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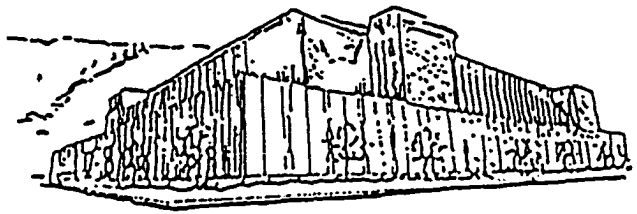
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The Perception of Followers

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Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

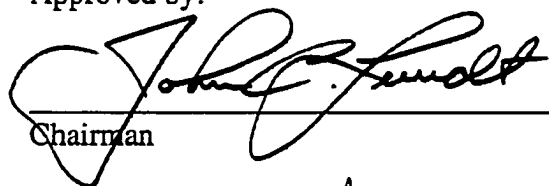
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The University of Montana

1999

Approved by:


Chairman


Dean, Graduate School

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The Perception of Followers

Chairman: John C. Lundt, Ed.D.



This qualitative inquiry articulated a grounded theory of leadership by recognizing the perception of followers. A multi-site sample was purposefully selected and included 12 subjects from organizations in education, business, and government. Subjects represented mid-level managers and individuals that report to them. Data were collected during one-on-one semi-structured interviews and analyzed with analytic induction. The inductive analyses included three separate coding procedures.

The three coding procedures used in this study were (a) open coding, (b) axial coding, and (c) selective coding. The first procedure, open coding, broke data into discrete parts and examined those parts for relationships. The open coding process revealed the categories: "motivation," "involvement," "commitment," "independent/critical thinking," "effectiveness," and "relationships within the organization." These categories were analyzed at a more micro level with axial coding procedures. During axial coding, data were de-contextualized into segments and analyzed. The de-contextualized data were then re-contextualized. As the axial coding process concluded, data segments were examined at a new level of specificity and revealed what was originally not evident. Building upon the microanalysis of the axial coding process, data were then examined in a more macro approach during the selective coding process. This final stage of analysis included the application of selective coding on the re-contextualized data. This macro analysis of data revealed a core category, which is related to the other categories. This core category, labeled "The Perception of Followers" is described through a narrative report. The narrative report formed the basis of this study's findings and recognized the interrelationships between all categories.

The first of three major findings from this study concluded that followers perceive themselves as leaders and display behaviors normally attributed to leaders. The second finding recognized that individuals' involvement is driven by their need to feel ownership, and ownership is equated with the congruence of personal values and organizational goals. This study concluded by postulating a new construct of leadership where there are no "followers" but only "leaders" and offered a definition of leadership that recognized the importance of evolving relationships to achieve mutual purposes.

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The undertaking of this research and the journey that followed could not have resulted in this finished product without the contributions and sacrifices of many individuals. The following individuals have influenced me in ways that they will never know. To them I offer my heartfelt gratitude and indebtedness.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Historically, the success of an organization has been attributed to leaders (DeBruyn, 1976; Kelley, 1992; Nahavandi, 1997; Pinchot, 1996; Porter & Frank, 1997; Sergiovanni, 1995; Smith, 1996; Yukl, 1998). Scholars in the latter years of the twentieth century began to identify the integral roles followers play in an organization's ability to succeed or fail. According to some, followers, not leaders, are the centers of an organization's success (Smith, 1996). Leadership scholars in the last decade of the twentieth century recognized that focusing their leadership studies on the leader did not reveal the entire picture of leadership (Buhler, 1993; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Rost, 1993). Followers complete the leadership picture and comprise an enlightening component of the organizational dynamic.

Evidence supports the notion that changing leaders does not have a strong effect on organizational performance and that this lack of leadership impact draws attention to the importance of the follower (Nahavandi, 1997). Shifting the focus of leadership studies from the leader to the follower and the interactive relationship between the two has helped to amplify our understanding of followers. An overwhelming number of scholars have agreed that leaders and followers exist within a relationship (Bennis, 1993, 1994, 1998; Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; Cooper, Higgott, & Nossal, 1991; DePree, 1989, 1997; Dwyer, 1994; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Heifetz, 1994; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995; Wheatley, 1994; Yukl, 1998). These 19 scholars have called for the role of the follower to be brought to the forefront of leadership discussions. Leadership scholars, such as Chaleff (1995), Heifetz (1994), Kouzes and Posner (1993), and Lipman-Blumen (1996), not only

recognized this relationship but have contended that leaders, followers, and their relationships should not be examined in isolation. Leadership studies that examine leaders, followers, and their relationships in isolation have provided an incomplete view of leadership.

Statement of the Problem

Leadership studies in the twentieth century have examined an incomplete view of leadership by either ignoring the role of followers or failing to recognize their important contributions. New leaders are routinely brought into organizations because of perceived problems with the previous leader, in the hopes that a new leader is the answer to existing problems (Heifetz, 1994). Yet changing leaders is costly for the organization and does not always solve the perceived problems. As Heifetz noted: "Changing the status quo will always require more than simply changing the person of the authority figure" (p. 238). The organizational practice of changing leaders may be ill advised, especially when considering that the success or failure of an organization may have more to do with the followers than the leaders (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Chaleff, 1995).

Attempts at mitigating the negative impacts of a leader leaving an organization have heretofore focused upon the leaders themselves, with little examination of the followers. That is, research to date has provided potential leaders with profiles of effectiveness devoid of context; similarly, studies focused on leadership have not attempted to discover the perception of followers in the leadership construct.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop a grounded theory of leadership that recognized the perception of followers. Through a qualitative analysis of the perceptions of followers, this study sought to offer a unique perspective on leadership by shifting the focus of the research from the leader to the follower. Existing leadership studies have

identified numerous traits and behaviors that leaders exhibit in various situations. These studies have attributed the organization's success or failure to the traits and/or behaviors of the leader. If followers possess the power and influence on organizations that recent leadership scholars have posited (Bell, 1975; Burns, 1978; DePree, 1989; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Rost, 1993; Starratt, 1995; Yukl, 1998), then the conclusions of past leadership studies may be flawed. The success and/or failure of an organization may not be attributed to the leader but to the followers. This grounded theory of follower perception was developed by collecting data to answer this study's research questions.

Research Questions

Qualitative studies may utilize research questions in the form of a grand tour question followed by sub-questions (Creswell, 1994). Creswell (1994) further suggested "that a researcher ask one or two grand tour questions followed by no more than five to seven sub-questions" (p. 70). This study was guided by the following two grand tour questions:

1. How are followers perceived?
2. What role do followers believe they play in an organization's success?

These two grand tour questions were supported by the following six sub-questions:

1. What motivating factors do individuals experience in their roles as followers?
2. How involved are followers in the pursuit of organizational goals?
3. How committed are the followers to the organization?
4. What types of independent and critical thinking strategies do followers report utilizing?
5. How do followers perceive their overall effectiveness?
6. What types of relationships are followers engaged in within the organization?

These questions provided direction during the study and aided in the development of a grounded theory as to the perception of followers and their perceived role in an organization's success. A research question rationale is provided in Chapter Three, Methodology. The research questions mentioned above involved several terms that were defined for the context of this study.

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study and analysis of its foundational literature, the following terms are defined:

Action/Interaction

According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), action/interaction are "strategies devised to manage, handle, carry out, respond to a phenomenon under a specific set of perceived conditions" (p. 97).

Authority

Nahavandi (1997) described authority as power that is vested in a particular position. Joseph Rost (1993) noted that authority is an uni-directional process from the leader to a follower and that it can be coercive or noncoercive.

Axial Coding

Axial coding, as defined by Strauss and Corbin (1990), is: "A set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between categories" (p. 96).

Causal Condition

Using the definition described by Strauss and Corbin (1990), causal conditions are "events, incidents, happenings that lead to the occurrence or development of a phenomenon" (p. 97).

Category

Category, as used in this study, refers to a classification of concepts. It is used in reference to qualitative analysis. Strauss and Corbin (1990) noted: "This classification is discovered when concepts are compared one against another and appear to pertain to a similar phenomenon. Thus the concepts are grouped together under a higher order, more abstract concept called a category" (p. 61).

Coding

As stated by Strauss and Corbin (1990), coding is "the process of analyzing data" (p. 61).

Core Category

For the purpose of this study, core category is defined using the definition put forth by Strauss and Corbin (1990): "The central phenomenon around which all the other categories are integrated" (p. 116).

Context

Context is the specific set of properties that pertain to a phenomenon. (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking, as articulated by Ennis (1962), is a special domain of creative human thinking that is reflective and reasonable thinking which people use to determine their next course of action. Ennis (1985, as cited in VanTassel-Baska et al., 1988) further delineated his model of critical thinking into three types of thinking skills: (a) defining and clarifying, (b) judging information, and (c) inferring to solve problems and draw reasonable conclusions.

Dimensional Range

In qualitative analysis, a dimensional range is defined as the range of properties along a continuum.

Ethical Standard

For the purpose of this study, ethical considerations pertained to those situations involving a follower's decision. For a decision to meet an ethical standard, those making the decision must be free from reprisal (Greenleaf, 1977; Rost, 1993).

Follower

The leadership literature listed numerous descriptors for those not acting in an official position of leader. The literature also recognized that leaders may also follow. For the purpose of this study, the term "follower" is used for anyone not acting in a position of "leader" and responding to organizational actions. Essential to this definition of follower is the concept that followers are active rather than passive (Rost, 1993).

Gatekeepers

For the purpose of this study, gatekeepers refer to those individuals whose approval must be obtained in order to conduct research at the specific location (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 1994).

Grounded Theory

For the purpose of this study, Strauss and Corbin's (1990) definition of grounded theory is used. Strauss and Corbin wrote: "The grounded theory approach is a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon" (p. 24).

Influence

Leadership scholars have defined influence as the process of using persuasion to have an impact on other people in a relationship (Bell, 1975). Influencing actions cannot

involve coercion, and the actions are multi-directional (Buhler, 1993; Rost, 1993; Yukl, 1998).

Intervening Conditions

According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), intervening conditions are "the structural conditions bearing on action/interaction strategies that pertain to a phenomenon" (p. 96).

Leader

There is a plethora of definitions for leader in the literature. For the purpose of this study, a leader is someone who assumes the responsibility for focusing all efforts, including the efforts of others, toward the achievement of mutual purposes. This is a general definition of a leader, but one that allows for the inclusion of followers who choose to lead.

Leadership

The designation "leader" has numerous definitions; the same is true for definitions of leadership. For the purpose of this study, the operative definition of leadership is the definition presented by Joseph Rost (1993): "Leadership is an influence relationship between leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 102).

Management

Some leadership scholars confused the definitions of leadership and management (Rost, 1993). This study uses the terms independently of each other. For the purpose of this study, management is defined as an authority relationship between at least one manager and one subordinate (Rost, 1993, p. 145).

Mutual Purposes

Joseph Rost (1993) described mutual purposes as reflecting what leaders and followers have to come to understand from their numerous interactions. The purposes must be consciously conceived and not come from coercion (Rost, 1993).

Open Coding

For the purpose of this study, open coding is defined using Strauss and Corbin's (1990) definition: "Open coding is the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data" (p. 61).

Organizational Success

Organizational success has been articulated with numerous definitions. Some of these definitions have referred to summative evaluation, whereas others referred to ongoing observable progress. For the purpose of this study, organizational success is defined as progress toward agreed upon goals.

Phenomenon

This study uses the definition of phenomenon as previously put forth by Strauss and Corbin (1990), who defined phenomenon as "the central idea, event, happening, incident about which a set of actions or interactions are directed at managing, handling, or to which the set of actions is related" (p. 96).

Power

Power has been referred to as the ability of one person to influence another (French and Raven, 1968). Power relationships are bi-directional as both followers and leaders can employ power within the leadership dynamic (Chaleff, 1995; Heifetz, 1994; Rost, 1993).

Property

As defined in this study and for the purposes of qualitative analysis, "property" refers to the attributes or characteristics pertaining to a category (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Selective Coding

Strauss and Corbin (1990) defined selective coding as "the process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development" (p. 116).

Semi-structured Interviews

For the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews are defined using Merton, Fiske, & Kendall's (1956) postulation that interviews be relatively open-ended, but focused around a specific topic and guided by some general questions. This study's semi-structured interviews are guided by grand tour questions followed by sub-questions.

Subordinate

The definition of subordinate is the definition presented by Joseph Rost (1993) who defined subordinates as individuals who report to a manager and are contractually required to obey the manager. Subordinates are universally viewed as being passive, doing what is asked of them and little else (Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995). For the purpose of this study, a subordinate is different from a follower. Subordinates are passive regarding their involvement within an organization, whereas followers are active.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

Who the subjects were and how they were chosen is a delimitation of this study. The sample for this study was purposefully selected. As suggested by Bogdan and Biklen

(1992), subjects are purposefully selected because it is assumed that they will facilitate the expansion of the developing theory. Because purposeful sampling was utilized instead of randomly selecting a sample, a limitation exists in regard to the generalizability of findings from this study.

