass (1990), whereas the real movers and shakers of the world are transformational leaders. Transforming leadership, according to Burns (1978) exists when:

The transforming leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. But, beyond that, the transformational leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents (p. 4).

Burns goes on to define moral leadership as the capacity of the leader to provide one's followers and constituents the opportunity to make a "conscious choice among real alternatives" (p. 36). This type of moral leadership can only occur when the leader and followers share the same goals, motives, values, and needs. Leaders who can truly unlock the hidden motives and potentials of the followers are transforming leaders who demonstrate moral leadership.

If the first task of leadership is to bring to consciousness the follower's sense of their own needs, values and purposes, the question remains: consciousness of what? Which of these motives and goals are to be tapped?... And we return to the surmise here: leaders with relevant motives and goals of their own respond to follower's needs and wants and goals in such a way as to meet those motivations and to bring changes consistent with those of both leaders and followers, and with the values of both (p. 41).

John W. Gardner (1986) helps clarify the moral aspect of transformational leadership by discussing the innovative aspects of leadership, which is "leadership that goes beyond merely managing the system to helping the system achieve its next stage of evolution" (p. 23). Leaders who are able to help followers develop individual initiative and grow as individuals and as part of the organization due in part to the modeling of appropriate behavior and emphasis on renewal are transforming leaders.

Sergiovanni sees successful transformational leaders as being able to link the once separate motives of leaders and followers. For Sergiovanni, the first stage of transformational leadership is termed as "building" and is based on "arousing human potential, satisfying higher-order needs, and raising expectations of both the leader and the led in manner that motivates both to higher levels of commitment and performance" (p. 24).

The next stage of transforming leadership is what Burns (1978) terms as "moral" (p. 4) leadership and what Sergiovanni (1992) labels "leadership by bonding" (p. 24). The true leader is one who "enables people to respond from within" (Sergiovanni 1992, p. 31). The source of this motivation is moral authority in the form of "duties derived from widely shared values, ideas and ideals" (Sergiovanni 1992, p. 31).

Covey (1990) defines leadership as "principle centered." "If you focus on principles, you empower everyone who understands those principles to act without constant

monitoring, evaluating, correcting, or controlling. Principles have universal application and when these are internalized into habits, they empower people to create a wide variety of practices to deal with different situations" (p. 98). At this level, the leader and the led develop a set of shared values, standards, and commitments that formulate the principles that guide behavior and bond them together in a common sense of purpose.

The final stage of leadership is "leadership by banking" (p. 24). According to Sergiovanni, this occurs when the leader works to administer to the needs of the institution and at the same time serves the led in a way so as to allow them to better serve the organization.

The goal of transformational leadership is to "transform" people and organizations in a literal sense--to change them in mind and heart; enlarge vision, insight, and understanding; clarify purposes; make behavior congruent with beliefs, principles, or values, and bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating, and momentum building" (Covey 1993, p. 287).

According to Sergiovanni (1992) it is not enough to have worked out what people "stand for and what is to be accomplished; a binding and solemn agreement must emerge, one that represents value system for living together and forms the basis of decisions and actions. This agreement is called a covenant." (p. 73)

Max De Pree (1989) discusses the covenantal relationship... "Covenantal relationships reflect unity, grace, and poise. They are expressions of the sacred nature of the relationships. (p. 12) The leader helps define the public good; they are the "water carriers" of an institution, they communicate and exemplify the "ties that bind" the institution together." The water carrier in the life of an American Indian tribe, held one of the most important and respected positions because water, like food and air, is

essential for survival. (de Pree, pp. 65-66)

The transformational leader can shape the motives, values, and goals of the followers into a collective purpose. The individual goals and interests of the leaders and followers are transformed into a common goal that produces significant change. This collective purpose which unites leaders and followers replaces the traditional view of followers being engaged in a common purpose for the good of the institution. In this relationship, leaders and followers are dependent on each other, their aspirations, hopes, and dreams rise and fall together and the results of planned change are shared. In order to accomplish this task the transforming leader must have vision, initiative, patience, respect, persistence, courage and faith.

Marilyn Ferguson (1980) in her book The Aquarian Conspiracy discusses personal and social transformation. The idea of social harmony springing from the character of individuals appears throughout history.

According to Confucian writings, wise individuals, wanting good government, looked first within, seeking precise words to express their hitherto-unvoiced yearnings, "the tones given off by the heart." Once they were able to verbalize the intelligence of the heart they disciplined themselves. Order within the self led first to harmony within their own households, then the state, and finally the empire." (Ferguson 1980, p. 192)

In an attempt to clarify his view of leadership, Burns (1978) offers five basic characteristics of leadership:

1. Leadership is Collective--Leaders, in responding to their own motives, appeal to motive based of followers. As followers respond, a symbiotic relationship develops that binds leaders and followers together.

2. Leadership is Dissensual--Conflict causes leaders to attract more followers to define motives and strengthens values.
3. Leadership is Causative--Leadership is an interactive process which results in a change in the leaders and followers goals and motives. This change produces a causal effect on the organization.
4. Leadership is Morally Purposeful--Leaders engage followers in setting goals, establishing purpose and mapping direction.
5. Transforming Leadership is Elevating--In transformational leadership, leaders elevate followers and followers help to sustain leaders (pp. 452-455).

Bennis and Nanus (1985) examined leadership in their book, Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge. They conducted a series of ninety interviews, sixty with successful chief executive officers, all corporate presidents or chairman of boards, and thirty interviews with outstanding leaders from the public sector. From this study, the following for areas of leadership competency emerged:

1. Attention through Vision--The leaders studied were able to convey a confidence to their followers, through a neverending devotion to the vision. This confidence instilled a belief in the followers that they could accomplish all that was expected.
2. Meaning the Communication--The leaders were able to provide meaning for the members of the organization. "The effective leader needs to articulate new values and norms, offer new visions..." (p. 139).



3. Trust through Positioning--The leaders were persistent and determined to define their position. The positions were known, predictable, and relentlessly pursued. Organizations possess a healthy climate and culture when a clarity of purpose and vision is communicated.
4. The Deployment of Self--The leadership competency has two aspects positive self-regard, and focusing on the possible. The leader with positive self-regard has the ability to compensate for weaknesses; has the capacity to develop and improve skills; has the ability to "discern the fit between one's perceived skills and what the job requires." (p. 60) Leaders with positive self-regard are able to induce positive self-regard in their employees, helping them to develop their full potential.

Bennis, in his book Leaders on Leadership (1992), interviewed sixteen leaders ranging from prime ministers to CEO's of American, Japanese and European business organizations. Through the analysis of the interviews, Bennis identified several recurring themes:

1. Each leader discovered that the culture of the organization must change because, as constituted, the culture is devoted more to perpetuating itself rather than to meeting new challenges.
2. Each leader is a "leader" not a "manager." Jack Welsh, Chairman and CEO of General Electric, predicted that "The work of the '90's and beyond will not belong to "managers" or those who make the numbers dance, as we used to say, or those who are conversant with all the businessese and jargon we use

to sound smart. The world will belong to passionate, driven "leaders"--people who not only have an enormous amount of energy, but who can energize those whom they lead" (Bennis 1992, p. xi).

3. Each leader understood that leadership is getting people to "want to do what needs to be done." Managers push. Leader pull. Manager command. Leaders communicate.
4. Every CEO interviewed was the chief transformational officer of his organization. The great leaders and the organizations surrounding them, had two interlocking characteristics of work and play. The leaders and had the capacity to create a compelling vision, and to translate that vision into reality.
5. The leaders are committed to identifying problems before they become crises, rolling the ideas and information necessary to solve their problems, testing possible solutions by means of pilot programs, providing opportunities to reflect on and to evaluate past actions and decisions; empowering individuals (pp. xi-xiii).

Senge (1990) details the concept of the learning organization in his book The Fifth Discipline and the type of leadership that is necessary to create the learning organization.

"In learning organizations, leaders are designers, stewards and teachers. They are responsible for "building organizations" where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models--this is, they are responsible for learning...Taking this stand is the first leadership act, the start of "inspiring" (literally "to breathe life into") the learning organization" (p. 300).

Senge describes the leader's role as:

1. **Designer**--The first task of leadership concerns designing the governing ideas--the purpose, vision, and core values by which people will live. Senge paraphrases Lao-tzu. The great leader is he who the people say, "We did it ourselves" (p. 341). The leader's role is building a shared vision, sizing up the players and needs in each situation and crafting strategies suitable to that particular time and setting. The "leader's task is designing the learning processes" whereby people throughout the organization can deal productively with the critical issues they face.
2. **Steward**--The leaders Senge interviewed each perceived a deep story and sense of purpose that lay behind their vision, what they called the "purpose story." The leaders story was both personal and universal. The story was central to his "ability to lead", it place the organization's purpose within a context of "where we've come from and where we're headed," where the "we" goes beyond the organization itself to humankind. Senge quotes George Bernard Shaw (1903), "This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by your-self as a mighty one...the being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."
3. **Teacher**--Leaders in a learning organization "teach" people to focus on purpose and systemic structure. Leaders are continually helping people see the "big picture": how the parts interact, point out how situations parallel one

another because of common underlying structures, how local actions have longer-term and broader impacts than the local actor realizes, and why policies are needed for the system as a whole. The true leader can integrate the "how" and the "why."

"Leaders who are designers, stewards, and teachers come to see their core task very simply. "Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create tension in the mind," said Martin Luther King, Jr., "so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half truths...so must we...create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism"...This tension is generated by holding a vision and concurrently telling the truth about current reality relative to that vision (Senge 1990, p. 357).

Bellon (1990) identified three leadership dimensions which appear to summarize the concept of transformational leadership. According to Bellon, these dimensions are management of self, development of others, and organizational leadership. They are "neither discrete nor equal and they tend to overlap and relate" (p. 1). Leadership behaviors that are characteristics of management of self include the following:

1. Uses feedback for self-understanding and improvement
2. Demonstrates a commitment to systemic renewal
3. Has positive self regard
4. Personal values are clear
5. Models behavior expected of others
6. Has judgment-in-action: avoids being iatrogenic (p. 1)

Leadership behaviors that are characteristic of "development of others" include the following:

1. Motivates by unlocking existing motives

2. High but attainable expectations
3. Converts followers into leaders
4. Helps others to develop their ability and capacity to act...empowers them (p. 1)

Leadership behaviors that are characteristic of "organizational leadership" include the following:

1. Establishes/creates a vision
2. Sets goals and priorities
3. Develops team relationships
4. Manages conflict (internal and external)
5. Affirms and regenerates organizational values
6. Understands the "fit" between own skills and organizational requirements (p.2)

Many of the characteristics of transformational leadership emerged in The Leadership Challenge (1987) written by James Kouzes and Barry Posner. Over a five year period, the authors asked hundreds of managers to describe a "personal best" experience. This "personal best" experience was an experience in which they got something extraordinary accomplished in an organization; a time when they felt they led, not managed. These were experiences in which "everything all came together." Through their investigation they learned there was a pattern of behavior that people used to lead and to achieve extraordinary results.

More than 550 managers completed the long form of the personal best survey. A short form of the survey was completed by an additional 780 managers. In addition to the case studies, the authors conducted 42 in-depth interviews, primarily with managers

in middle-to-senior level organizational positions. More than 70% of the behaviors and strategies described in the respondents' personal best case studies and interviews can be accounted for in the five fundamental practices and ten behaviors listed below:

Leaders "challenge the process." They search for opportunities to change the status quo. They work for innovative ways to improve the organization. They experiment and take risks. And since risk taking involves mistakes and failure, leaders accept the inevitable disappointments as learning opportunities.

Leaders inspire a shared vision. They passionately believe that they can make a difference. They envision the future, creating an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become. Through their strong appeal and quiet persuasion, leaders enlist others in the dream. They breathe life into vision and get us to see the exciting future possibilities.

Leaders enable others to act. They foster collaboration and build spirited teams. They actively involve others. Mutual respect is what sustains extraordinary efforts, so leaders create an atmosphere of trust and human dignity. They strengthen others, making each person feel capable and powerful.

Leaders model the way. They establish values about how employees, colleagues, and customers ought to be treated. They create standards of excellence and then set an example for others to follow. Because complex change can overwhelm and stifle action, leaders plan small wins. They unravel bureaucracy, put up signposts, and create opportunities for victory.

Leaders encourage the heart. Getting extraordinary things done in an organization is hard work. To keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize contributions the individuals make to the climb to the top and every winning team needs to share in the reward of their efforts, so leaders celebrate accomplishment. They make everyone feel like heroes (pp. 279-280).

Kouzes and Posner (1987) extracted a profile of transformational leaders from interviews that paralleled the profile of transformational leadership as presented in the literature. In all, the current literature on leadership reflects the practices outlined by

Kouzes and Posner. It is for this reason that the present study has used the Personal Best Questionnaire to explore the superintendent's ability to discuss their practices in terms of transformational leadership.

This chapter has served to reinforce by theoretical triangulation, the five practices chosen for observation and to provide insight into the complexity of the leadership situation. In all, the literature reinforced the basic conviction that leadership is a complex social process, an interaction between leaders and those "led", and that the practices that leaders engage on a consistent basis effect their ability to lead. The chapter that follows outlines the conduct of this research.

**CHAPTER III**  
**METHODOLOGY**  
**Design of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to discover patterns of practices of seated superintendents and their ability to discuss what current research and theory postulate as effective leadership practices. The study focused on those practices that Kouzes and Posner identified in their research. Specific questions relating to the current research were asked and analyzed in terms of: 1) patterns, 2) unique responses, 3) relationship of practice, 4) similarities in practice; and, 5) differences in practice. The analysis took into consideration the level of familiarity with current research demonstrated by the superintendents.

Because of the qualitative nature of the inquiry, fundamental questions become important rather than statistically oriented hypothesis. The major questions in the study are as follows:

1. Do seated superintendents demonstrate the ability to discuss the practices of transformational leadership as postulated in current research and theory?
2. Do seated superintendents utilize the practices of transformational leadership in their organizational setting?

The first question aimed for verification of the ability to discuss current research



and theory. The second question became of a point of departure for a deeper exploration of the context of practice.

The research was guided by the theoretical base developed by Kouzes and Posner, as well as by the theoretical perspective advanced in the literature review. The specific practices served as the reference point for analysis. Most of the leadership research has been conducted in the area of business. Application of the Personal Best Questionnaire to the study of seated superintendents enhanced the findings in the area of educational leadership. The key questions of this study focused on the superintendents' ability to discuss the practices identified as transformational in relationship to their experience and their ability to engage in the practices in their organizational setting.

Kouzes and Posner (1987) extracted a profile of transformational leadership practices. They surveyed 550 middle and 780 senior level managers. In addition to the case studies, they conducted forty-two in-depth interviews, primarily with managers in middle-to-senior level organizational positions in a wide variety of public and private sector companies. The various case studies (from survey and interview notes) have been independently content analyzed by two outside raters. While the category labels have gone through several iterations, the fundamental patterns of behavior that emerge when people accomplish extraordinary things in organizations are described by Kouzes and Posner by the following five practices each consisting of two strategies:

1. Challenging the process
  - a. Search for opportunities
  - b. Experiment and take risks
  
2. Inspiring a shared vision
  - a. Envision the future
  - b. Enlist others

3. Enabling others to act
  - a. Foster collaboration
  - b. Strengthen others
4. Modeling the way
  - a. Set the example
  - b. Plan small wins
5. Encouraging the heart
  - a. Recognize contributions
  - b. Celebrate accomplishments (Kouzes and Posner 1987, pp. 13-14)

More than 70 percent of the behaviors and strategies described in the respondents' personal best case studies and interviews are accounted for by these practices and strategies.

Following an analysis of the personal best cases, Kouzes and Posner developed the Leadership Practices Inventory which enabled them to measure the leadership practices they uncovered. They validated their initial research by asking over 3,000 managers and subordinates to assess the extent to which the managers they studied used the practices identified in the personal best case studies.

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) is an empirical effort to measure the conceptual framework identified in case studies of managers' personal best experiences. As reported by Kouzes and Posner (1987), various analyses support the belief that the LPI has sound psychometric properties. The factor structure of the LPI is consistent with the a priori conceptual model. "The internal reliability of the LPI-Self ranged from .69 to .85 and on the LPI-Other from .78 to .90. Test-retest reliability from a convenience sample of fifty-seven M.B.A. students averaged better than .13. Tests for social desirability responses bias were also performed with a sample of thirty middle-level

managers, using the Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale which consists of thirty-three items representing behaviors that are culturally sanctioned and approved but are improbable of occurrence. None of the correlations was statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ) (Kouzes and Posner 1992, p. 313).

### **Sample Selection**

The sample chosen for analysis was purposive. The sample members were chosen because they met the following criteria:

1. The superintendents had 3 or more years' experience in their current positions.
2. The superintendents chosen administered districts with enrollment figures of more than 3,000 students because:
  - a) of the more complex levels of organization and responsibility entailed in their job
  - b) they could be discretionary in the delegation of responsibility due to the existence of a central office staff.

The superintendents chosen for the sample reflected complex job assignments. This was evidenced by the fact that they administered districts with enrollments of over 3,000 students. Also in terms of complexity of assignment, each district experienced a rapid change in demographics which not only included an increase in numbers, but a change in the social economic status of the population and ethnicity.