Creswell (1994) cautioned the user of qualitative research in the areas of generalizability and replication due to the uniqueness of the study within a specific context. This does not mean that findings from this study cannot be generalized. Eisner (1991) stated that users of research, who have chosen their samples by means other than by random selection, must assume the responsibility of determining whether these findings are appropriate to their situation. Any generalizations from this study should be regarded as tools with which to work from as they are shaped in context (Eisner, 1991).

The definitions mentioned above have been articulated in the context of this study. Other components, articulated in the context of this study, may be viewed as a potential limitations to the study. One such component is the use of semi-structured interviews. This study confined itself to semi-structured interviews of followers and leaders from selected organizations in education, private business, and government agencies. Research scholars have recognized limitations inherent when using interviews.

Interviews have several limitations because they offer data that has been filtered through the interviewee (Creswell, 1994). Semi-structured interviews are vulnerable to another limitation. The ability to understand how the subject would frame the topic is lost when using a semi-structured interview (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). This limitation is based upon the postulation that any question asked by the researcher frames the topic from the interviewer's perspective. To address these limitations, every attempt was made to allow the subjects to structure the topic within the constructs of the interview. The

delimitations and limitations discussed above should not detract from the significance of this study.

Significance of the Study

This research added important information to the existing body of organizational behavior and leadership theory by focusing directly upon the followers and their contributions to the leadership process. Understanding the role of followers allowed for a more comprehensive view of leadership (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Buhler, 1993). Barker (1998) noted: "If people were to hold a different view of leadership, they may act differently and allocate resources differently" (p. 5). A logical area in which to begin this examination was with the characteristics of followers.

A tremendous amount of organizational success depends upon the characteristics of followers (Chaleff, 1995). This postulation became more apparent in times of follower/employee empowerment wherein the roles of followers and leaders were changing (Yeomans, 1996). Organizations must pay attention to the nature, quality, and perspectives of their followers if they are to be successful (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996).

Within a given organization, identifying desired followership characteristics helped limit the negative follower behaviors which lead to loss of interest, tuning out, and follower dissatisfaction associated with poor performance (Lipman-Blumen, 1996). Therefore, effective follower characteristics must be cultivated and nurtured by leaders (Burns, 1978; Kelley, 1988). To better understand follower characteristics, the characteristics were viewed within the follower's context of the leadership dynamic.

Contextual components of leadership are important for leadership studies (Heifetz, 1994; Klenke, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1995; Slater, 1995). Findings from this study substantially augment the leadership research knowledge base. More importantly, these

findings serve to contextualize the followers' roles and relationships in organizational leadership. Contextualizing these roles highlight the followers' importance.

Finally, by focusing on followers, this investigation served to meet the challenge issued by James MacGregor Burns (1978) to determine which factors leaders and followers have in common as well as what differentiates them. A significant number of studies have focused on leaders with very little attention being directed toward followers. To meet Burns' challenge, leadership scholars must redirect their preoccupation with leaders and begin to amplify followers. It is difficult to amplify an entity that is scarcely understood. Without fully understanding followers, the leadership construct is incomplete. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that this study articulated a grounded theory on the perception of followers.

CHAPTER TWO

Review Of The Literature

If you scroll through the subject catalogue at the Library of Congress you will find the category 'leadership' and hundreds of books on the subject. You will not find a category 'followership' and you will only find a handful of articles and a book or two on the subject, tucked away under the leadership rubric (Chaleff, 1995, p. xii).

Review of the Literature Introduction

The review of the literature for this study incorporated leadership literature that indirectly referred to followers as well as articles and books that specifically addressed followers and followership. Since there is no existing formal theory on followers, most of the information pertaining to followers was gleaned from literature focusing on leadership. Within the existing literature, three books concentrated on followers. Two of the books are written by Robert Kelley (1992, 1998) and one book by Ira Chaleff (1995). These scholarly works formed the basis for this literature review.

The strategy for this literature review employed a macro to micro analysis as suggested by Sternberg (1981). This review of the literature is organized with four main sections: (a) "General Issues Pertaining to Followers," (b) "The Role of Followers in Leadership Studies," (c) "Relationships Between Followers and Leaders," and (d) "Characteristics of Followers."

The first section of this literature review addresses who followers are and the need to identify the societal context in which they exist. This section begins with a discussion of non-leader descriptors, as it is important to identify who the followers are within an organization. Because followers can be male or female, a summary of gender-biased differences in leadership studies is included in this literature review. Although not a focus

of this study, cultural differences in the way followers are perceived were noted in the literature. These cultural differences were reported so readers recognize the importance of examining followers within their societal context. After the population that can be considered followers has been established and the societal context of the population articulated, the second section of this literature review looks at the gradual recognition of followers as a factor in leadership studies.

The second section of the literature review is "The Role of Followers in Leadership Studies." Leadership studies have addressed followers to varying degrees. The role of the follower gained more attention from scholars as leadership studies continued through the twentieth century. In these studies, followers progressed from being viewed as passive recipients of the directions from leaders to active, contributing members within a leadership relationship. These leadership studies are reviewed in this study, but only as to their portrayal of the follower's role.

Scholars, who included the role of the follower in their leadership studies, have agreed that there is a relationship between the leader and the follower. The third section in this review, "Relationships Between Followers and Leaders," addresses these various relationships as identified in the literature. The review of literature in this section begins by recognizing that these relationships are based upon authority, power, and influence. It has also been noted that these relationships are not without ethical considerations. Influence allows for the reciprocity of the follower-leader dynamic. This dynamic highlights the importance of followers, which is addressed as a subsection within this section of the Review of the Literature. The subsection, "Importance of Followers" leads into the final two subsections. These two subsections, "Knowing When to Follow" and "Leading Through Following," complete the literature review section labeled "Relationships Between Followers and Leaders."

The concluding section of the literature review, "Characteristics of Followers," synthesizes the previous review sections into six dimensions of follower characteristics that form the basis for this study's research questions. These follower dimensions are (a) "motivation," (b) "involvement," (c) "commitment," (d) "independent-critical thinking," (e) "effectiveness," and (f) "relationships within the organization." The Review of the Literature for this study concludes with a summary of the literature review.

Section 1: General Issues Pertaining to Followers

This section discusses three general issues that pertain to followers (a) non-leader descriptors, (b) gender issues and following, and (c) cultural views of followers. Although these issues are not the focus of this study, they warrant recognition. The first issue is descriptions of non-leaders.

Non-leader Descriptors

In the process of this review, 11 different terms were found for individuals who were not acting as leaders. Follower was by far the most widely used term in the literature for these individuals. The disparity of terminology regarding those not acting as leaders may be attributed to historical perceptions.

The terms "leader" and "follower" have taken their current meanings in the twentieth century (Chaleff, 1995). Chaleff contended that the term "leader" had its origins in the "great man" studies, and the term "follower" evolved from the idea of the "survival of the fittest." Both terms have their roots in Social Darwinism. The winners are seen as leaders and everyone else is viewed as followers. Prior to the middle of the twentieth century, leaders were viewed as individuals who were managers and perceived as active; whereas followers were considered subordinates who were submissive and passive (Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995). This stereotyping of leader and follower has not been beneficial to either group (Kelley, 1992). These early conceptions about non-leaders

created a discomfort with the term and image associated with followers (Chaleff, 1995; Heifetz, 1994; Smith, 1996). This existing discomfort with the term follower may be responsible for the use of other terms.

A reoccurring complaint to the term follower has to do with its condescending history (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Rost, 1993; Smith, 1996). Chaleff (1995) believed that the term follower "conjures up images of docility, conformity, weakness, and failure to excel" (p. 3). Following suffers from a serious image problem in this country. Douglas Smith (1996) summarized this image problem:

Few children aspire to grow up to become followers. Following is not included in selection criteria for colleges, professional schools, scholarships, or awards. In fact, in school, books and newspapers, in the movies, and on television, following is often condemned as a mindless denial of basic humanity. We are bluntly warned against the horror and destitution of following (p. 202-203).

Kelley (1992) took issue with these views and believed that we need strong, exemplary followers. He added that this cannot happen until "we legitimate and appreciate the inherent value and dignity in following" (p. 47). Scholars continue to debate the connotations associated with the term follower.

Different adjectives that describe individuals not acting as leaders appear to make a general distinction between individuals who are passive and those who are active. Even with this distinction, scholars have held opposing views of the term "follower." Several leadership scholars described followers as demonstrating active, critical thinking (Kelley, 1988, 1992, 1998; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992, 1995; Yukl, 1998). Contrary to these scholars, Heifetz (1994) believed that the term follower "connotes somewhat mindless, lemming-like behavior, fails to suggest how it feels and what it means to be mobilized to do adaptive work" (p. 326). The term "subordinate" does not suffer from the confusion afforded to the term "follower." Subordinates are universally viewed as being passive,

doing what is asked of them and little else (Rost, 1993; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Sergiovanni, 1995).

In conclusion, there is no agreement among leadership scholars as to the one best term for those who are not acting as a "leader." For the purposes of this study, the term "follower" is used for anyone not acting in a position of "leader" and are responding to organizational actions. It should also be noted that followers could be male or female.

Gender Issues and Following

Writers in the field of followership have not specifically addressed gender issues pertaining to following. Chaleff (1995) recognized that gender issues tend to complicate leader-follower relationships and elected to not address them in his work. Klenke (1996) regarded the empirical evidence of female-male differences in leadership behaviors as fragile at best. Building upon Klenke's findings, Gary Yukl (1998) summarized the research on gender-based differences in leadership studies and found them to be inconclusive. Leadership scholars have posited that the inconclusiveness of these findings are due to flaws in the research, disagreements and difficulty regarding the interpretation of the research, contamination from external variables, failure to investigate explanations and report the magnitude for any differences that are found (Bass; 1990; Dobbins & Platz, 1986; as cited in Yukl, 1998).

The inconclusiveness of gender-based differences in leadership studies has highlighted the importance of gender being addressed in this study. Gender is a contextual component over which followers have no control. The manner in which the existing culture views followers is also a contextual component outside of the follower's control.

Cultural Views of Followers

The second general issue pertaining to followers is the cultural view of those who are not "leaders." "Followers" are not viewed the same in countries throughout the world. These differences are noted in this review of literature because it is important to recognize the cultural context when describing followers. This lack of agreement as to how followers are perceived even exists within the United States.

Scholars within this country have disagreed concerning the cultural perception of followers. Some scholars believed that Western culture does not look up to following as a desirable outcome; we are not raised to be "followers," but rather raised to be "leaders" (Smith, 1996; West, personal communication, November 18, 1996). There are other writers who believed that the spirit of democracy highlights the role of the follower. Followers are recognized as determining whether political leaders maintain their position (Kelley, 1992).

Contrary to the prevailing negative perception toward followers in this country, other areas of the world, such as Asia, nurture skills that foster following (West, personal communication, November 18, 1996). Followership has been noted as a desired role in Germany and Japan, bringing personal satisfaction and social recognition (Kelley, 1992). Regardless of the cultural view toward the role of following, it is important that this cultural view is noted by leaders and followers if they are to be successful within their existing culture.

Section 2: The Role of Followers in Leadership Studies

The second general category of this review of the literature is the role of followers in leadership studies. Leadership studies from the twentieth century have referred to followers in varying degrees. The role of the follower in these studies progressed from a passive recipient of the leader's wishes to an active participant in the follower-leader

relationship (Chaleff, 1995; Bennis, 1998; Burns, 1978; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992). James MacGregor Burns (1978) referred to this relationship as "the interwoven texture of leadership and followership" (p. 4). Most twentieth century leadership research has emphasized the importance of the leader rather than the follower (Brown & Thornborrow, 1994; Wilkes, 1992; Yukl, 1998). In the last 25 years of this century, leadership studies have recognized the importance of followers (Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1985, 1988, 1992, 1998; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Rost, 1993; Wilkes, 1992; Yukl, 1998).

Leadership studies were examined in this review only as they pertain to their perceived role of the follower. The trait era began this examination, as it was the predominant theory at the end of the nineteenth century.

The Trait Era

During the late nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century, leadership studies were dominated by the belief that leaders possessed innate traits that were not possessed by other people (Nahavandi, 1997; Yukl, 1998). Hollander (1964) noted: "In the most traditional study of leadership [trait approach], unique characteristics of "leaders" were sought" (p. 4). The research of the trait era focused on the leader (Yukl, 1998). Data were collected on leaders and followers, but the purpose of the data collection was to determine what characteristic or traits distinguished "leaders" from "followers" (Nahavandi, 1997). The trait era researchers viewed followers as behaving in accordance to the leader's directive behaviors (Short & Greer, 1997). Bass (1985) criticized trait theory for the passive status and lack of recognition of followers. Trait theory gave way to researchers calling attention to the behaviors exhibited by leaders.