**TABLE I**  
**Sample Characteristics**

Site	Enrollment	Race	Gender	Years of Experience	Type of District	Type of Degree
1	10,772	C	M	8	Unit	Doctorate
2	7,266	C	M	10	High School	Doctorate
3	3,472	C	M	5	High School	Masters
4	5,136	C	M	3	Elementary	Doctorate
5	3,472	C	M	18	High School	Doctorate
6	3,630	C	F	10	Elementary	Doctorate
7	3,583	C	M	6	Elementary	Doctorate
8	3,688	C	M	3	Elementary	Doctorate
9	3,398	C	M	15	Elementary	Doctorate
10	4,792	C	M	12	Elementary	Doctorate

### Conduct of Study

The general procedure of the research study was as follows:

1. The literature was reviewed to provide support for the theoretical base.
2. The Personal Best Questionnaire developed by Kouzes and Posner served as the study instrument.
3. A telephone survey of the superintendents targeted for sample membership was conducted to determine whether or not the superintendents would meet the criteria (previously noted).
4. A letter and questionnaire were mailed to the identified superintendents (See Appendix A) that outline the process.
5. The interviews were scheduled and conducted with the participating superin-

tendents. Fieldnotes were used to record the data. The field notes were transcribed and analyzed. Thus, the fieldnotes became the empirical data for analysis.

Of the 15 superintendents contacted, 10 superintendents fit the established criteria. Of the 10 superintendents that qualified all 10 superintendents agreed to participate. The interviews generally took forty-five minutes to one hour to conduct but in three cases lasted three hours.

A number of specific approaches was utilized to insure validity and reliability, thus, increasing the objectivity of the study. In terms of validity, the research employed the use of the Personal Best Questionnaire (reproduced in Appendix A). The questions were based upon the leadership practices selected for analysis. The practices were identified and previously validated in the research study conducted by Kouzes and Posner (1987). The reliability of the questionnaire was measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory.

The interview focused on concrete situations in which the actual practices rather than opinions served as the basis for fieldnote analysis. The responses were analyzed in terms of patterns and similarities in practice; unique responses and differences in practice; and the relationship of practice to research. In this way, the study followed a qualitative but objective and logical model of research which sought to discover emerging patterns of practice within the structure or framework of the five practices cited by Kouzes and Posner (1987).

## **Data Analysis**

Through their research, Kouzes and Posner (1987) determined that there were fundamental patterns of leadership behavior that emerge when people are accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations. These categories of behavior have been described by the following practices:

1. Challenging the process
2. Inspiring a shared vision
3. Enabling others to act
4. Modeling the way
5. Encouraging the heart

The Personal Best Questionnaire grouped questions under each one of the five practices. These five practices were separated for analysis by a series of questions. The data gathered through the interview process were retained for analysis through fieldnotes. The analysis of the fieldnotes took into account the superintendents' familiarity with the practices and the use of the strategies in their organizational setting.

According to Marshall (1987), research that delves in-depth into complexities and processes should be qualitative. The in-depth interview is the data collection technique used as the basis for this research project. The interview was chosen because of the particular strengths. The interview technique was used to gain large amounts of data quickly; to allow for immediate follow-up questions and, if necessary, clarification. Combined with observation, the interviews allow the researcher to check description against fact.

It is for these reasons that the focus of the present study was asking broader research questions rather than formulating a specific hypothesis. Qualitative methodology depends on logical interpretation of the answers to the broader research questions. "Identifying salient themes, recurring ideas, and patterns of belief that link people and setting together is the most intellectually challenging phase of data analysis and one that can integrate the entire endeavor. Through questioning the data and reflecting on the conceptual framework, the researcher engages the ideas and the data in significant intellectual work" ( Marshall Rossman 1989, p. 116).

As Glaser and Strauss (1989) have pointed out, the research question in grounded theory study is a statement that identifies the "phenomenon" to be studied. This study, then, looked for 1) patterns, 2) unique responses, 3) relationships of practices to research, 4) similarities in practice; and, 5) differences in practice. Through the analysis of data, the research questions will be answered, thus enabling the researcher to make some meaningful statements about the understanding and leadership practices identified as transformational.

Grounded theory is a qualitative research approach which employs systematic techniques and procedures of analysis that enables the researcher to develop a substantive theory that meets the criteria of doing "good" science: significance, theory-observation, compatibility, generalizability, reproducibility, precision, rigor, and verification. Although the procedure is designed to give the analytic process precision and rigor, creativity is also important. The creative component enables the researcher to ask pertinent questions of the data and make the kind of comparisons that elicit from the data new insights into phenomenon and novel theoretical formulations (Strauss, Corbin 1990).

Kirk and Miller point out that qualitative researchers stress "...objectivity is the simultaneous realization of as much reliability and validity as possible" (Kirk, Miller

1986, p. 20). This objectivity was guaranteed by the theoretical validity of the Personal Best Questionnaire used by Kouzes and Posner in their research. Over a period of five years they asked hundreds of managers to describe a "personal best" experience in which something extraordinary was accomplished in an organization. These were experiences in which "everything all came together." They found that everyone had a story to tell. They learned that there was a pattern of behavior that people used to lead and to achieve extraordinary results.

The purpose of the interview was to have the seated superintendents reflect on recent practices. In addition, it allowed the researcher to discuss in detail the results of the practices. The interview allowed the interviewer to relate a detailed account of events, and discuss the strategies used to achieve the goal or goals that were identified. This research attempts to discover what is really going on in the field. Does theory support practice? Can superintendents discuss the practices? Are the practices as stated in theory successful in attaining organizational goals?

The analytic procedures fall into five modes according to Marshall, Rossman (1989): organizing the data; generating categories; themes, and patterns; testing the emergent hypothesis against the data, searching for alternative explanations of the data; and writing the report. "Each phase of data analysis entails 'data reduction' as the reams of collected data are brought into manageable chunks and 'interpretation' as the researcher brings meaning and insight to the words and acts of the participants in the study" (p. 114).

According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), two analytic procedures that are basic



to the coding process include: 1) the "making of comparisons," 2) the "asking of questions." These two procedures help to give the concepts in grounded theory their specificity. The analysis begins by breaking down and conceptualizing the data. This is done by "taking apart an observation, a sentence, a paragraph, and giving each discreet incident, idea, or event, a name, something that stands for or represents a phenomenon" (p. 63). The researcher does this by asking questions of the data, and comparing incident with incident so that similar occurrences can be given the same name.

Strauss, Corbin (1990) suggest several ways of doing open coding; line by line, sentence or paragraph, or using the entire document. In the analysis the researcher asks what meanings the various analytically salient terms have for the respondents. This technique raises questions about the possible meanings, whether assumed or intended, by a speaker. It also helps bring out the researcher's assumptions about what is being said.

The following techniques are suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990) for analysis through comparisons:

1. The flip-flop technique--requires the researcher to take a concept and turn it upside down and imagine the very opposite. This exercise helps the researcher to think analytically rather than descriptively about data, and to think about generative questions.
2. Systematic comparisons--requires the researchers to ask questions that bring out similarities and differences between two categories using questions that take the researcher away from the standard ways of thinking, this allows exploration of other avenues of thought.
3. Waving the red flag--requires the researcher to become sensitive to certain

words and phrases, ones such as "never," "always," "it couldn't possibly be that way." These words and phrases should be taken as signals to take a closer look.

The data from the fieldnotes were analyzed using the techniques discussed in this chapter. The data were organized in a narrative format using the five practices as categories.

### Summary

The Personal Best Questionnaire was used to conduct interviews with 10 superintendents in DuPage County. It contained questions that related to five leadership practices that have been identified as transformational.

The data from the fieldnotes were analyzed to determine if the data reflected the practices postulated in leadership research as effective in transforming organization. Specific questions relating to the current research were asked and analyzed in terms of: 1) patterns, 2) unique responses, 3) relationship of practice to research, 4) similarities in practice, 5) differences in practice.

To recapitulate, the method of research in this study was qualitative. The data, the responses to the interview questions, were submitted to an analysis that made use of logic and insight to discover patterns. This approach is in line with Strauss and Corbin's (1990) open coding method. "The basic analytic procedures by which this is accomplished are: the asking of questions about the data; and making comparisons for similarities and differences between each incident, event, and other instances of phenomena. Similar events and incidents are labeled and grouped to form categories" (p. 74).

The researcher brings to the analysis of data, biases assumptions, patterns of thinking, and knowledge gained from experience and reading. These assumptions, patterns of thinking, and prior knowledge and experience can block our objectivity, or prevent the researcher from moving from the descriptive to the theoretical level of analysis. Strauss and Corbin (1990) recommend the following techniques which can be used to prevent or rectify these problems: "the use of questioning; analysis of a single word, phrase, or sentence, the flip-flop procedure; the making of comparisons, both close-in and far-out; and waving the red flag." (p. 95)

The general reference points for the categories or patterns of behavior were selected from the Personal Best Questionnaire used by Kouzes and Posner. The description of the practices have provided the study with a theoretically valid base that lends itself to greater objectivity.

### **Assumptions**

The assumptions made in this study are listed below:

1. The sample members shared a common background in terms of geographic, demographic, and economic conditions. All were superintendents of Suburban Chicago DuPage County schools, all have seen extreme changes in enrollment from +1.5% to a high of +284.7%. Because of increases in property value, resources have increased over the past decade. Due to the property tax caps, and saturation of population, future resources could be limited.
2. DuPage County is considered to be an affluent community of educated professionals that hold high expectations of the schools that serve their children.

3. All of the schools represented in the study are complex in nature given their size. The largest is Naperville which serves 17,330 students to the 15th in size Glen Ellyn which serves 2,948 students.
4. DuPage County in suburban Chicago can be selective in its choice of superintendents. The districts chose to allocate resources to provide attractive benefit packages in order to attract a large pool of candidates. The districts can be selective in their choice of candidates. 13 of the 15 superintendents have confirmed doctorate degrees. All but one had prior experience as a superintendent.
5. The superintendents included in the study responded candidly to the questions asked in the interviews.
6. The theoretically base instrument for the study, the Personal Best Questionnaire, yields results that are valid, reliable, and accurate information and conclusions.

In summary, Chapter III presented the methodological approach utilized in this study. The results of the study will be presented and discussed in Chapter IV under the headings of the five practices discussed in Chapter I.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

This chapter presents an examination of the research questions: Do seated superintendents demonstrate the ability to discuss the practices of transformational leadership as postulated in current research and theory? Do seated superintendents utilize the practices of transformational leadership in their organizational setting?

The data for the study of seated superintendents was gathered through in-depth interviews with ten superintendents in the county of DuPage in the Fall of 1993. The data from the fieldnotes taken during the interview are presented and discussed under the headings of the five practices discussed in Chapter I.

Data reduction was accomplished in three ways. The fieldnote responses followed the structure of the interview schedule, different practices were separated for analysis by a series of questions. The notes were transcribed in such a manner as to permit the placement of summarizing comments or memos along the sides of the raw data, the interview responses. In the first place, the data from the transcriptions were organized into large outlines set up in such a way as to answer the fundamental questions of the study: Could the superintendents discuss the practices? Did the superintendents utilize the practices in their organizational setting? Could the evidence of the practice be documented? The data were placed on tables that included a list of the activities that the

superintendents discussed during the interview. The table includes the number of superintendents who provided evidence that they engaged in the practice in their organizational setting. The data were analyzed in terms of patterns, unique responses, relationships of practice to research, similarities in practice, differences in practice. Analysis of single words, phrases or sentences was included. The responses from the questions were analyzed to determine if they reflect the practices postulated in leadership research as effective in transforming organizations. This form of analysis helped to determine what was significant in the data according to Strauss and Corbin (1990).

The descriptions used to code the transcriptions were taken from the Leadership Practices Inventory developed by Kouzes and Posner (1987). The activities used for data analysis were placed on the summary tables. The tables present information that includes the number of superintendents that discussed the practice, and the number of those superintendents that provided evidence that supported the conclusion that they engaged in the practice in their organizational setting.

The structure of the written analysis of the individual practices followed a general format. The text listed the interview questions that pertained to the practice being analyzed in that section. Following the questions is a table listing the specific activities that were indicative of the cited practice. The table included the information regarding the number of superintendents who discussed the practice and the number of superintendents who provided evidence that they engaged in the practice in their organizational setting.

## **Section I Challenging the Process**

This section examined the information, gathered through the interview process, that related to the practice of Challenging the Process. The data were examined to determine if the superintendents interviewed could discuss the strategies that supported the practice of Challenging the Process. The data were investigated further to determine if there was evidence of implementation of the practice within the organizational setting.

The questions used to precipitate the discussion of this practice include the following:

1. What was the greatest challenge facing you when you took this position?  
How did you identify the challenge? What did you envision you would accomplish?
2. Do you consider this challenge your greatest accomplishment? If so, what role did you play?
3. What were the results of the project, both qualitative and quantitative?
4. Why did you want to do this project? What made you believe that you could do it?
5. What strategies did you use to challenge the status quo? What changes occurred due to your intervention? What innovative things did you do? What risks did you take?
6. How did you feel at the beginning of the project? How did you feel after you initiated this project?

Table I presents a summary of the activities that support the practice of

Challenging the Process. The contents of the table identify the number of superintendents that discussed the practice, the number of superintendents that engaged in the practice and the evidence that supports that conclusion.

**TABLE I**  
**Challenging the Process**

**Strategy:**  
**Searching for Opportunities**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Superintendents</b>		<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
	<b>Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b>Engaged in Practice</b>	
Sought opportunities to challenge skills and abilities	10	10	Attained current positions
Questioned the status quo	10	10	Developed plan
Stayed up-to-date on most recent developments affecting the organization	10	10	Conducted site visits, scheduled meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Planned in-service and staff development programs</li> </ul>	10	10	Allocated funds for staff development Developed written plan for staff development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Hired consultants</li> </ul>	4	4	Plan indicated the use of consultant
Organized committees that included all groups, community, parents, school personnel	8	6	Developed a long-range plan based on input from groups
Surveyed stakeholders	6	6	Used data to develop plan

N = 10



**Strategy:**  
**Experimenting and Risk Taking**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Superintendents</b>		<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
	<b>Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b>Engaged in Practice</b>	
Looked for innovative ways to improve organization	4	4	Organized task force committees
Honored risk takers	4	4	Offered mini grants, piloted programs, recognized achievement
Asked "What can we learn?"	4	4	Established a process for reviewing and editing plan which included revision that reflected what was learned

N = 10

All of the superintendents interviewed had written plans. Three superintendents chose to share their written plan. In all three cases 1) they were very detailed, 2) they consisted of 20+ pages of material, 3) they included a statement of mission and philosophy, 4) they were research-based, and 5) they were very organized, the goals and activities were clearly defined.

This group of superintendents clearly viewed themselves as agents of change. They evaluated the conditions that existed when they began the project and began to formulate a plan or plans to attain the goal or goals established. The challenges that the superintendents described included the following:

- Increasing the level of trust between the Board of Education and the building level administrators.
- Increasing the use of technology as an instructional strategy.

- Improving relations between the teachers union administration and Board of Education.
- Developing a strategic plan that addressed the common concerns of the community power brokers, school district personal, and the students.
- Increasing funding to provide additional buildings to house students.
- Providing special education services for low incidence handicapped students in their home school.

Six of the superintendents developed the plan in conjunction with the stakeholders effected by the decision. Six specifically cited the strategies they used to include the participation of constituents in the planning process.

All of the superintendents discussed changes in the way the organization conducted business. The following are examples of what superintendents discussed as they described the changes that occurred because of their intervention. The changes included the following:

- Negotiated contracts using collaborative bargaining
- Increased the level of trust between the board, administration and community
- Increased the number of special education students receiving service in home school
- Improved relations between the board of education, union and community
- Increased participation in the decision-making process
- Increased the number of facilities to accommodate population growth
- Increased the level of funding through referendum to support building projects and programs

Six of the superintendents set up committees that included parents, community, and school personnel for the purpose of developing plans. Their rationale for doing so included "...to make people a part of the solution." "When you involve people you can identify common concerns..." "This can serve to unite people in an effort to move toward a common cause." "Broad based support insures success." One of the six started the process of planning during the selection process prior to being hired by the district. One used the community power structure to plan and implement the strategies in order to pass a successful tax referendum. Four of the six superintendents reported hiring consultants to assist in the projects.

Six of the ten superintendents reported using survey information to provide data for decision-making and planning. The survey results were published and shared with the public. This strategy increased the creditability of the process and was effective in identifying common concerns according to the superintendents interviewed.

Less than half of the superintendents, (40%), discussed risk-taking activities. One of the four said that it was easier to ask for forgiveness than to ask for permission. One district supported a "What If" program. This program funds innovative projects that were developed by individuals or groups. The projects were evaluated for funding based on the philosophy of the district. Another district awards "mini-grants" to individuals or groups who develop an innovative program. The program or project was evaluated according to district goals.

Only four of the ten superintendents discussed "What can we learn" from this experience. One stated that he learned that you cannot force participation; people have

to want to provide input and make decisions. One of the superintendents realized that people have to be trained in the necessary skills before the process can work effectively, i.e., conflict resolution, consensus decision-making. One of the four superintendents stated that you have to accept the decision or results of the group even if you do not agree with the recommendation. Another identified setting clearly defined parameters as necessary to avoid undesirable results.

The most frequently used words that six of the superintendents used in discussing their personal best cases included challenging, rewarding, exciting, and energizing. They talked about empowering people, shared decision-making, and site-based management. They all viewed themselves as able to: lead districts out of crisis and into collegial relationships; improve facilities; and increase funding. In six of the cases they talked about the many hours they willing worked to accomplish the goals. Four of the superintendents discussed the loneliness of the position, and the fear they felt as they met the barriers of convention when they began to tread into unknown territory. One discussed the fact that he could take risks because he had nothing to lose; this superintendent could retire anytime.

Three major findings are listed below:

1. All of the superintendents interviewed challenged the status quo, developed plans to improve the organization, included training and staff development programs as part of the plan.
2. Six of the ten identified specific strategies that they employed to facilitate participation. Conversely, four of the ten identified the need for input but did

not identify the strategies they used to facilitate the process.