Behavior Approach

Behavior approaches to leadership theory continued to focus on the leader, but research in this area began to include the follower as a reporter and recipient of the leader's behavior (Nahavandi, 1997; Short & Greer, 1997). Studies on the behaviors of leaders began to focus on interaction of the leader and the follower (Rossow, 1990). According to Homans (1950), frequency of interaction was associated with an increase in sentiments of mutual liking. Interactions between leaders and followers were noted in the Ohio State Leadership Studies. According to Nahavandi (1997), the Ohio State Leadership Studies are among the best-known behavioral approaches to leadership. From the Ohio State Leadership Studies, approximately 2,000 leadership behaviors were identified. These behaviors were later synthesized and became the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). The LBDQ focused mostly on the behaviors of consideration and initiation of structure. Consideration factors encompassed people-oriented behaviors and initiation of structure focused on task-related behaviors. The identification of these behaviors by researchers called attention to the relationship between followers and leaders and the situations in which these behaviors occurred.

Situational Theories

Similar to the "great man" studies, situational theorists in the first half of the twentieth century explained leadership as an effect of a single set of forces overlooking the interactive effect of individual and situational factors (Stogdill, 1974). Situational theories in the second half of the twentieth century built upon the works of earlier scholars and began to recognize the follower-leader relationship, specifically the maturity level of followers (Slater, 1995). Studies pertaining to situational leadership have noted that leaders may alter their behavior in response to followers (Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995). Slater (1995) described leadership from the situational perspective as being

conceptualized as an interaction between the leader and those being led. These studies began to view the follower as more than a passive recipient of the leader's wishes. The attention given to followers through situational leadership theories diminished when emerging leadership theories, such as contingency theory, recognized other intervening factors within the leadership construct.

Contingency Theory

Followers are part of contingency theories, but only in a limited manner as contingency theory's main focus continues to be on the leader. Contingency theorists realize that situational factors such as the type of task and work group should be considered in leadership studies (Fielder, 1967). Short and Greer (1997) agreed with other leadership scholars and postulated that in contingency theory, leadership depends upon the following variables: (a) task specificity, (b) leader-member relations, (c) leader personality, and (d) group maturity. Leader-member relations are viewed as one of many components in contingency theories, and these social interactions are the focus of social exchange theory.

Social Exchange

Homans (1950) defined social exchange as "an exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between two persons" (p. 13). Building upon Homan's (1950) work, Hollander (1978) promoted a social exchange theory of leadership: "In social exchange terms, the leader is expected to live up to commitments and obligations to the group" (p. 9). This theory recognizes leadership as an interaction between the leader and those who follow. According to Hollander (1978), "Leadership is not just the job of the leader but also requires the cooperative efforts of others" (p. 1). Social exchange theory brought to light the interaction between leaders and followers.

The follower-leader relationship was viewed as an interaction in social exchange theory, and this interaction is the focus of leader-member exchange theory.

Leader-Member Exchange

Yukl (1998) wrote that the leader-member exchange theory describes how a leader and all followers develop exchange relationships as they influence each other and negotiate the subordinate's role in the organization. Yukl's postulation built upon the earlier works of Dansereau, Graen, and Haga (1975) and Graen and Cashman (1975). The leader-member exchange theory recognized that each relationship is different and that leaders establish a one-on-one relationship with each follower, even though each relationship varies in terms of quality (Nahavandi, 1997). Leader-member exchange theory realized the influence that followers and leaders exchange. The impact of this influence was examined in path-goal theory.

Path-Goal Theory

Path-goal theory draws attention to the rationale behind the influencing behaviors between followers and leaders. The original model was postulated by House (1971) and provided a theoretical framework for understanding leader-follower relations as well as acceptance of the leader. Yukl (1998) described path-goal theory of leadership as attempting "to explain how the behavior of a leader influences the satisfaction and performance of subordinates" (p. 265). Wilkes (1992), in her summary of path-goal theory, wrote that the leader's "behavior is acceptable to the extent to which subordinates see it as a source of satisfaction in that it clarifies paths or increases goal attainment" (p. 5). Path-goal theory recognized the active role, even if limited, that followers play in a leadership relationship. It also recognized that there is some reciprocity between leaders and followers. This reciprocity was foundational in transactional theories of leadership.

Transactional Leadership

Reciprocity is a critical component of transactional leadership. Transactional leadership theory recognized that leaders and followers exchange needs and services in order to accomplish their own goals (Burns, 1978; Sergiovanni, 1995). Followers are viewed as having a highly active role in transactional leadership. This theory of leadership postulated that the exchange between leaders and followers need not be initiated by the leader. The follower can be the driving force behind the transaction. Transactional leadership viewed followers as active participants in the leadership relationship. Followers are also viewed in an active role in charismatic leadership studies.

Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic theories have their roots in Weber's (1968) definition that charisma was based upon follower perceptions that the leader possessed exceptional qualities. According to Weber (1968), "It [charismatic authority] is based on an emotional form of communal relationship" (p. 243). Followers assume more than a passive role in a charismatic relationship. Yukl (1998) summarized charisma as "an attribution from the interactive process between leader and followers" (p. 319). According to House (1977):

A charismatic leader has profound and unusual effects on followers. The followers of a charismatic leader perceive that the leader's beliefs are correct, accept the leader without question, obey the leader willingly, feel affection toward the leader, are emotionally involved in the mission of the group or organization, believe that they can contribute to the success of the mission, and have high performance goals (p. 299).

Some scholars have viewed the role of the follower in a charismatic relationship as active but without influence. Sergiovanni (1992) projected the follower involved in a charismatic relationship as being manipulated and led to blind followership. In contrast to the dominant role of the leader in charismatic leadership, servant leadership emphasized the importance of following.

Servant Leadership

Greenleaf (1977) coined the term "servant leader" when he wrote that the servant leader made sure that the priority needs of others were met. Serving others had been viewed as a follower behavior instead of a leader behavior prior to Greenleaf's articulation of the servant leader. Servant leadership blurred the traditional roles of leader and follower, and by doing so, highlighted the importance of following.

Servant leadership did not diminish the role of the leader. Sergiovanni (1992) believed that a leader gains the legitimacy to lead by serving others. Kelley (1992) focused on the importance of following through servitude by referring to the writings of Aristotle and Hegel:

Hegel echoes Aristotle by requiring followership as a precondition of leadership. . . . According to Hegel, the best masters are those who have known servitude. The act of personally passing through followership sears the followership experience into the leader's psyche (p. 54) .

The important role followers play in the leadership dynamic came to its pinnacle in transformational leadership.

Transformational Leadership

The role of the follower in transformational leadership is an integrated component that assumes as much importance as the leader's role. Transformational leadership engaged the full person of the follower as leaders, as followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation (Burns, 1978). Sergiovanni (1995) described the transformational relationship as a pursuit of higher level goals that are common to both leader and follower.

Relationships are at the crux of transformational leadership. The vast majority of leadership studies that recognized the importance of followers also recognized the relationship between leaders and followers. The next section of this review examines what leadership scholars have written about leadership relationships. This section also

incorporates the importance of followers, the need for leaders to know when to follow, and concludes by summarizing the concept of leadership through following.

Section 3: Relationships Between Followers and Leaders

Throughout time, writers who concerned themselves with leadership have recognized that a relationship existed between a leader and those being led. Machiavelli (1514/1995) articulated the need for a leader to recognize this relationship. He challenged leaders to know how they were perceived by those being led, as well as the importance of satisfying followers and keeping them content. Early writings about leadership were speculative, with scientific research on leadership not beginning until the twentieth century (Yukl, 1998). Working from these early studies, leadership scholars concluded that leadership cannot exist without followers (Burns, 1978; DePree, 1989; Fagiano, 1994; Heifetz, 1994; Nahavandi, 1997; Sergiovanni, 1992).

Robert Kelley (1988) involved just about everyone in the follower-leader dynamic when he noted that people spent the majority of their time as followers. Other scholars articulated the follower-leader relationship and concluded that individuals experience leadership as both leaders and followers (Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; DePree, 1989; Hollander, 1978; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Smith, D., 1996; Smith, W., 1994; Yukl, 1998). The interplay of leaders and followers has been described by Chaleff (1995) as a dance where leaders and followers change partners and roles. The changing of roles between leaders and followers is evident in every society. According to Burns (1978):

In no society are their leaders without followers or followers without leaders. Moreover, leaders and followers exchange roles over time and in different political settings. Many persons are leaders and followers at the same time (p. 134).

Followers and leaders are the players within the leadership dynamic that scholars have begun to describe.

Leadership has been viewed by scholars, in the last 25 years of the twentieth century, as a relationship between followers and leaders (Bennis, 1994; Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; Cooper, Higgott, & Nossal, 1991; DePree, 1989, 1997; Dwyer, 1994; Heifetz, 1994; Hollander, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995; Wheatley, 1994; Yukl, 1998). This relationship is so important that James MacGregor Burns (1978) concluded that "for leadership to be real there must be the relationship between the leader and the follower" (p. 135). Rost (1993) built upon Burns' concept and believed that "the error is made when leadership resides in the leader(s), rather than being a relationship among leaders and followers" (p. 43). Kouzes and Posner (1993) believed that any discussion on leadership must attend to the dynamics of the reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers. Once the leadership relationship was recognized and accepted among scholars, examination of this relationship revealed its complexity.

Follower-leader relations are more complex than a one-on-one relationship. Chaleff (1995) called attention to this complexity by observing that leadership relationships involve several people and include interactions between followers and leaders as well as between followers. Individuals in an organization have a variety of roles and relationships within and without the organization, and these individuals are leaders in some relationships and followers in other relationships (Chaleff, 1995; Bennis, 1994; Burns, 1978; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992). Examining the complexity of the leadership dynamic allowed for the dissection and labeling of its components.

One such component of the follower-leader relationship is what some scholars have referred to as partnerships (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998). Kelley (1992) articulated the importance of

partnerships for organizations when he stipulated that competent people working together can achieve more than they could on their own. Partnerships have also been described as a relationship of moral, intellectual and emotional commitment (Burns 1978; Deluga, 1990; Nahavandi, 1997). Leadership scholars have also used other descriptors when referring to people working together within the leadership dynamic.

Common or mutual purposes have been recognized as an important component of a leadership relationship (Chaleff, 1995; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995). Chaleff (1995) stated that "followers and leaders both orbit around the purpose; followers do not orbit around the leader" (p. 11). Rost (1993) amplified the importance of mutual purposes in the follower-leader relationship and believed that the relationship will dissolve if the participants feel decisions do not reflect mutual purposes. Robert Starratt (1995) noted that mutual purposes can evolve into something more powerful than a partnership. According to Starratt (1995), mutual purposes can evolve into a covenant. Chaleff (1995) extended this conversation when he focused, not only on the relationship between followers and leaders, but on the quality of the relationship as well.

This quality is based upon open and honest feedback (Chaleff, 1995). Bennis (1993, 1998) articulated the importance of feedback by noting that "followers who tell the truth and leaders who listen to it, are an unbeatable combination" (p. 157). Scholars have asserted that mutual purposes, common purposes, and covenants can only be created through honest feedback in an atmosphere of trust.

Trust has been viewed as essential in relationships between followers and leaders (Bennis, 1994; Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; DeBruyn, 1976; DePree, 1997; Chaleff, 1995; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992). Chaleff (1995) identified trust and using that trust to speak honestly

as two essential elements of the follower-leader relationship. Trust and honesty provide a fertile environment for the interactions between followers and leaders.

Honesty is a building block for credibility among the participants of the follower-leader relationship. Kouzes and Posner (1993) wrote that credibility is determined by the followers. These authors go so far as to state that credibility is foundational for all relationships and is determined by the constituents. Kouzes and Posner's (1993) research recognized the importance of honesty as an attribute of credibility:

The dimension of honesty accounts for more of the variance in believability than all of the other factors combined. Being seen as someone who can be trusted, who has high integrity, and who is honest and truthful is essential (p. 24).

Sergiovanni (1995) highlighted the essentiality of credibility by asserting that "leadership flourishes when leaders and followers view each other as being credible" (p. 139). The credibility of both leaders and followers is determined by the context of their relationships.

Authority, Power, and Influence Relationships

Leaders and followers participate in their relationships by utilizing power, authority or influence, or a combination of them. Some leadership authors have used authority, power, and influence interchangeably (Nahavandi, 1997). Other leadership scholars have made the distinction among power, authority, and influence (Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Yukl, 1998). For the purpose of this study, authority, power, and influence are examined independently. Authority is examined first.