3. Of the six superintendents who facilitated participation, only four looked for innovative solutions to the challenge.

The superintendents in this study did discuss at least one strategy that supported the practice of Challenging the Process. They all documented evidence of engaging in the activities that supported the strategy in their organizational setting. Six identified the structure they used to include others in developing district goals and plans. As a result of their intervention, several changes occurred. These changes resulted in increased funding, improved human relations, and generated positive public support for the system. In six cases all three changes occurred. In four cases only one change was identified as occurring. In no case was there a significant change in the delivery of instruction or curriculum.

## **Section II**

### **Inspiring a Shared Vision**

This section examined the information, gathered through the interview process, that related to the practice of Sharing and Inspiring. The data were analyzed to determine if the superintendents interviewed could discuss the strategies that supported the practice of Sharing and Inspiring. The data were investigated further to determine if there was evidence of implementation of the practice within the organizational setting.

The questions that precipitated the discussion of this practice included the following:

1. What strategies did you use to build a sense of enthusiasm and excitement for this project?
2. Did you use symbols or slogans to describe your vision?
3. What strategies did you use to sell others on the project?
4. What strategies did you use to involve others in the planning and decision-making?

Table II presents a summary of the activities that support the practice of Inspiring A Shared Vision. The contents of the table identify the number of superintendents that discussed the practice, the number of superintendents that engaged in the practice, and the evidence that supports that conclusion.

**TABLE II**  
**Inspiring A Shared Vision**

**Strategy:**  
**Envisioning the Future**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Superintendents</b>		<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
	<b>Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b>Engaged in Practice</b>	
Described to others the future	10	6	Documents, newsletters, memos, speeches
Used of metaphors/symbols	6	6	Logos on newsletters, speeches, discussions
Communicated a positive and hopeful outlook for the future of organization	6	6	Documents, newsletters, memos, speeches, formal/informal discussion
Developed stump speech	6	6	Documents, video, formal/informal discussion
Appealed to common purpose	6	6	Documents, newsletters, memos, speeches, formal/informal discussion.
Learned from the past	4	4	Program changes, revision of written plan new organizational structure
Acted on intuition	3	3	Discussion

N = 10

**Strategy:**  
**Enlist Others**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Superintendents</b>		<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
	<b>Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b>Engaged in Practice</b>	
Appealed to others to share in dream of the future	6	6	Documents, formal discussions, committee structure
Showed others how their long-term future interests can be realized by enlisting a common vision	6	6	Documents, newsletters, dialogue

N = 10

All of the superintendents reported that they looked ahead and forecasted what the future looked like. Six provided documentation that included written plans, brochures, and newsletters. They discussed in detail the structure they used to access and disseminate information. Two of the six discussed the use of the scientific method of problem-solving. One superintendent used the following steps to solve problems: 1) review the situation or problem, 2) gather data, 3) analyze data, 4) develop plan, 5) predict outcomes, 6) evaluate the outcomes; and, 7) review plan. The other four did not discuss in detail the strategies they used to inspire a shared vision.

Four of the superintendents reported learning lessons from past experience. They incorporated the lessons into the program changes. Some of the lessons that the superintendents learned included the following:

- People need training in consensus building
- You can not force people to participate
- You have to establish a clearly defined vision, and set parameters for decision



making based on philosophy and rationale

- Involvement has to be intimate and legitimate

Three of the ten superintendents discussed the use of intuition in planning. In discussing the use of intuition they used phrases like "I just knew it was the right thing to do." "They said it could be done; I just knew we could do it." "The process flows...just kind of do it...you instinctively know what moves to make and how." Seven of the superintendents did not discuss the use of intuition.

Six of the ten superintendents discussed in detail the strategies they used to involve people in future planning. When they discussed these strategies, there was a sense of excitement. This was demonstrated by the way they leaned forward in their chairs; by their enthusiastic voices; by their cheerfulness, they smiled and laughed a lot. They were very articulate and optimistic when discussing the future. These six interviews lasted longer than the other four. Three of the six interviews lasted three hours. In only one case did the participant use the word transformation. One of the superintendents who discussed the practice and had evidence of engaging in the practice did not realize this until midway through the interview. Together we analyzed the patterns of activities that emerged. Their genuineness emerged through the detailed discussion of the strategies they utilized in their organizational setting. There was an appreciation expressed for the contributions of dedicated staff members.

Four superintendents carried the district's message through the use of metaphors, symbols and slogans. These symbols and slogans were clearly visible on the stationery in the newsletters and brochures. These superintendents used the metaphors in speeches

and informal discussion. The symbols and slogans included: "I.Q. I'm for Quality Education." "All Children Belong" silhouette of children side by side "Believe or Leave", "Teaching Today for Tomorrow." Four superintendents used metaphors to discuss their projects. One applied the concept of a wagon train and the other a boat and voyage as a comparison to the process of planning and implementation.

Four major findings are listed below:

1. Plans were developed plans based on a clearly articulated philosophy, rationale guiding principles and common concerns.
2. The districts' message was articulated through presentations, speeches, newsletters, brochures, personal letters, memos, videos, and dialogue.
3. They attributed the success of the project to the contributions of others.
4. They made statements about their beliefs and values, and recognized that their definition attributed to their success.

Six of the superintendents in the study discussed the activities that supported the practice of Inspiring a Shared Vision. All six provided evidence that documented the engagement of this practice in their organizational setting. These superintendents identified the channels that lead to communication with all the constituents; the exchange of information that occurred and the impact of the exchange on the planning process. They used multiple communication networks, while conversely the other four superintendents relied on static, bureaucratic structures or a single method of communication. The information exchanged did not impact the planning process. Although all the superintendents who relied on the bureaucratic structure discussed the problems in greater detail.

### **Section III** **Enabling Others to Act**

This section examined the information, gathered through the interview process, that related to the practice of Enabling Others to Act. The data were analyzed to determine if the superintendents interviewed could discuss the strategies that supported the practice of Enabling Others to Act. The data were investigated further to determine if there was evidence of implementation of the practice within the organizational setting.

The questions used to precipitate the discussion of this practice include the following:

1. What strategies did you use to build collegial teams? What methods did you use to foster cooperation and collaboration?
2. What strategies did you use to build trust and respect among those who worked on the project?
3. What strategies did you use to help members to focus on the goals and objectives?

Table III presents a summary of the activities that support the practice of Enabling Others to Act. The contents of the table identify the number of superintendents that discussed the practice, the number of superintendents that engaged in the practice and the evidence that supports the conclusions:

**TABLE III**  
**Enabling Others to Act**

**Strategy:**  
**Strengthening Others**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Superintendents</b>		<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
	<b>Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b>Engaged in Practice</b>	
Involved others in planning actions taken	10	6	Hired consultants, committee structure, regular meetings of stakeholders, held administrative meetings
Treated others with dignity and respect	9	6	Established assistance programs, formally/ informally recognized accomplishments, collaborative bargaining
Gave people discretion in decision-making	9	6	Relaxed work rules, mini grants awards for innovative programs, autonomous committee, structure

N = 10

**Strategy:**  
**Fostering Collaboration**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Superintendents</b>		<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
	<b>Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b>Engaged in Practice</b>	
Developed cooperative relationships with staff	8	6	Mentor programs, committee structure
Created atmosphere of mutual trust	9	6	Collaborative bargaining, 3-yr. contracts with teachers, reduction of watchdog group membership

Got others to feel a sense of ownership	9	6	Video taped presentations by administration, staff, and community members, contributions to district newsletters
N = 10			

Of the ten superintendents who discussed including others in the planning, 60% discussed the strategies and committee structure they used for developing a plan. Their strategies included: meeting with teachers, consultants, community members in groups both large and small, being open and honest with individuals and groups; setting up committees with participants that held opposite and opposing views to assist in identifying common concerns; practicing the skills of consensus building. 40% did not discuss in detail their committee structure; they did meet regularly with the school board and their administrative team. One did not want his principals involved in the work of the committees. This particular superintendent did the "lion's share of the work" to show that he was involved and concerned. This particular superintendent discussed in detail his relationship with the Board of Education.

Nine of the ten superintendents discussed the need for creating a positive environment. Six reported using the following strategies:

- Dignify ideas with a response and follow through
- Conduct personal meetings to discuss ideas and concerns
- Keep all groups fully informed
- Develop trust by being consistent in words and deeds
- Fund what you say is important

- Equip people with problem solving skills
- Ongoing training and in-service.

Six of the superintendents discussed in detail the programs they had in place that supported the activity of treating people with dignity and respect. These superintendents focused on the decision making process rather than the decision. They discussed times when the decision made was not one they would have considered; only to discover that it met the identified goal. One superintendent discussed with enthusiasm the fact that the team accomplished the identified goal and went on to establish a new one in his absence. This reinforced his commitment to the process of shared decision making. One discussed the fact that the teachers and school board negotiated a three-year contract without IEA involvement. One of the superintendents said that getting everyone involved builds a sense of enthusiasm and excitement but did not identify the strategies he used to accomplish this task. This superintendent chose to focus on the building projects that were completed during his administration. He did not identify the strategies he used to encourage the involvement of others.

Six of the ten superintendents talked with enthusiasm about the need to establish and clearly communicate the shared beliefs and values of the district. Throughout the interview these superintendents used the pronoun "we." The other four superintendents discussed the need to carefully monitor the committee meeting to be sure they were moving in the right direction. They meet regularly with committee chairs to make sure they established parameters for decision making. They did not discuss the use of training and/or in-servicing the participants to insure they had a working knowledge of the skills

involved in consensus building, problem solving, and conflict resolution. Six of the superintendents interviewed included this particular type of in-service and training as part of their written plan.

When discussing this practice, six out of ten superintendents frequently used the following words: coordinator, facilitator, organizer and advisor. Six of the ten superintendents frequently used the following words: listened, questioned and encouraged; only one used the word authority and the pronoun "I" consistently throughout the interview: "I make the recommendations, the board approves my recommendations," "I was the only one to be able to pull it together," "I spent three years..." Six used the pronoun "we" consistently throughout the interview.

Four major findings are listed below:

1. Provided opportunities for members of the team to make presentations to community groups, school board and faculty members.
2. Developed collaborative relationships with the people involved in planning and problem solving, revised plans based on input.
3. Provided ongoing in-service and training to insure that the participants were exposed to the skills necessary for collaboration.
4. Provided opportunities for discretion in decision making as demonstrated by flexible contractual obligations, awarding innovative ideas, an autonomous committee structure.

Most of the superintendents involved in the study discussed the need to involve people and the need to create a positive climate but only six of the superintendents

provided evidence of the engagement of this practice in their organizational setting. The six superintendents provided the necessary support for staff to engage in discretionary decision-making. These superintendents saw themselves as facilitators, they assisted in developing plans based on a philosophy that was agreed upon and accepted by the group. The decisions that were made reflected this philosophy. The four superintendents who did not provide evidence of the engagement of this practice controlled the decision-making process. They saw themselves as ultimately responsible for all decisions, and in order to expedite decision-making they limited the involvement of others in the process.

#### **Section IV Modeling the Way**

This section examined the information gathered through the interview process that relates to the practice of Modeling the Way. The data was analyzed to determine if the superintendents interviewed could discuss the strategies that supported the practice of Modeling the Way. The data was investigated further to determine if there was evidence of implementation of the practice within the organizational setting.

The questions that precipitated the discussion of this practice include the following:

1. What were the values that you believed should guide everyone's actions?  
What were the standards to which everyone was held accountable?
2. What strategies did you employ to show others, by your own example, that you were serious about the values and standards? How did you lead by example?



3. What structure and systems did you use to plan, organize or control the project?
4. What dynamic or unusual actions did you take to get the attention of the group?

Table IV presents a summary of the activities that support the practice of Modeling the Way. The contents of the table identify the number of superintendents that discussed the practice, the number of superintendents that engaged in the practice and the evidence that supports the conclusions.

**TABLE IV**  
**Modeling the Way**

**Strategy:**

**Setting an Example**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Superintendents</b>		<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
	<b>Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b>Engaged in Practice</b>	
Clear about philosophy of leadership	6	4	Topic of speeches, schedule time, discuss details during interview
Spent time and energy on making certain that people adhered to values that had been agreed.	6	6	Regularly scheduled meetings, committee structure, face-to-face meetings, drop-in visits, evaluation instruments, mentor people
Let others know my beliefs	6	6	Sent people to conferences, workshops, reward occurrence of behavior that demonstrate beliefs
Practiced values	6	6	Maintain positive attitude, demonstrate dedication and commitment, participate in staff development activities

N = 10

The practice of Modeling the Way was a difficult one to accrue evidence of practice. Through the interview process a limited amount of information could be gathered. Only six of the ten superintendents discussed in detail the need for a philosophy to guide behavior. Of the six, only four used the words values, quality, honesty, integrity, high standards, and respect. The statements made by these four superintendents included: "You enhance the quality of the decision when you get the parties together to

come to consensus," "You have to be honest about involving others," "Our district has high standards and it shows," "You have to respect the contributions of others." In two cases the superintendents were directed by the board to develop a philosophy based on the need to be identified as the "Education District" and the other as a district that promotes "Choice." The evidence of practice was established through discussion and based on each of the superintendent's perceptions. The practice emerged through the discussion of how the superintendents sent the message, how they scheduled their time, and what the leaders awarded on a regular basis.

The engagement in practice would have to be documented over time. Statements could be made regarding this practice and evidence could be presented through the use of policy statements, correspondence in newsletters, in speeches. The research that would be inclusive in documenting this practice would have to be reported by subordinates and superordinates.

Two major findings are listed below:

1. The researcher could assume that a superintendent who discusses values and beliefs on a regular basis, both formally and informally, would be more likely to engage in activities that reflect those values and beliefs.
2. The researcher could assume that superintendents who communicate their values and beliefs in writing were more likely to engage in activities that reflect the beliefs and values.

Seven of the superintendents engaged in discussion of the practice. Documentation of evidence of practice was difficult to gather. The engagement was established

through discussion and based on the superintendents' perceptions. Seven of the superintendents discussed in detail their philosophy of leadership. Six of the seven discussed to involving people in the process to insure success. They were very participatory in their responses. One was very authoritative and modeled this philosophy in his administrative style. Four of the superintendents interviewed did not discuss in detail their philosophy nor did they discuss the strategies they used to show others that they were serious about beliefs and values.

Four of the ten superintendents did not discuss the engagement of this practice and did not provide evidence of the practice in their organizational setting.

## **Section V Encouraging the Heart**

This section examined the information gathered through the interview that relates to the practice of Encouraging the Heart. The data were examined to determine if the superintendents interviewed could discuss the strategies that supported the practice of Encouraging the Heart. The data were investigated further to determine if there was evidence of the implementation of the practice within the organizational setting.

The questions used to precipitate the discussion of this practice include the following:

1. Did you celebrate accomplishments? Did you set milestones and celebrate their achievement?
2. What festive events were planned? What percentage of the group participated?

3. How did you recognize individual contributions? Did you use incentive systems or recognition programs? Were there public displays?
4. How did you communicate to the rest of the organization the accomplishments of the group?

The table that follows includes the categorization of actions that are indicative of the use of the strategies that support the practice. The contents of the table identifies the superintendents that were able to discuss the practice, the number of superintendents who engaged in the practice, and the evidence that supports those conclusions.

**TABLE V**  
**Encouraging the Heart**

**Strategy:**  
**Recognizing Contributions**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number of Superintendents</b>		<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
	<b>Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b>Engaged in Practice</b>	
Recognized the people who contributed to success of project	10	10	Those Who Excel District awards
Told the rest of the organization about the good work completed by the group	6	6	Media, newsletter, newsletter, newspaper
Praised people for a job well done	6	6	Letters, wall of fame, awards, personal notes

N = 10

**Strategy:**  
**Celebrating Accomplishments**

<b>Activity</b>	<b># of Supts. Engaged in Discussion</b>	<b># of Supts. in Practice</b>	<b>Evidence of Practice</b>
Found ways to celebrate	6	6	Receptions, Dinners, Breakfasts
Took the time to celebrate when milestones are reached	6	6	Annual reports to Board and community gather- ings, retirement dinners

N = 10

All ten superintendents chose to engage in a discussion of this practice. They documented with evidence the engagement of practice within their organizational setting. One of the ten discussed the retirement luncheon that the district sponsored annually and concluded the discussion with the fact that more could be done in this area. This superintendent relied on the faculty association to provide this recognition. One limited the celebrations to the school day, but did not identify how this was accomplished. One of the superintendents hosted a roast-type awards dinner and used his personal income to cover the costs. Two superintendents used conference expenses as a reward. One of the superintendents reported that using public money to reward accomplishments created a public relations problem but continued to find ways to fund awards.

Table V reflects the fact that six superintendents used publications, the media, and presentations to disseminate the information regarding accomplishments. One of the six superintendents discussed the use of personal handwritten notes to express appreciation for a job well done. Of the six superintendents who discussed this practice, four expressed pride in the accomplishments of their teams. They claimed the success of the

project was a direct result of the contributions of the group. Two took the time to introduce me to their central office staff. They made positive comments regarding the contributions of each individual. Four of the six discussed the need to make work fun, the superintendents gave examples of the strategies they used.

Two of the superintendents discussed using the Those Who Excel program as a reward system. Another discussed the "Hall of Fame" to highlight the contributions of educators, community members, and business leaders. The local paper published a column entitled "Educational Leader of the Week." One of the superintendents used the district newsletter to disseminate information regarding programs and teachers.

Two of the six superintendents discussed the district's leadership programs that they implemented. They recognized staff members who demonstrated outstanding leadership in their position with the district. They encouraged those people to participate in the mentor program. The program included the following components: assignment of a mentor, financial assistance for continuing education, and release time for participation; upon successful completion of the program, they were assigned to an administrative position in the district.