Authority. Most scholars writing about authority have based their postulations on the writings of Max Weber. Weber (1968) identified three types of pure power: "rational" (legal authority), "traditional," and "charismatic" (p. 215). Authority has been described by Rost (1993) as "a contractual (written, spoken, or implied) relationship wherein people accept superordinate or subordinate responsibilities in an organization" (p. 106).

Nahavandi (1997) described authority as the power vested in a particular position. Rost's and Nahavandi's definitions have described authority as a uni-directional process.

Authority is uni-directional, emanating from the leader to the follower (Rost, 1993).

Within this uni-directional process, Rost asserted that authoritative power can be coercive and non-coercive. Regardless of these assertions, authority is functional only as long as the follower accepts the leader's authority. Authority is given and can be taken away by followers as no one has power over another without that person's consent (Greenleaf, 1977; Heifetz, 1994; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Starratt, 1995). One way followers can reject the leader's authority is by exerting their own power.

Power. Power is concerned with the ability of one person to influence another (French & Raven, 1968). Seminal research regarding the sources of power were conducted by French and Raven (1968) when they identified five sources of power: (a) legitimate power, (b) reward power, (c) coercive power, (d) expert power, and (e) referent power (pp. 607-623). A component of power, according to Rost (1993), was that certain people control others through rewards and/or punishments. It is important to note that all parties within the leadership dynamic have power. According to Etzioni (1969): "Power differs according to the means employed to make the subjects comply" (p. 61). He identified three types of power: (a) "coercive" the application or threat of physical sanctions; (b) "remunerative" control over resources and rewards; and (c) "normative" manipulations of symbolic rewards. Parsons (1959) defined power as "an actor's ability to induce or influence another actor to carry out his directives or any norms he supports" (p. 121). For power to exist, there must be a relationship.

Power relationships are bi-directional; in other words, followers as well as leaders have power in the leadership relationship (Rost, 1993). Chaleff (1995) articulated the bi-directional nature of relationships that are based upon power:

As followers, our formal powers are unequal to the leader's, and we must learn to participate effectively in the relationship despite this. We may have far more power than we imagine, however, and too often fail to exercise the power we do have. It is critical for followers to connect with their power and learn how to use it (p. 16).

Followers can exert their power in a variety of ways (Heifetz, 1994). Leaders who fail to exert their power, create environments which are conducive for followers to exert the power they possess (Burns, 1978; Heifetz, 1994). George Counts (1932) observed "that the men and women who have affected the course of human events are those who have not hesitated to use the power that has come to them" (p. 26). When they do exert their power, followers may find that they usually have more power than they realized (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1985; Yukl, 1998).

Power of Followers. Machiavelli (1514/1995) recognized the importance and power of those being led when he wrote:

I conclude, therefore, that when a prince has the good will of the people he must not worry about conspiracies; but when the people are hostile and regard him with hatred he must go in fear of everything and everyone (p. 59).

Kelley (1992) used the democratization of Eastern Europe as an example of the power followers have when they organize their efforts, even if those efforts are contrary to the prevailing leaders: "The Berlin Wall fell not by any act of leadership, but by millions of East Germans joining together to say they wouldn't take it anymore" (p. 30). Followers can exert their power through positive means or through subversive actions.

There is evidence of followers rejecting one leader after another through a variety of actions that include a failure to cooperate, making deliberate errors to embarrass the leader, threatening to quit, and even exercising group tyranny (Heifetz, 1994; Kelley, 1985; Lipman-Blumen, 1996). Followers can exert their power by ultimately accepting or rejecting the leader and/or the leader's commands (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1985; Sanford,

1950). Realizing the power that followers possess, companies have responded to followers rejecting a leader by replacing that leader instead of an invaluable senior professional (Heifetz, 1994; Kelley, 1985). This type of decision is an example of a company's belief that the right leader would solve its problems (Heifetz, 1994). Companies are responding to followers who exercise their power.

Followers exercise their power through the choices they make. Employers have recognized that their employees have choices (Campbell, 1998, as cited in Stafford, 1998; Rieber, 1999, as cited in Murr, 1999). Heifetz (1994) highlighted the importance of each follower's actions to the organization: "In a hall of five thousand, one person in the back of the second balcony talking to a neighbor or getting up to leave has all too real an impact" (p. 6). If businesses are to survive for the long term, they must attract and retain the followers they need for today and the future (Kelley, 1985). A leader's intelligence, described by Machiavelli (1514/1995), can be based on the quality of those with whom he surrounds himself. Followers are important because of the value they add to an organization (Sergiovanni, 1992). Chaleff (1995) articulated this importance by stating that "brilliant support contributes as much to an organization's ability to fulfill its purpose as does leadership" (pp. 52-53). Organizations have begun to recognize the importance of followers.

Recognition of the importance of followers can be evidenced by the increase of organizations flattening their hierarchy with empowered employees who exercise initiative (Boccialetti, 1995; Chaleff, 1995). Work environments reflecting employee empowerment have increased their emphasis on teams, collaboration, employee ownership and grass root movements (Kelley, 1992). Followers have broadened their power as organizations have given them responsibility and authority that traditionally have been reserved for management positions (Helgesen 1996; Yukl, 1998). Leaders have

weaknesses as well as strengths, and followers can use their power to determine whether the leader's strengths are fully utilized and the weaknesses overcome (Yukl, 1998).

Followers have power, but more importantly, they have the ability to influence.

Influence. Influence has been described by Bell (1975) as the process of using persuasion to have an impact on other people in a relationship. Rost (1993) believed that influence does not include coercion. Not being able to use coercive measures is what differentiates influence from authority and power. As Rost noted: "Coercion is antithetical to influence relationships. People in influence relationships can refuse to behave in prescribed ways and still remain on good terms with other people in the relationship" (p. 106). Influence is so critical in the leadership dynamic that Yukl (1998) described it as the essence of leadership. Influence relationships are also multi-directional.

Early twentieth century leadership studies emphasized a uni-directional power process from the leader to those who followed. According to Hollander (1978): "It [leadership] involves someone who exerts influence, and those who are influenced. However, influence can flow both ways" (p. 4). Rost (1993) built upon these earlier postulations and postulated that influence is not only uni-directional but multi-directional. Leaders have influenced followers, but followers have also influenced leaders (Buhler, 1993; Yukl, 1998). Because influence is multi-directional, followers have also influenced other followers (Bettenhausen, 1991). The power of influence is available to everyone in the leadership dynamic. Max DePree (1989) articulated the importance of influence when he stated that, "everyone has the right and the duty to influence decision making and to understand its results" (p. 24). If a follower possesses power through influence, then the influential power from a group of followers can not be overlooked.

Followers as a group have substantial influence, and Kelley (1992) noted that "there are times when the followers may exert more influence than leaders, times when they seize the initiative, and times when their purposes drive the relationship" (p. 112). Leaders and followers have utilized their authority, power, or influence, but their actions have not been without ethical considerations.

Ethical Considerations. The relationship between follower and leader has not been without ethical considerations (Chaleff, 1995; Hollander, 1995; Kelley, 1992, 1998; Rost, 1993; Weil & Arbaeher, 1997). Kelley (1992) noted that individuals routinely face difficult ethical situations as they are expected to follow directives regardless of their conscience. According to Kelley (1992), followers are encouraged to allow the leader or organization to make ethical decisions and followers are especially vulnerable when asked to do what someone else has decided should be done. Kelley (1992) articulated this dilemma: "Much of our social structure reinforces the leader's final authority and the follower's duty to obey" (p. 169). Weil and Arzbaeher (1997) also recognized the possibility of exploiting followers when they wrote: "disparities of power in relationships and transactions pose risks of exploitation or abuse of those with little or no power and frequently precipitate questions about fair treatment" (p. 76). Kelley (1992) postulated that followers tend to do what they have been told rather than what they believe should be done. Hollander (1995) believed that the ultimate success of leaders and followers depends upon the ethical values of the relationship.

For the leadership relationship to be ethical, those involved in the relationship must be free to choose their decisions without threat of reprisal (Greenleaf, 1977; Rost, 1993). Rost (1993) regarded free and fair agreement as ethical standards:

Leadership by free and fair agreement thus becomes the ethical standard for the leadership process. . . . If there is little or no room for free and fair agreement, the threats and intimidations are unethical. If there is

considerable room for free and fair agreement, the threats and intimidations are ethical (p. 161-162).

To be involved in a relationship, individuals do not have to sacrifice their integrity (Rost, 1993). Individuals have choices, and they are ultimately responsible for their actions.

Rost (1993) incorporated the follower's responsibility into the follower-leader relationship. He contended that "personal responsibility for making ethical judgments is essential to any ethical framework of leadership content" (Rost, 1993, p. 173). Chaleff (1995) believed that followers must consider refusing to participate in decisions that are morally unacceptable. Followers who chose their own actions, based upon ethical considerations, power, and influence, became important contributors to the organization.

Importance of Followers

Warren Bennis (1994) is convinced that the importance of effective followers is under-appreciated. Other leadership scholars, such as Smith (1994) and Lipman-Blumen (1996), noted that attention appears to be focused on the leader when in fact we should be examining the role of followers in the leadership relationship. Kelley (1998) agreed that there is a problem with the current preoccupation with leaders. He articulated this problem: "So followership dominates our lives and organizations, but not our thinking, because our preoccupation with leaders keeps us from considering the nature and the importance of the follower" (p. 143). Focusing on the leader promoted the tendency to give credit to the leader and obscures the significant contribution of followers (Yukl, 1998). Therefore, focusing solely on the leader diminishes the importance of followers.

As the twentieth century draws to a close, increasing numbers of leadership scholars are recognizing the importance of following. Some scholars believed that followers are just as important as leaders and at times, more important (Kelley, 1992; Sanford, 1950). The importance of followers has been highlighted by scholars who believed that a leader or organization can be no better than their followers (Bennis, 1994;

Chaleff, 1995; DeBruyn, 1976; DePree, 1989, 1997; Mariotti, 1996). Individuals who accepted and excelled at their role as a follower are of true value to the organization (Buhler, 1993; Chaleff, 1995; DePree, 1997).

Followers are important to an organization and to the leader. Without followership, there can be no leadership or the accomplishments attributed to leaders (Fagiano, 1994; Nahavandi, 1997; Sergiovanni, 1992). Sergiovanni (1992) contributed to this theme by recognizing that followership is a basic component to leadership. Rost (1993) disagreed that followership is a basic component to leadership. He contended that followers do not participate in followership, they participate in leadership. In stating this disagreement, Rost highlighted the importance of the follower. Continuing with the importance of followers, DeBruyn (1976) noted that "no leader can be any better than the potential of those being led" (p. 31-32). Summarizing the importance of followers, Mariotti (1996) regarded a great team of followers as a leader's best asset. Followers must be active within the organization if they are going to call attention to their importance.

Kouzes and Posner (1993) viewed followers as active in their relationship with leaders: "They are more than just followers of someone else's vision and values. They are participants in creating them" (p. 7). Followers are also important as they shape the leader's experience of reality through the feedback they give to the leader (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1985; Sanford, 1950). Heifetz (1994) combined the importance of followers and the follower-leader relationship and concluded that:

Leadership cannot be exercised alone. The lone-warrior model of leadership is heroic suicide. Each of us has blind spots that require the vision of others. Each of us has passions that need to be contained by others (p. 268).

Within the leadership relationship, it is important for leaders and followers to know when to follow.

Knowing When to Follow

Leadership scholars recognized that individuals in an organization will have roles as both followers and leaders (Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; DePree, 1989; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Smith, D., 1996; Smith, W., 1994; Yukl, 1998). Organizations have also recognized the duality of follower and leader roles. There has been evidence of organizations redefining their hierarchy to provide more opportunities for followers to lead and leaders to follow (Pinchot, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1995; Smith, 1996; Yeomans, 1996; Yukl, 1998). Within these opportunities, individuals need to be able to move fluidly between the roles of leader and follower (Chaleff, 1995). Critical to operating within the leadership dynamic, individuals must know when to lead and when to follow (Smith, 1996).

Following has been an important skill for any leader (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Pinchot, 1996; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995; Smith, D., 1996; Smith, W., 1994). Smith (1996) proclaimed the significance of leaders knowing when to follow:

Performance now demands that we all learn how and when we most effectively advance our self-interest by following. In fact, I would state this even more strongly. In the complex interdependent reality we now inhabit, our self-interest--indeed our survival--demands that we become as adept at following others as we are at getting them to follow us (p. 204).

According to Smith (1996), performance challenges, not position, should determine when to follow and when to lead. Leaders have not diminished their organizational status when they have participated as followers. In fact, many scholars believed that leadership can be demonstrated by following.