Of the ten superintendents interviewed, ten discussed their staff members. One stated that there were good teachers and good administrators in this district. Another said that they could not do anything without good people. One discussed the fact that people make the difference, good people make the program or plan work. Six of the ten superintendents used words like talented, dedicated, excited when they described their staff. When discussing their accomplishments, one used words like unexpected, beyond expect-

tations, and outstanding. These six superintendents were explicit in their descriptions using names and detailing accomplishments.

Two of the superintendents discussed the fact that there were staff members who did not contribute. One estimated the cost of terminating a teacher at close to \$100,000 and taking four years. Another referred to a group of teacher as "stones"; they try to weight everyone down.

Four major findings are listed below:

1. The superintendents were personally involved in the recognition process, made recognition a public display, focused on key values when providing recognition.
2. The superintendents structured plans that outlined the expectations and communicated the expectations.
3. The superintendents viewed their staff as hardworking and dedicated but acknowledged that there was a group of teachers who were negative forces and how difficult it was to deal effectively with this particular group.

Six of the superintendents engaged in discussion regarding this practice of encouragement and rewarding accomplishments. All six provided evidence that documented the engagement of this practice in their organizational setting. They reinforced the behavior of the constituents that supported the prescribed philosophy. They did this often and made the ceremonies public displays. They were successful in communicating the information to the entire organization. Four of the superintendents interviewed did not take personal responsibility for rewarding or acknowledging accomplishments.



## Summary of Findings

From the analysis of the fieldnotes emerged a profile of superintendents who engaged in discussion and provided evidence of the practices of transformational leadership:

1. They articulated a philosophy of leadership that reflected the following beliefs and values:
  - a) Personal philosophy had to be congruent with district philosophy; this had to be articulated frequently and clearly.
  - b) Accomplishments were based on the contributions of others.
  - c) Honesty and integrity were identified as important characteristics.
  - d) Commitment and determination have to be modeled.
  - e) The situation determines the strategies.
2. When developing a plan, they always involved others. Their organizational structure reflected this involvement. They used data and philosophy as a basis for decision-making.
3. They communicated in a variety of ways, their network enabled information to flow in all directions.
4. They designed systems within the district and the community to acknowledge accomplishments; these accomplishments reflected the district philosophy and contributed to the district's identified goal.
5. They participated in ongoing professional development activities including workshops and conferences, read literature on leadership in the areas of

business and education; and were familiar with authors and concepts currently being postulated as effective leadership practices.

6. They were realistically positive. They were enthusiastic about what was being accomplished; recognized that they were constantly being challenged. They recognized that change created turmoil, was difficult to accomplish without conflict.

The following is a list of the major findings related to the practices identified as effective to initiate change in an organization:

1. All of the superintendents attained positions that challenged their skills and abilities.
2. All of the superintendents challenged the status quo through the development of a plan that altered the manner by which the organization conducted business.
3. All of the superintendents discussed the need to involve others in the planning process; however, 80% of the superintendents interviewed provided evidence of the engagement of this practice.
4. Of the eight superintendents that discussed involving others in planning and provided evidence of involvement, only six included all the stakeholders. 20% of the superintendents did not provide evidence of the engagement of this practice in their organizational setting.
5. Of the six superintendents who structured widespread involvement of the constituents, only four of the superintendents looked for innovative ways to

improve or change their institution. These four had programs in place that honored risktakers.

6. Six of the superintendents developed plans based on clearly articulated philosophies and rationales. These plans addressed the common concerns identified by the stakeholders.
7. Six of the superintendents who engaged in participatory practices also enabled others to act. They gave their participants discretion in making decisions and the organizational structure supported this practice.
8. Seven superintendents clearly articulated their philosophy. They provided evidence that supported this practice. One of the seven was very clear about the limits he set regarding the involvement of others; the organizational structure supported this philosophy. Conversely, the other six superintendents engaged in activities that supported the practices identified as effective in transforming organizations. These activities supported their personal philosophy.
9. Six of the superintendents interviewed discussed and provided evidence of engagement in activities that provided recognition. This recognition process focused on the key values of the organization. The expectations were clearly defined and communicated. Recognition was communicated to the entire organization and community. The other four superintendents discussed the need to recognize achievement but did not provide evidence of the practice.
10. Six of the superintendents interviewed discussed and provided evidence of engagement of all five practices in their organizational setting. Two of the six

were nationally recognized as outstanding leaders in the field of education by prestigious associations. One of the six teaches a course in leadership at an institution of higher education.

Chapter IV has presented an analysis of the data for the study. Further discussion and a summary of the findings, conclusions of the investigation, and suggestions for future research are presented in Chapter V.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations**

#### **Summary**

A review of the literature indicated that the call for educational reform is as old as the institution itself, it started in 1893 with the "Committee of Fifteen" and has continued through 1993 with the "America 2000" report. As society changes, the demands and expectations of the educational institution change. The evolution of the system is a continuous and progressive process that takes place over time to meet the ever changing needs of the population the institution serves.

The superintendent of schools, serving as the chief executive officer, is the person responsible for the governance of the total school environment. The board of education and the community, which elects the board, rightly hold the superintendent accountable for the effective and efficient operation of the district. The superintendent has to possess a great deal of leadership skill and a working knowledge of the change process in order to insure the aforementioned characteristics..

A recent report from the Danforth Foundation notes that researchers and policy-makers "keep coming back to the essential ingredient in change...administrative leadership of schools" (Danforth 1989, p. 2). In order to be an effective leader, the superintendent has to transcend current reality; he has to be able to establish district

goals, encourage participation by the constituents in order to convert the goals to reality. The superintendent has to be able to motivate followers to accept and work toward the established goals for the common good.

This particular approach to leadership was first cited by James MacGregor Burns in 1978 and was identified as transformational. It was the purpose of this study to examine the practices of selected seated superintendents to determine the extent to which these superintendents actually bridged the gap between theory and practice, by employing the practices of transformational leadership in their organizational setting.

### **The Purpose**

This study focused on the five practices that pervaded the current research and have been identified by Kouzes and Posner (1987) as effective in bringing about change in an organization. The five practices include:

1. Challenging the process--developing a plan to improve performance
2. Inspiring a shared vision--creating a common concern
3. Enabling other to act--allowing other to work together
4. Modeling the way--setting an example through words and deeds
5. Encouraging the heart--acknowledging accomplishments and contributions

Using these five general practices as a basis, this study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Do seated superintendents demonstrate the ability to discuss the practices of transformational leadership as postulated in current research and theory?

2. Do seated superintendents utilize the practices of transformational leadership in their organizational setting?

A qualitative analysis was used to examine the level of familiarity with current research demonstrated by the participants and documentation of engagement of the practices in their organizational setting.

### **The Instrument**

The Personal Best Questionnaire developed by Kouzes and Posner served as the study instrument. The questionnaire was divided into five parts. The five practices were separated for analysis by a series of questions. The interview schedule focused on concrete situations in which the actual practices rather than opinions served as the basis for fieldnote analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The data from the fieldnotes was analyzed to determine if it reflected the practices postulated in leadership research as effective in transforming organizations. Specific questions relating to current research were asked and analyzed in terms of: 1) patterns, 2) unique responses, 3) relationships of practice to research, 4) similarities in practice, and 5) differences in practice.

The data, the responses to the interview questions, was submitted to an analysis that used logic and insight to discover patterns. This approach is in line with Strauss' and Corbin's (1990) open coding method. This procedure was descriptive in nature and the movement from descriptive to the theoretical level, utilized the following techniques:

1) the use of questioning: analysis of a single word, phrase, or sentence, 2) the flip-flop procedure, the making of comparisons, and 3) waving the red flag, paying attention to repeated use of words, phrases or sentences.

The data was coded and analyzed and placed in tabular form to aid in the analysis process. The results were presented in detail in Chapter IV. It was from this detailed analysis that several important conclusions, and recommendations for further study were developed. The conclusion provided concrete answers to the questions: Were superintendents able to discuss the practices postulated in research as effective in bringing about change in an organization? Did the superintendents engage in the theoretically validated practices in their organizational setting; if so, could the practice be documented?

### **Conclusions**

The following are the conclusions reached as a result of the findings of this study:

1. Superintendents under study did prove themselves to be leaders in the sense that they did develop plans that resulted in changing the way the organization functioned. However, not all superintendents provided a structure for wide participation in planning and decision-making.
2. All of the superintendents identified problems and sought information to solve those problems. However, not all superintendents demonstrated a wide range of approaches for exploring and analyzing alternative solutions. Only a few looked for innovative ways to improve the organization.
3. A limited number of superintendents employed a variety of strategies to effectively communicate. These superintendents networked within the



organization and outside the organization, modifying the plan as additional information was provided. However, not all superintendents demonstrated the ability to facilitate two-way communication; in some cases it was very limited.

4. The majority of the superintendents under study did demonstrate a commitment to a philosophy of leadership. They demonstrated their philosophy through their actions and their words. This philosophy was used as a basis for developing plans and communicating the plans. Some rewarded others for their contributions to the success of the project. Less than half of the superintendents used expert advice and research to aid in decision-making.