Leadership Through Following

Sergiovanni (1992) believed that "the true leader is one who follows first" (p. 72). Many leadership scholars writing in the last ten years of this century have recognized that

followership prepares one for leadership (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Pinchot, 1996; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992, 1995; Smith, 1996; Yukl, 1998). Sergiovanni (1992) has gone so far as to state that success as a follower is required for the mantle of leader.

As stated earlier, within a leadership dynamic, the roles of leader and follower have been blurred (Chaleff, 1995; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995; Smith, 1996; Yukl, 1998). Rost (1993) proposed that for something to be called leadership, the followers and leaders must be doing the leadership as compared to management where followers carry out the leader's wishes. Therefore, leadership can be performed by any member of the organization (Yukl, 1998). Smith (1996) saw this revolving leadership as a strength for the individuals and the organization:

Individuals forever both follow and lead one another in whatever combination works best for the task at hand, then recongeal around different followers and leaders for the task coming on its heels. In those moments when some are following, they do so neither as saints nor serfs, but as human beings trying to make a difference (p. 207).

The extent to which leadership is shared has been referred to as leadership density by Sergiovanni (1992). Kouzes and Posner (1993) articulated how leadership density can be positive for an organization: "When everyone is a leader, each person is responsible for guiding the organization toward its future" (p. 174). Barker (1998) forecasted that leadership will be viewed as a group process "where every participant is assumed to occupy a leadership role to some degree" (p.14). Adding to this construct of leadership, scholars concluded that effective following involves the same skills as leading (Kelley, 1988; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Smith, 1996). To examine the leadership construct further, Section 4: Dimensions of Followers concentrates on follower characteristics.

Section 4: Dimensions of Followers

Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal (1991) noted that "there is in the literature little agreement on how best to characterize followers other than to recognize their complexity" (p. 393). Scholars have identified, through empirical research, numerous adjectives describing the characteristics of followers. Kelley (1988, 1992) studied follower characteristics and stated that these behaviors fall into two categories. The two categories that Kelley (1988; 1992) believed underlie followership are (a) Independent, Critical Thinking and (b) Active Participation. Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman (1998) have also grouped follower characteristics and place them into the two categories: Performance Initiative and Relationship Initiative. The categories of follower characteristics proposed by Rosenbach, Potter III, and Pittman (1998) and Kelley (1988, 1992) have some common characteristics. The literature review for this study incorporates the categories mentioned above with descriptions of follower characteristics from other leadership scholars. The compilation of follower characteristics from the literature review exposed six general dimensions of follower characteristics. For this study, data were collected in these six dimensions: (a) motivation, (b) involvement, (c) commitment, (d) independent-critical thinking, (e) effectiveness, and (f) relationships within the organization. The first dimension examined is motivation.

Motivation

Scholars in the field of human motivation recognized that individuals choose their actions for specific reasons. Maslow (1954) postulated that man is driven to fulfill basic human needs. Maslow (1954) presented these needs in a hierarchy that ranged from (a) the need for physiological requirements, (b) the need for safety, (c) the need for belongingness, (d) the need for relations, and finally (e) the need for self-actualization. Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Kauchak, and Gibson (1994) noted that Maslow's hierarchy

"assumes that an individual's behavior at any time is determined by the strongest need" (p. 353). Maslow (1954) recognized that humans are never satisfied:

Man is a wanting animal and rarely reaches a state of complete satisfaction except for a short time. As one desire is satisfied, another pops up to take its place. When this is satisfied, still another comes into the foreground, etc. It is a characteristic of the human being throughout his whole life that he is practically always desiring something (p. 69).

Scholars in the social sciences have been influenced by Maslow's (1954) postulation and they attempted to use Maslow's hierarchy to determine how best to "motivate" individuals.

Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman (1959) built upon Maslow's (1954) postulations and proposed a "Motivation-Hygiene Theory." Using this theory, Herzberg (1966) recognized two distinct needs of man: (a) as an animal to avoid pain and (b) as a human to grow psychologically. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) described motivators as satisfiers and hygiene factors as dissatisfiers. According to Herzberg (1966), "dissatisfier factors essentially describe the environment and serve primarily to prevent job dissatisfaction" (p. 74). Herzberg (1966) went on to describe motivators as those factors that "are effective in motivating the individual to superior performance and effort" (p. 74). The motivators that Herzberg (1966) identified are (a) achievement, (b) recognition, (c) work itself, (d) responsibility, and (e) advancement. Herzberg (1966) described an essential finding from his study:

The factors involved in producing job satisfaction were separate and distinct from the factors that led to job dissatisfaction. . . . The opposite of job satisfaction is no job satisfaction, not job dissatisfaction. Hence the opposite of job dissatisfaction is no job dissatisfaction; not job satisfaction! (p. 75-76).

It is of particular interest to this study to recognize how salary is viewed in Herzberg's "Motivation-Hygiene Theory." Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) stated that salary is primarily a dissatisfier. According to Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman

(1959): "It would seem that as an affector of job attitudes salary has more potency as a job dissatisfier than as a job satisfier" (p. 82). Contrasting salary as a dissatisfier, Herzberg (1966) recognized that the factors that result in positive job attitudes are those factors that satisfy the individual's need for self-actualization in his work. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) summarized these findings regarding job satisfaction by stating:

When our respondents reported feeling happy with their jobs, they most frequently described factors related to their task, to events that indicated to them that they were successful in the performance of their work, and to the possibility of professional growth (p. 111).

These factors can be considered intrinsic rewards. Wheatley (1994) noted that "motivation theory tends to be shifting from the enticement of external rewards to the intrinsic motivators that spring from the work itself" (p. 12). Motivation has been a key factor in an individual's level of involvement within an organization.

Involvement

Followers can take a variety of actions. These actions can help leaders by amplifying their strengths and compensating for their weaknesses, or the follower's actions can highlight the leader's weaknesses and aid in the demise of the leader (Chaleff, 1995). The construct of involvement assumes that the follower takes action. Whatever actions are taken by the followers, these actions impact the leader's position (Chaleff, 1995). Scholars have recognized the importance of followers being active in the follower-leader relationship (DePree, 1989; Frank, Gertz, & Porter, 1996; Kelley, 1988, 1992; Smith, 1996; Yeomans, 1996). Demonstrating initiative is one way followers can be active within an organization.

Taking initiative is a characteristic of followers that numerous scholars have identified as important (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Kelley, 1988, 1992, 1998; Yukl,

1998). Yeomans (1996) and Yukl (1998) believed that followers should utilize initiative to take charge and solve difficult problems. Chaleff (1995) viewed initiative as being more complex than the examples articulated by Yeomans and Yukl. He described initiative as knowing how to accomplish tasks within the existing rules and procedures. Kelley (1998) expanded the realm of initiative beyond operating within the existing rules and procedures. He viewed initiative as seeking out responsibilities beyond normal expectations even when it involved personal risk. Followers who take initiative may also need to take courageous actions.

Followers have many choices as to the actions or non-actions they choose to make. Chaleff (1995) and Kelley (1988; 1992) referred to these choices as courageous actions. Chaleff espoused the importance of followers courage in their relationships: "The courage to be right, the courage to be wrong, the courage to be different from each other" (p. 4). Courage also incorporates assuming responsibility, to serve, to challenge, to participate in transformation, and even the courage to leave (Chaleff, 1995). The courage to challenge has been identified by several leadership scholars.

Courageous actions have been demonstrated by followers challenging the decisions of leaders (Buhler, 1993; Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Yukl, 1998). A follower may challenge the decision of a leader when the required actions threaten common purposes (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992). Challenging the leader or organization has been referred to as constructive dissent by Yukl (1998). Chaleff (1995) viewed these challenging actions as a desired behavior and believed that not following in every issue makes for an excellent follower. Courageous follower behaviors have also be used to challenge the status quo (Buhler, 1993). Regardless of whether their behavior is courageous or not, followers must be able to communicate.

Being able to communicate effectively and courageously has been identified as important skills for followers (DePree, 1989; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Yeomans, 1996). According to Chaleff (1995), followers should seek clarification through communication, especially before implementing dubious instructions. Communicative skills are essential to a follower being perceived as an involved member of the organization. Demonstrating involvement within an organization has been identified as a critical component of commitment.

Commitment

Demonstrating a strong commitment to an organization is a desired behavior of followers (DePree, 1998; Lawson, J. D., Griffin, L. J., & Donant, F. D., 1980; Yukl, 1998). Commitment is a desired follower characteristic because committed people have been identified as essential to any leader or organization (Kelley, 1988; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Sergiovanni, 1995). Commitment can be displayed in several ways. Sergiovanni (1995) articulated the desire for followers to demonstrate emotional commitment. Chaleff (1995) believed that commitment is demonstrated by followers caring compassionately about their work. Scholars have recognized that committed followers are also supportive to their leader or organization.

Followers can demonstrate their commitment to the leader and organization by their support. Support has been described by leadership scholars with numerous descriptors. Kelley (1992) believed that followers can demonstrate their support by developing additional expertise, increasing their critical path activities, and championing new ideas. Covey (1989) believed that individuals should "be loyal to those who are not present" (p. 196). Other scholars noted that supportive followers are also accountable (Chaleff, 1995; DePree, 1989). Supportive actions require having the right attitude to meet the boss' and the organization's needs (Chaleff, 1995; Yeomans, 1996). Meeting the

leader's and organization's needs may involve embracing change and negotiating differences for the follower (Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998). These supportive actions may also require flexibility and working cooperatively with the leader rather than adversely (Alcorn, 1992; Kelley, 1992; Yukl, 1998). Supportive actions by followers may also include the utilization of independent and critical thinking skills.

Independent-Critical Thinking

Kelley (1992) postulated that "the best followers are described as individuals who 'think for themselves,' 'gives constructive criticism,' 'are their own person' and 'are innovative and creative'" (p. 93). The ability to solve problems has been attributed to independent thinking (Alcorn, 1992). DePree (1989) blended independent and critical thinking as he postulated that they both incorporate an understanding of the organization.

Critical thinking has been highlighted as an essential behavior for followers (Buhler, 1993; Kelley, 1992). Critical thinking was articulated by Ennis (1962, as cited in VanTassel-Baska et al., 1988) as a special domain of creative human thinking that utilizes reflective and reasonable thinking to determine the next course of action. Ennis (1985) further delineated his model of critical thinking into three types of thinking skills: (a) defining and clarifying, (b) judging information, and (c) inferring to solve problems and draw reasonable conclusions. Independent and critical thinking skills enhance the effectiveness of a follower.

Effectiveness

Kelley (1992) described effective followers as displaying behavior that is enthusiastic, intelligent, self-reliant, and participatory without star billing. Effective behaviors can also be courageous behaviors as they may result in loss of favor with the leader (Chaleff, 1995). Kelley (1992) viewed not being intimidated by hierarchy as important for followers. Followers may even be compelled to succeed without a strong

leader (Murphy 1990, as cited in Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998). Regardless of whether followers have a strong leader or not, they can be effective by providing leadership at their own levels (Frank, Gertz, & Porter, 1996).

Providing leadership at their own level also requires followers to build relationships.

Building relationships is another way followers can be effective within an organization.

Relationships Within the Organization

Relationships between followers and leaders, or followers and the organization, appear to have been developed for specific reasons. Some followers have been described as disciples. These followers enter into a relationship to be part of something and that something is usually more important or bigger than the follower. Some individuals have sought mentoring relationships which are based upon intense one-on-one relationships for the maturity of the follower. Apprenticeship relationships focus on a mastery of skills. Some followers have sought relationships as comrades for the social support and intimacy. Others have followed out of personal loyalty or strictly because they are committed to their personal dream rather than to a particular leader. Service is another reason followers have entered into a relationship. There are also types of followers who have followed because they believe no other way of life is as rewarding. (Kelly, 1992)

Followers create numerous relationships with a variety of people. and these relationships can range from professional relationships to covenant relationships (DePree, 1989; Yeomans, 1996). Rosenbach, Potter III, and Pittman (1998) believed that followers entered into relationships because they identified with the leader. Sometimes, the followers may even see themselves as equals to the leader (Kelley, 1992). Regardless of the reason or type of relationship, effective relationships consist of people willing to work with others (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Yeomans, 1996). According to Yukl (1998), maintaining

cooperative working relationships is important for the individual and the organization. These cooperative working relationships provide fertile ground for followers to cultivate organizational interrelationships. Yukl's (1998) postulation was in agreement with Kelley (1992) who noted that organizational interrelationships are important for the follower and the organization. These networks have aided followers in their quest as active participants in the organization (Kelley, 1992).