Therefore, a summary picture of the sample membership would depict a limited number of superintendents who employed the practices of transformational leadership. These superintendents were limited in their ability to discuss the practices cited in the literature and to engage in those practices in their organizational setting.

An examination of the limitations in the activities that the superintendents followed pointed to a dichotomy between those superintendents who demonstrate greater or lesser ability to discuss and engage in the practices in their organizational setting. This dichotomy was evident across the practices. Despite the fact that some of the superintendents demonstrated some limitations, over half of the superintendents demonstrated greater facility with overall practice engagement. Those superintendents were more in line with the practices that Kouzes and Posner ascribed to as being transformational in nature. These superintendents were more creative in developing plans, encouraged wider participation in the process, communicated effectively with all

constituents and valued the contributions of others. They supported programs that converted followers into leaders. These superintendents did not isolate themselves from the constituents. They emphasized collegial relationships. They rewarded risk-takers. From this perspective, then, these superintendents were more transformational in their practice than the others in their approach to educational leadership.

On the other hand, those superintendents who did not discuss nor engage in the activities that supported the practices identified as transformational presented themselves as more structured in their approach. While those superintendents did demonstrate a level of commitment, they did not encourage wide participation in planning or decision making. They did not establish clearly defined communication networks. They relied on a bureaucratic structure for decision-making and problem-solving. They did not rely on consultants nor did they reward risk-taking. Their leadership philosophy was not articulated or it reflected an authoritative approach. These superintendents did not articulate a district philosophy and they limited rewarding or acknowledging the accomplishments of the group or individuals. They did not plan programs that developed the leadership skills of the participants.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Along with the conclusions and implications of this study, several questions arose which suggested topics for further investigation.

1. Conduct this study with a different group of superintendents whose districts differ from the ones that engaged in the current study to discover their familiarity with current research and to determine their level of engagement

in the identified practices.

2. The interview technique employed in the present study could be expanded to include responses from school board members, community members, administrators, faculty and staff. Thus, the data source could be expanded to provide for different perspectives on the superintendents' leadership practices.
3. It was not the intent of this study to evaluate the changes that occurred as a result of the engagement of activities by the superintendents, a follow-up study could be conducted to evaluate the results of the plan and the impact on educational improvement.

Such studies would deepen understanding of the superintendent's engagement of specific practices that would contribute to their leadership effectiveness as they face leadership challenges.

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A  
Cover Letter**

**Roberta J. Avery**  
5461 N. East River Road, Apt. #1401  
Chicago, Illinois 60656

April 13, 1994

Dear Sir,

I am a graduate student at Loyola University of Chicago working on my Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Study. The research for my dissertation involves an investigation of the background and training of effective superintendents. In order to obtain the information I need, I am interviewing selected superintendents in the state of Illinois. You are a superintendent with the kind of qualities and attributes I am interested in investigating.

The project requires a personal interview and the questions which will be used are enclosed for your consideration. As is customary in all scientific research, your responses will remain confidential and anonymous. I will be looking for commonalities between you and your peers and then the collated group characteristics will be analyzed. I believe that studying positive instances of dynamic leadership will uncover significant components and assist in the development of leadership training programs.

It is my hope that you will be able to participate in this project. A complete report on the results of this project will be given to you as a way of showing my appreciation.

I will contact you within a short period of time following receipt of this letter to answer any questions you may have about the project.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated. I hope you will see this activity as an opportunity to contribute to the increasing data on effective leadership. Education can only move forward by learning from past experiences and it is your experience and skills which I hope to collect and analyze.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. My daytime telephone number is (708) 671-1922.

Sincerely,

Roberta J. Avery

aa  
(suptltr)

Enclosure

## **Appendix B**

### **Personal Best Questionnaire**

#### **A. RENEWAL**

1. What was the greatest challenge facing you when you took this position? How did you identify the challenge? What did you envision you would accomplish?
2. Do you consider this challenge your greatest accomplishment? If so, what role did you play?
3. What were the results of the project, both qualitative and quantitative?
4. Why did you want to do this project? What made you believe that you could do it?
5. What strategies did you use to challenge the status quo? What changes occurred due to your intervention? What innovative things did you do? What risks did you take?
6. How did you feel at the beginning of the project? How did you feel after you initiated this project?

#### **B. SHARING**

1. What strategies did you use to build a sense of enthusiasm and excitement for this project?
2. Did you use symbols or slogans to describe your vision?
3. What strategies did you use to sell others on the project?
4. What strategies did you use to involve others in the planning and decision making?

#### **C. INSPIRING**

1. What strategies did you use to build collegial teams? What methods did you use to foster cooperation and collaboration?
2. What strategies did you use to build trust and respect among those who worked on the project?
3. What strategies did you use to help team members focus on the goals and objectives?

**D. MODELING**

1. What were the values that you believed should guide everyone's actions? What were the standards to which everyone was accountable?
2. What strategies did you employ to show others, by your own example, that you were serious about the values and standards? How did you lead by example?
3. What structures and systems did you use to plan, organize or control the project?
4. What dynamic or unusual actions did you take to get the attention of the group?

**E. ENCOURAGING**

1. Did you celebrate accomplishments? Did you set milestones and celebrate their achievement?
2. What festive events were planned? What percentage of the group participated?
3. How did you recognize individual contributions? Did you use incentive systems, recognition programs? Were there public displays?
4. How did you communicate to the rest of the organization the accomplishments of the group?

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**Appendix C**  
**Letter of Request**

ROBERTA J. AVERY  
5461 N. East River Road, Apt. 1410  
Chicago, Illinois 60656  
FAX: (708) 671-1972  
H (312) 380-4057 W (708) 671-1922

November 16, 1993

Barry Posner, Professor of Management  
Director of Graduate Education  
Leavey School of Business & Administration  
Santa Clara University  
Kenna Hall, Room 225  
Santa Clara, California 95050

Dear Dr. Posner:

I am a graduate student at Loyola University of Chicago working on my Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Study. The research for my dissertation involves an investigation of the background of 15 effective superintendents in DuPage County in the State of Illinois.

The project requires a personal interview; the instrument I plan on using is the Personal Best Questionnaire, Appendix A on pages 303-308 in your book, The Leadership Challenge. I am requesting that you give me permission to duplicate 15 sets of the questions for use in the interview process.

As is customary, the individual responses will remain confidential. I will be looking for commonalities in the responses and then the collated group responses will be analyzed. A complete report on the results of this project will be given to you as a way of showing my appreciation.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Roberta J. Avery



**Appendix D**  
**Letter of Acknowledgement**

**KOUZES POSNER INTERNATIONAL**  
15419 Banyan Lane  
Monte Sereno, California 95030  
Phone/FAX: (408) 354-9170

November 23, 1993

Roberta J. Avery  
5461 N. East River Road, Apt 1410  
Chicago, Illinois 60656

Dear Roberta:

Thank you for your fascimile of November 16, 1993 requesting permission to use the Personal Best Questionnaire in your doctoral dissertation examining the leadership background of effective superintendents. We are willing to cooperate with this endeavor, as you outlined, with the following understandings:

- (1) That the Personal Best Questionnaire is used only for research purposes and is not sold or used in conjunction with any compensated management development activities;
- (2) That copyright of the Personal Best Questionnaire is retained by Kouzes Posner International;
- (3) That the following copyright statement be included on any and all written copies of the Personal Best Questionnaire: "Copyright 1993 Kouzes Posner International, Inc. Used with permission."; and,
- (4) That we receive a complete copy of your dissertation and all papers, reports, articles, and the like, which make use of data obtained using the Personal Best Questionnaire.

If the terms outlined above are acceptable, would you please so indicate by signing one (1) copy of this letter and returning it in the enclosed self-addressed return envelope. Best wishes for every success with your research project. If we can be of any further assistance, please let us know.

Cordially,

  
Barry Z. Posner, Ph.D.  
Managing Partner

I understand and agree to abide by these conditions:

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Roberta J. Avery*      *Nov 29, 1993*

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## VITA

The author, Roberta Angelotti Avery, is the daughter of Laurence and Jean (Oligeri) Angelotti. She was born on February 12, 1947 in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Ms. Avery graduated from Northern Illinois University in May, 1980 with a Bachelors of Science Degree in Education.

In September of 1984 Ms. Avery entered the Master's Program in Educational Administration at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois. She received her M.S.E. Degree in May of 1986.

Ms. Avery has served as an educator in the State of Illinois for the past 14 years. During the last three years, Ms. Avery has been engaged in study at Loyola University of Chicago in the Ph.D. Program in Educational Leadership and Policy Study.

## APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Roberta Jean Avery has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. L. Arthur Safer, Director  
Associate Dean, School of Education  
Loyola Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
Loyola University of Chicago

Dr. Philip L. Carlin  
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
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Dr. Melvin P. Heller  
Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
Loyola University of Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

*April 13, 1994*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*L. Arthur Safer*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director's Signature