Scholars recognized the importance of trust in the follower-leader relationship (Kouzes and Posner, 1993). Followers must be capable of building trust (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998). They also need to be able to trust others in the organization (DePree, 1997). Kouzes and Posner (1993) highlighted trust as a critical component of credibility, and they proclaimed credibility as a foundation for all relationships.

Summary of the Literature Review

Twentieth century leadership studies viewed followers as progressing from passive recipients of the leader's commands to an active participant in the follower-leader relationship. The image of followers has evolved to individuals who at times follow and at other times lead. This view of followers, progressing from passive to active participants, can be traced to the recognition by leadership scholars of the role followers play in the follower-leader relationship. Within this relationship, followers are confronted with a variety of decisions, and these decisions may involve ethical dilemmas as well as opportunities for courageous actions. Courageous actions may support the leader and organization, but courageous actions may also challenge decisions of the leader. Courageous actions are one way followers can exert their power.

During the last decade of this century, scholars have recognized the importance of followers as well as the power they possess. Followers can exert their power by accepting

or rejecting a leader through a variety of actions, or at times, lack of action. These actions form the foundation of relationships within the organization. Although relationships can be based upon authority or power, effective relationships appear to be based upon influence. Influence is determined by each participant in the relationship being able to freely choose their decision without fear of possible reprisal. Influence relationships have proven to be beneficial to organizations.

Empirical research has identified a symbiotic relationship between followers and leaders. Researchers observing this symbiotic relationship have surmised that participating as a follower prepares an individual for the role of leader. Knowing when to lead and when to follow is important to both the "leader" and the "follower." Several leadership scholars have concluded that effective following and leading involve the same skills. These conclusions have begun to blur the distinction between leaders and followers.

Followers have been described by a plethora of adjectives, depending upon which characteristics a particular author has decided are important. Scholars have agreed that followers can be divided into two categories; those who are active and those who are passive. For the purpose of this study, follower characteristics that appear in the literature are grouped into the six dimensions of (a) motivation, (b) involvement, (c) commitment, (d) independent-critical thinking, (e) effectiveness, and (f) relationships within the organization. This study's research questions used these six follower dimensions as a framework.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Research Paradigms

The most common research designs are quantitative and qualitative. These two designs are based upon differing assumptions. Quantitative designs, exemplified by their deductive reasoning which tests a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures to make generalizations of a theory, emerged early in the history of scholarly studies (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 1994). As the scope of research expanded, scholars have recognized that statistical comparisons may not be relevant for all desired outcomes (Eisner, 1991). These scholars have proposed and developed an alternative research paradigm. Eisner (1991) recognized the need for more than one research paradigm:

The growing interest in alternative paradigms makes problematic the belief that one epistemology fits all or that nonscientific modes of inquiry are permissible only as reconnaissance efforts; if you 'really' want to know, you need to conduct an experiment (p. 104).

The alternative research paradigm is the qualitative design.

A qualitative paradigm is better suited for some research questions rather than a quantitative paradigm. Eisner (1991) recognized the importance of qualitative research as a design that allows researchers to describe a phenomenon with text that goes beyond what could be described by statistics. Creswell (1994) believed that the qualitative paradigm is "an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting" (pp. 1-2). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) referred to qualitative research as a term that encompasses and shares the basic

characteristics of being "rich in description of people, places, and conversations, and not easily handled by standardized procedures" (p. 2). Because of the nature of this study's purpose, the characteristics of the qualitative research design are appropriate for this study.

The current scholarly study of followers is an emerging area of leadership that has not established a holistic picture of the perception of followers and their perceived role in the leadership dynamic. The vast majority of information pertaining to followers is located in leadership articles and books. These pieces of literature have either addressed the role of the follower in a cursory manner or stated the need for further study regarding followers. Existing literature on followers is very limited with a few books and articles written on the subject (Chaleff, 1995). Therefore, the nature of a qualitative research paradigm is best suited for this study as the qualitative paradigm will allow for a theory to develop from rich data collected through semi-structured interviews.

Developing a Theory

Using a qualitative research paradigm, this study has focused on the development of a theory in regard to the perception of followers. Consistent with the inductive nature of qualitative studies, a theory emerges during the data collection and analysis phase, and thus the theory does not constrain the study (Creswell, 1994). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) noted that the qualitative researcher does not attempt to prove or disprove a hypothesis held *a priori*. Rather, the qualitative researcher should build a theory through the use of inductive reasoning (Creswell, 1994). Building a theory through inductive reasoning is critical to the qualitative paradigm as the researcher cannot predetermine what themes will become evident or the one best course of action to pursue during the study (Eisner, 1991).

Grounded Theory

Glaser and Strouse (1967) proposed a theory that emerges from the bottom up through inductive reasoning from numerous pieces of data that are interconnected. They referred to this type of theory as grounded theory. Creswell (1994) recognized grounded theory as a research design used in human and social science research. Creswell (1994) noted that the word "theory" is used by researchers conducting grounded theory studies: "They [researchers] hope to discover a theory that is grounded in information from informants" (p. 93). Strauss and Corbin (1990) described grounded theory as "attempts to derive a theory by using multiple stages of data collection and the refinement and interrelationship of categories of information" (p. 12). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) as well as Eisner (1991) described the use of a grounded theory design as similar to the construction of a picture. The picture takes shape as the researcher collects and analyzes the parts. This study pursued a grounded theory by collecting and analyzing data.

Data

Sample

The sample for this study was purposefully selected and used a multi-site design. Subjects were purposefully selected because it is assumed that they would facilitate the expansion of the developing theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). This sample was composed of 12 subjects who are employed in education, private business, and government agencies. Three subjects are employed in education and are all employed in the same K-12 school district. Six subjects are employed in private business. These six subjects are employed in two business organizations. Each business is represented by three employees. The remainder of the sample, three subjects, are government employees. All subjects are considered full-time employees by their organization. They were purposefully selected by the official leader from each organization. The official leader

was asked to select a mid-level manager and two people who reported to that person. The official leaders were asked to make their selection in a manner that would ensure diversity of the individuals. Subjects were selected because it was believed that they would provide a variety of opinions. Mid-level managers were included in this sample because they have an official organizational role as both "leader" and "follower." The longevity of the subjects in the organization ranged from 8 months to 26.5 years. The length of time in their current position ranges from 8 months to 10 years. This information is presented in Table 1, located in Chapter Four, Findings From the Qualitative Inquiry.

Data Collection

Data were collected through one-on-one interviews with followers and leaders in organizations representing education, private business, and government agencies. Prior to collecting the data, permission was obtained to conduct the interviews at the chosen organizations. This permission was sought through the organization's gatekeepers.

Creswell (1994) as well as Bogdan and Biklen (1992) referred to gatekeepers as those individuals whose approval must be obtained in order to conduct research at the specific location. Marshall & Rossman (1989) noted that acquiring approval to conduct a study at each site can be an ongoing problem for the researcher. It has been recommended that these gatekeepers should know, in general terms, the focus of the research, how data will be gathered, and what they can expect in return for their participation (Eisner, 1991).

Procedures

Initially those individuals providing access to the organizations where the interviews were conducted, were contacted with an introductory letter outlining: (a) the importance, purpose, and significance of the study, (b) explanation of the interview process, (c) perceived inconveniences to the subjects and organization, (d) assurances of

individual and organizational confidentiality, and (e) an invitation for a brief summary of the study upon its completion. Accompanying this introductory letter was a letter supporting this study from Dr. John C. Lundt, doctoral dissertation chairman. (These letters are contained in Appendix A.) Shortly after the mailing of the introductory and supporting letter, the gatekeepers were contacted by phone to answer any questions and either set up a meeting with them or secure access to the organization. Access was granted by all organizations that were initially contacted. Once permission to conduct the study in a specific organization was granted, the interviews were confirmed.

Interviews. Creswell (1994) noted that an important methodological strategy in qualitative research was the development of the interview and the application of Carl Rogers' (1942) "non directive interview" procedures. Rogers (1942) described the non-directive interview as being "characterized by a preponderance of client activity, the client doing most of the talking..." (p. 124). Merton and Kendall (1946) noted that "qualitative interviews vary in the degree to which they are structured" (p. 97). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) cautioned that an interview can become too rigid, not allowing the subjects to tell their story. Therefore, the interviews for this study were semi-structured. Eisner (1991) noted that interviews "should not be formal questionnaire--oriented encounters" (p. 183). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) further recognized that semi-structured interviews can increase the confidence of getting comparable data across subjects. In order to ensure comparable data, the interviews for this study were conducted utilizing an interview protocol, which standardized the interviews for all subjects.

Interview Protocol. This study followed the protocol for interviewing suggested by Creswell (1994). Creswell (1994) noted that a form be developed to note observations in the field. The interview form for this study followed Creswell's (1994) suggestion and includes: (a) demographic information concerning the time, place, and setting of the

interview, (b) a heading, (c) opening statements, (d) 28 interview questions, and (e) space for recording data. Note taking followed the suggestions by Eisner (1991) and Creswell (1994) that the researcher divide a paper vertically to separate descriptive notes from reflective notes. (The Interview Protocol is located in Appendix B.) In addition to the interview protocol, field note memos were also used to collect data.

As suggested by Bogdan & Biklen (1992), field note memos were generated by the researcher following each interview. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) suggested that the field memo be used "to reflect on issues raised in the setting and how they relate to larger theoretical, methodological, and substantive issues" (p. 159). The field memos were a critical component of the data analysis as they aided the process of identifying emerging themes or categories. (The Field Memo is located in Appendix C.) Field memos were used as a supplement to the interview data.

The majority of data collection occurred during each interview. Data acquired through interviews can be preserved by taking notes or tape recording. Each method, tape recording or taking notes, has the possibility of disrupting the communication between the subject and the interviewer. Note taking can facilitate data collection, but it can also disrupt the subject's responses, especially if they expect an answer to be written down and it is not. Tape recording an interview can be helpful as it allows for an exact transcription, reducing bias by the interviewer as well as allowing for two or more researchers to code the data independently. There are those scholars who believe that tape recording a subjects' responses can hinder their response. Numerous research scholars have identified disadvantages of tape recording interviews. (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996)

Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) noted that the main disadvantage of using a tape recorder during an interview is that "the presence of the tape recorder changes the interview situation to some degree" (p. 320). Eisner (1991) cautioned against using a tape

recorder for the first interview. Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) recognized that tape recording can inhibit responses when the interview involves highly personal information. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) also noted that the use of a tape recorder in an interview requires special considerations as some people believe that once their words have been recorded, they could get in trouble (p. 100). Therefore, according to Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) "respondents might be reluctant to express their feelings freely if they know that their responses are being recorded" (p. 320). Gall, Borg, and Gall suggested that an interviewer should wait to record sensitive or confidential data until after the interview in order to avoid distracting the subject. Lyne (1999) concluded that many researchers would disagree with taping interviews, concluding that the disadvantages outweigh the advantages.

Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) suggested that "before choosing one of these methods [note taking or tape recording], the interviewer should consider carefully the advantages and disadvantages of each" (p. 320). The nature of the proposed interview for this study could have been perceived as intrusive by the subject as information was sought in regard to the subjects' perceptions of themselves, their leader, and their relationships within the organization. Collecting information in these areas could have appeared threatening for the subject, especially when their responses are being recorded. Assurances of trust and confidentiality must be established between the researcher and the subject. Tape recording the subject's responses could be a detriment to the researcher-subject relationship. Research scholars have contended that any benefit from a method or procedure that could weaken the atmosphere of trust and confidentiality must be heavily weighed as to its possible negative impact on the ability of the researcher to obtain accurate information. Because of the above considerations, a tape recorder was not

employed during the interview process. Recording data by taking notes during the interview helped ensure subjects that the data they reported was confidential.

Confidentiality regarding the name of the subject and their place of employment was maintained throughout the study as well as in the reporting of its findings. A code was used to identify subjects and their places of employment on the interview form. This code was necessary for member checks and any additional contacts with the subjects. A confidential rubric was kept by the researcher to match the subject with the coded field notes. This rubric contained the subject code, subject's name, position as a leader or follower within the organization, and the place of employment (The Interview Codes for confidentiality can be found in Appendix D). Subjects were referred to as "S" in all field notes. When referred to in the narrative, subjects and places of employment were mentioned under a fictitious name. Subjects were also afforded the opportunity to give permission for the use of direct quotations from their interviews. (The Permission to Quote form is located in Appendix E.) Quotations from the subjects were prompted from a standard set of interview questions.

Development of Questions

The interviews for this study aligned with Merton and Kendall's (1946) suggestion of being relatively open-ended, but focused around a specific topic and guided by some general questions. Werner & Schoepfle (1987) agreed with Merton and Kendall and suggested that the interview structure be composed of grand tour questions. This study employed Creswell's (1994) recommendation "that a researcher ask one or two grand tour questions followed by no more than five to seven sub-questions" (p. 70).

Grand Tour Questions. This study was guided by two grand tour questions:

1. How are followers perceived?
2. What role do followers believe they play in an organization's success?

Sub-questions. The two grand tour questions were supported by six sub-questions:

1. What motivating factors do individuals experience in their roles as followers?
2. How involved are followers in the pursuit of organizational goals?
3. How committed are the followers to the organization?
4. What types of independent and critical thinking strategies do followers report utilizing?
5. How do followers perceive their overall effectiveness?
6. What types of relationships are followers engaged in within the organization?

To answer the grand tour and sub-questions of this study, subjects were asked 28 interview questions. These interview questions were influenced by existing literature as synthesized in this study's Chapter Two: Review of The Literature.

Research Question Rationale

The research questions for this dissertation were developed from a review of the literature and consisted of two grand tour questions followed by six sub-questions. Grand tour questions were written in their most general form. Stating grand tour questions in a general form allowed for the questions to be under review during the study as well as allowing for the possible reformulation of the questions. Allowing these questions to evolve and change was consistent with the qualitative assumptions of an emerging design (Creswell, 1994).

The grand tour and sub-questions were developed from this study's literature review. A synthesis of existing literature has pointed to the six follower dimensions of (a) "motivation," (b) "involvement," (c) "commitment," (d) "independent-critical thinking," (e) "effectiveness," and (f) "relationships within the organization." Each sub-question addressed one of the dimensions mentioned above through an inductive process that

allowed for the development of emerging themes. Data pertaining to the six dimensions were collected from each subject.

Data that answered the two grand tour questions and six sub-questions in this study were collected through an interview process. The interview process included standard protocol for each interview. The questions for these interviews were developed from a review of existing literature and sought to answer this study's grand tour questions. Subjects in this study were asked 28 general, open-ended questions during semi-structured interviews which provided data for the development of emerging themes.

General data on each subject were collected in two categories. The first category was gender. Findings from gender-biased leadership studies have been inconclusive (Yukl, 1998). However, the gender of each subject was noted because gender is part of the context in which subjects interpret their world. The second category recorded data for subjects according to their organizational status as either a "leader" or a "follower." It is important to know whether each subject was reporting from the context of a "leader" or from the context of a "follower," since scholars have noted that context is important for leadership studies (Heifetz, 1994; Klenke, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1995; Slater, 1995). After the general data were collected and each subject was read the same opening statements, the interview began by asking questions and collecting data to answer the two grand tour questions.

Grand Tour Question #1: How are followers generally perceived? The formal study of followers is still in its infancy (Chaleff, 1995). Followers have only recently gained attention from leadership scholars, and no formal theory regarding followers exists. Leadership scholars have referred to followers, but usually when explaining the accomplishments of leaders (Yukl, 1998). Caution must be heeded when referring to followers from the perspective of a leader, because leaders may view certain follower

characteristics differently (Kelley, 1998). One leader may view followers who blindly obey whatever directions are given to them as demonstrating positive follower behavior. Another leader may view the same behavior as negative, because the follower is acting in a passive manner and not actually contributing to the organization. Contrary judgments such as these have led to opposing opinions concerning followers. These opinions are also devoid of the follower's voice. This Grand Tour question brought the follower's voice to the forefront of the leadership conversation.

Grand Tour Question #2: What role do followers believe they play in an organization's success? Building upon the first grand tour question, this general question sought to identify followers' perceptions of their role in the organization's success. Leadership scholars have recognized the need to examine the role of followers (Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Smith, 1994). Researchers have also recognized that the role of following is an important factor in the success of an organization (Bennis, 1994; Chaleff, 1995; DeBruyn, 1976; DePree, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Mariotti, 1996; Smith, 1996; Yukl, 1998). Identifying the follower's role is important, especially when considering that follower actions can either promote or subvert an organization's goals (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Heifetz, 1994). Scholars have yet to articulate how followers view their role in an organization's attempt to achieve its goals. Grand Tour Question #2 sought to fill this gap in the leadership literature. These two grand tour questions were supported by six sub-questions and 28 interview questions. The first sub-question addressed follower motivation.

It should be noted that the order of the following "Interview Questions" was altered during the interview process. The researcher felt that the interviews would produce a richer set of data by arranging the questions in a different order than what was originally presented. The "sub-questions" are in their original order. The interview

questions are listed underneath the sub-question that they support. The number of the "interview question" denotes the order that it was asked during the interview process.

Sub-question #1: What motivating factors do individuals experience in their roles as followers? Maslow (1954) recognized that man is driven to fulfill basic human needs. Utilizing Maslow's (1954) "Hierarchy of Needs" and Herzberg's (1966) "Motivation-Hygiene Theory" it can be determined that man experiences intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Sub-question #1 sought to determine the types of motivation followers refer to when describing their work environment.

Interview Question #14: Why do you continue to work in this organization?

Wheatley (1994) postulated that organizations are shifting their compensation efforts from extrinsic to intrinsic rewards. Herzberg (1966) reported that subjects feel positive about their job when they feel that they are successful and have the opportunity for professional growth. Salary can be one reason people continue working in an organization.

Interview Question #15: Is your salary fair for what you do? This interview

question sought data regarding the attitude of followers toward their salary. Salary has been identified as a dissatisfier by Herzberg (1966) in his "Motivation-Hygiene Theory."

Interview Question #28: What personal goals do you have? Herzberg (1966)

noted the relationship of followers feeling successful and their job attitude. According to Herzberg (1966) and Maslow (1954), accomplishing goals is one way followers can evaluate their performance. This question is also related to Interview Question # 11. Motivation can be an important factor regarding a follower's involvement within an organization.

Sub-question #2: How involved are followers in the pursuit of organizational goals? Sub-question #2 attempted to identify the level of involvement followers have in

regard to organizational goals. It is based on the postulation by scholars that followers impact an organization (Bennis, 1994; Kelley, 1992; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Smith, 1996; Wilkes, 1992; Yukl, 1998). Kelley (1992) described the actions of followers on a continuum from passive to active, with active involvement a critical component of "exemplary" followers. Therefore, information pertaining to the level of involvement a follower has in pursuit of organizational goals was important for this study.

Interview Question #2: What is your involvement within the organization? This question is directly related to sub-question #2. Ira Chaleff (1995) reported that followers can take a variety of actions, and these actions can either support a leader or undermine the leader's efforts. Followers who have made contributions to organizations are involved in the pursuit of organizational goals (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992, 1998). Sometimes followers' contributions to an organization are diminished when they encounter obstacles.

Interview Question #3: When you encounter an obstacle, what do you do? Followers who are involved in an organization must actively participate in the organization as well as take initiative (Kelley, 1992, 1998). This question collected data on the level of activity and initiative reported by followers. This follow-up question is based upon findings in the literature that reported initiative as a desired behavior for followers to demonstrate (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Kelley, 1992, 1998; Yukl, 1998). Initiative can involve both positive and subversive actions. Interview Question #7 sought information from followers as to their actions when disagreeing with their leader.

Interview Question #7: What do you do if you don't agree with the leader? When followers do not agree with a leader they can employ numerous strategies. Followers can attempt to resolve conflict with their leaders by utilizing behaviors that range from active to passive (Kelley, 1992). Behaviors can also be subversive to the leader or organization (Chaleff, 1995; Heifetz, 1994; Kelley, 1992). Skills, such as the ability to effectively

communicate, have been identified as important for followers if they are to resolve conflicts (DePree, 1989; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Yeomans, 1996). How followers reacted when they didn't agree with their leader is of vital interest for this study. Kelley (1992) noted that followers may feel pressure from their leaders to act in certain ways. Other scholars have recognized the necessity of followers to be able to make decisions free from reprisal (Greenleaf, 1996; Rost, 1993). This interview question sought information in relation to the actions taken by followers when they disagree with the leader. Follower involvement is also a factor in their commitment to an organization.

Sub-question #3: How committed are the followers to the organization?

Commitment to an organization has been recognized as a desired follower behavior (DePree, 1998; Lawson, J. D., Griffin, L. J., & Donant, F. D., 1980; Yukl, 1998). Other scholars go beyond labeling commitment as a desired behavior and have concluded that follower commitment is essential to a successful organization (Kelley, 1988; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Sergiovanni, 1995). Interview Question #6 directly sought information as to the self-reported level of commitment by this study's subjects.

Interview Question #6: What is your level of commitment to your leader? The sixth interview question was based upon numerous observations that have identified committed people as essential to any leader or organization (Kelley, 1988; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Sergiovanni, 1995). Identifying with the goals of an organization can be one indicator of a follower's commitment.

Interview Question #4: How do you identify with the goals of the organization? Identifying with the goals of an organization has been recognized as a supportive action on the part of followers (Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Yukl, 1998). Followers who have identified with the goals of an organization tend to be more committed to the organization than those who do not (Lawson, J. D., Griffin, L. J., & Donant, F. D., 1980). Followers

can be supportive of the organization but not supportive of their leader. Interview Question #8 asked for information directly related to the support subjects have for their leader.

Interview Question #8: How do you support your leader? Scholars have recognized numerous follower actions that can support their leader or organization. This question assumed that supporting a leader also supports the organization. One such action that is pertinent for this study has been the desire by followers to meet the organization's needs (Chaleff, 1995; Yeomans, 1996). Interview Question #8 endeavored to determine how followers support their leader. It is of interest to note that the actions of followers may not necessarily be in support of their leader.

Interview Question #9: How do you not support your leader? Interview Question #9 pursued strategies employed by followers when not supporting their leader. Scholars have noted that within an organization, followers possess power and can exert their power in various ways (Chaleff, 1995; Heifetz, 1994). Some uses of follower power have been viewed as subversive to the goals of the leader (Chaleff, 1995; Heifetz, 1994; Kelley, 1992). For this study, it is of interest how followers do not support their leader. Followers can perceive their actions as effective regardless of whether these actions are viewed as positive or subversive by the organization. Sub-question #4 pursued self-reported data from followers as to their perceived effectiveness.

Sub-question #4: How do followers perceive their overall effectiveness? This question assisted in the collection of data pertaining to how followers perceived their own effectiveness within an organization. Existing leadership literature identified a multitude of descriptors for effective follower behavior (Chaleff, 1995; Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Kelley, 1992, 1998; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998). To date, none of the

descriptors found in the literature have been identified through the voice of the follower. Enhancing an organization can be viewed by followers as an effective behavior.

Interview Question #10: How do you enhance your organization? Followers can add value to an organization (Kelley, 1992, 1998; Sergiovanni, 1992). Adding value to an organization is described by Kelley (1992) as "going beyond doing a good job" (p. 131). Interview Question #10 pursued how followers believed they bring value to the organization. This question also sought information pertaining to the actions subjects chose when adding value to the organization. Followers may find themselves in dilemmas as they attempt to enhance the organization. Interview Question #5 put each subject in such a situation to record the strategies they reported utilizing when faced with a dilemma.

Interview Question #5: How do you handle directions that appear contrary to expressed goals? This question is related to Interview Question #3. Followers have found themselves in situations when directions given to them are contrary to the expressed goals of the organization (Kelley, 1992). Scholars have recognized that followers may find themselves confronted with the dilemma of either following directions that appear contrary to expressed goals or taking other forms of action (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992). Interview Question #5 placed subjects in this dilemma to note their course of action when confronted with directions that appear to be contrary to the expressed goals of the organization. When confronting dilemmas, subjects may utilize behaviors that are similar to those demonstrated by leaders.

Interview Question #16: What things do you do that are normally attributed to leaders? and Interview Question #1: Earlier you labeled yourself as a (leader or follower), why? These questions sought to determine if subjects view themselves as employing behaviors traditionally attributed to leaders. Followers have experienced

relationships within the leadership dynamic as both "leaders" and "followers" (Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; DePree, 1989; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Smith, D., 1996; Smith, W., 1994; Yukl, 1998). Within this dynamic, scholars have postulated that effective followers exhibit behaviors that are normally attributed to leaders (Frank, Gertz, & Porter, 1996).

Interview Question #11: How would you describe your effectiveness? This question is related to Interview Question #10. As mentioned earlier, scholars have posited that followers displaying behaviors normally attributed to leaders are perceived as being effective. Interview Question #11 sought information from subjects as to how they view their effectiveness. Numerous leadership authors have referred to the need for followers to be effective (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998). Individuals may use different criteria to determine their effectiveness than does their leader or organization. Therefore, effectiveness can be based upon personal criteria, even though numerous authors have identified a plethora of effective follower behaviors. As articulated in the rationale for Sub-question #4, those behaviors listed by leadership authors have been identified through the context of the leader or organization, not through the context of the follower. Interview Question #11 pursued the perception followers have regarding their personal effectiveness. This question is also related to Interview Question #4 as effective follower behavior has been described as identifying with organizational goals (Lawson, J. D., Griffin, L. J., & Donant, F. D., 1980).

Sub-question #5: What types of independent and critical thinking strategies do followers report utilizing? This sub-question focused attention on the strategies followers reported using in their quest to be effective. Independent and critical thinking

skills have been viewed as a valuable asset for followers (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Buhler, 1993; DePree, 1989; Kelley, 1988, 1992). Although leadership scholars have recognized the value of followers who have employed independent and critical thinking, the current literature does not address independent and critical thinking skills from the perspective of the follower. Sub-question #4 focused on how followers perceived their effectiveness. It also supported data regarding strategies followers use to accomplish tasks.

Interview Question #12: How do you accomplish an important task? Leadership scholars have stated numerous desired behaviors that followers can employ when accomplishing a task. One such behavior that has been noted is the ability of followers to provide effective leadership at their own levels (Frank, Gertz, & Porter, 1996). Effective leadership for followers has been identified as being able to manage themselves (Brown & Thornborrow, 1996; Kelley, 1992; Smith, 1996). Other essential skills, for followers attempting to accomplish a task, have been noted as involving independent and critical thinking (Buhler, 1993; DePree, 1989; Kelley, 1992). Independent and critical thinking strategies are important as accomplishing tasks are rarely experienced without encountering problems.

Interview Question #13: What if there are problems as you attempt to solve the task? This question ensured that the subjects addressed the strategies they employ when barriers arise during their efforts to accomplish a task. It sought to add additional information in relation to Interview Question #12. Followers may have to involve others when attempting to accomplish a task. Therefore, the relationships they have with leaders and followers within the organization was of interest for this study.

Sub-question #6: What types of relationships are followers engaged in within the organization? Virtually every leadership scholar who mention followers has stated

that followers exist within a relationship. These relationships can be complex and have involved a variety of people (DePree, 1989; Yeomans, 1996). This sub-question is important because the types of relationships followers participate in are developed for specific reasons (Kelley, 1992). Sub-question #6 identified the types of relationships that followers self-reported being involved in with others in the organization. This examination of relationships began with followers' perception of their relationship with those they view as leaders.

Interview Question #17: What can you tell me about leadership in your organization? This study of followers was conducted within the construct of their relationships. Followers have experienced numerous relationships as leaders and as followers (Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; DePree, 1989; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Smith, D., 1996; Smith, W., 1994; Yukl, 1998). Interview Question #17 sought general information about leadership from the perspective of the follower. After data were collected regarding leadership, subjects were then asked to be more specific concerning their relationship with their leader.

Interview Question #18: How would you describe your relationship with your leader? As stated earlier, just about every author who includes followers in their study of leadership has recognized that leaders and followers exist within a relationship. These relationships have been based upon authority, power, or influence (Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Yukl, 1998). Kelley (1992) noted that relationships between the leader and follower are developed for specific reasons. Therefore, the type of relationship that followers perceive they have with their leader was important for this study.

Interview Question #19: How does your leader feel about you? Kouzes and Posner (1993) contended that any discussion on leadership must address the reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers. This question also related to Interview Question #18. Chaleff (1995) articulated the need to not only recognize that a relationship exists, but to concentrate on the quality of the follower-leader relationship. Interview Question #19 sought information on the reciprocity within the follower-leader relationship from the perspective of the follower. Giving feedback to a leader has been identified as essential in a leadership relationship (Bennis, 1998; Chaleff, 1995).

Interview Question #20: How do you feel when giving feedback to your leader? The ability to communicate has been recognized by numerous scholars as an important follower characteristic (DePree, 1989; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Yeomans, 1996). It is an important follower characteristic because leaders have modified their leadership based upon follower feedback (Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995). This interview question also involved the type of relationship between the follower and the leader. The response to Interview Question #20 provided information pertaining to the type of relationship followers perceived they have with their leader. There may be a difference in how subjects give feedback to their leaders and how they feel feedback should be given.

Interview Question #21: How should feedback be given to a leader? Chaleff (1995) has noted that followers are responsible for seeking clarification through communication with their leader. Interview Question #21 is related to Interview Question #20. Data from Interview Question #21 determined if there is a difference between how followers give feedback to their leaders and how they feel feedback should be given to a leader. This question also laid a foundation for Interview Questions #24, #25, #26 and

#27, which pursued data in regard to trust within the organization. Information pertaining to the relationships followers participate in must also include their relationships with their colleagues.

Interview Question #22: How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues? Followers have experienced a variety of relationships within an organization (Yukl, 1998). Numerous scholars have recognized that being able to work with people in an organization is a desirable follower characteristic (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Yeomans, 1996; Yukl, 1998). Data from Interview Question #22 was compared with data from Interview Question #18 to determine if any difference existed between the relationships followers have with their colleagues and the relationship followers have with their leader. Relationships with leaders and other followers may involve ethical decisions.

Interview Question #23: Have you felt pressure to act in a manner contrary to your conscience? Tell me more. Within the leadership relationship, followers have been required to carry out directions that may involve ethical considerations (Chaleff, 1995; Hollander, 1995; Kelley, 1992, 1998; Rost, 1993; Weil & Arzbaeher, 1997). Kelley (1992) believed that followers tend to do what is asked of them rather than follow their own conscience. Interview Question #23 sought data to determine if followers feel that they have had to compromise their ethical standards. Relationships have met an ethical standard if each person can make decisions free from reprisal (Greenleaf, 1996; Rost, 1993). This question could be answered with a simple yes or no. To ensure that data pertaining to this question was descriptive, the follow-up statement "tell me more" was utilized.

Interview Question #24: How do you feel about trust in your organization? Trust has been viewed as essential in follower-leader relationships (Bennis, 1994; Brown &

Thornborrow, 1996; DeBruyn, 1976; DePree, 1997; Chaleff, 1995; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992). This question was directly related to Interview Questions #25 #26, and #27. These questions sought information regarding trust within all relationships in the organization.

Interview Question #25: Do you trust your leader?

Interview Question #26: What can you tell me about trust between followers?

Interview Question #27: How would you describe the trust between followers and leaders?

These three interview questions recognized that followers participate in a variety of relationships within an organization. Chaleff (1995) posited that follower-leader relationships are more complex than a one-on-one relationship:

The dynamics are much more complex than those between two individuals. There are usually at least several followers who are close to the leader, and the interaction between followers profoundly affects the group (p. 30).

Interview questions #25, #26, and #27 examined the issue of trust in a general context, whereas, interview question #24 sought specific information concerning the followers' perceptions of trust within their specific work environment.

Data Analysis

Data obtained from the questions mentioned above were analyzed to discern emerging trends. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) note:

Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others (p. 153).

Tesch (1990) noted that there is no right way to analyze qualitative data as the process is eclectic.

Data analysis in qualitative studies is an ongoing inductive process. Scholars have contended that data collection and data analysis occur at the same time in qualitative research as does data interpretation and narrative report writing (Creswell, 1994). According to Eisner (1991): "It is simply not possible to predict the flow of events as they unfold, so researchers must adjust their course of action based upon emerging conditions that could not have been anticipated" (p. 170). The course of action and analysis in a qualitative design has been compared to the creation of a collage by Eisner (1991). Eisner contended that a collage is allowed to evolve as the artist makes decisions while the collage is in progress. In a collage, the artist controls the qualities and is cued by them (Eisner, 1991). Data obtained during this qualitative study were analyzed through a process similar to that described by Eisner.

Analytic Induction. Data from the semi-structured interviews of followers and leaders in organizations representing education, private business, and government agencies were analyzed using analytic induction. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) suggested the use of analytic induction as an approach to collecting and analyzing data in the development of a theory. According to research scholars Bogdan and Biklen (1992), "analytic induction is employed when some specific problem, question, or issue becomes the focus of research" (p. 70). Following the suggestions of Bogdan and Biklen (1992), formal analysis began soon after the first interview was completed. Using analytic induction in this manner allowed for the modification of the theory and research questions during the research process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

It has been suggested by Marshall & Rossman (1989), that the analysis of data begins with "reductions" and "interpretation." This process has also been referred to by Tesch (1990) as de-contextualization and re-contextualization. Tesch went on to describe this form of analysis: "While much work in the analysis process consists of 'taking apart'

(for instance, into smaller pieces), the final goal is the emergence of a larger, consolidated picture" (p. 97). Eisner (1991) recognized that "there is no single decontextualized answer possible" (p. 191). Using codes is one way researchers analyze data.

Coding. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) reported that coding is a procedure used in most methods of analyzing qualitative data. There is not a firm set of rules for the sorting through of interview data; although qualitative researchers have formed categories of information and attached codes to the categories (Creswell, 1994). Strauss and Corbin (1990) utilized a set of process steps for grounded theory that included open coding, axial coding, selective coding, and the generation of a conditional matrix. Research scholars have referred to this process as generating categories, themes, or patterns (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992; Marshall and Rossman, 1989). Creswell (1994) has noted that which ever type of coding is employed by the researcher, it is important that a systematic process of analyzing the data be used.

This study employed the use of coding categories articulated by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1992). According to Bogdan and Biklen, coding categories are developed as the researcher searches through the collected data to discover emerging topics and patterns. These categories can then be grouped and regrouped into coding families (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The coding procedures for this study were used in a manner to ensure the verification of the findings.

Verification

Creswell (1994) postulated that the evidence of a scholarly study consists of accuracy, generalizability, and the possibility of replicating the study. Other researchers have noted that the two research paradigms of qualitative and quantitative differ in their

methods of addressing generalizability, validity, and reliability (Creswell, 1994; Eisner, 1991). Qualitative and quantitative studies are equally concerned with the accuracy of a study.

Accuracy. Accuracy in qualitative studies can be controlled by employing what Creswell (1994) referred to as "member checks" (p. 158). According to Creswell (1994), when employing member checks, subjects give feedback to the researcher as to whether specific quotes, categories, and conclusions are accurate. This study employed member checks as its primary check for accuracy. Creswell (1994) noted that member checks can also be used as a strategy to ensure the validity of a qualitative study. Validity in qualitative studies can be established through a process of triangulation.

Creswell (1994) recognized that triangulation emphasizes the need to combine methodologies to study a phenomenon. Triangulation can also be used as an assurance of validity in qualitative studies (Denzin, 1970, Creswell, 1994). Jick (1979) recognized Denzin's (1970) use of triangulation as a means to reduce any bias inherent in the researcher, data source, or method through the use of different methodologies. Creswell (1994) synthesized Jick's concept of triangulation into a "convergence among sources of information, different investigators, or different methods of data collection" (p. 158). Triangulation has been employed when additional data sources became available during the course of the study. In addition to triangulation, using detailed descriptions has assisted the researcher's efforts to ensure the accuracy of that data.

Merriam (1988) suggested the process of using detailed information in the form of "rich, thick descriptions" to aid in the transferability of the findings. Transferability has specific consequences in regard to the generalization of qualitative findings. Rich, thick, descriptive data was used to support the generalizability of this study's findings.

Generalizability. Generalizability of a study's findings has been identified as an important element for researchers to consider. The generalizability of findings has been associated with the transference of knowledge. Eisner (1991) recognized this association and believed that most transferences of knowledge are generalizations derived from life itself. The concept of generalizability has been articulated by Eisner. Building upon Bruner's ideas, Eisner (1991) noted: "Generalizing can be regarded not only as going beyond the information given (Bruner, 1973), but also as transferring what has been learned from one situation to another" (p. 198). Referring to quantitative research and random sampling, Eisner (1991) stated:

In research the ability to generalize depends upon a statistical process through which a sample is randomly selected from a population. . . . Random sampling is the cornerstone on which statistical inferences are built; [but he also recognizes that in our lives, we generalize without randomly sampling]. . . . we do, in fact, learn lessons 'from life,' from events that are about as far from random as they can be (p. 197).

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) noted: "When researchers use the term generalizability they are usually referring to whether the findings of a study hold up beyond the specific research subjects and setting involved" (p. 44). Bogdan and Biklen went on to articulate generalizability from the view of the qualitative researcher:

Some qualitative researchers do not think of generalizability in the conventional way. They are more interested in deriving universal statements of general social processes than statements of commonality between similar settings. . . . Therefore, they concern themselves not with the question of whether their findings are generalizable, but rather with the question of to which other settings and subjects they are generalizable (p. 45).

According to Eisner (1991), there exists anticipatory generalizability and retrospective generalizability.

Anticipatory generalizability is the most common type and its validity is determined to the extent that what we expect from the findings actually happens. Eisner

(1991) noted: "If we find that some experimental treatment has an effect on a randomly selected group, we expect that groups like the sample would be similarly influenced if we employed the same treatment" (p. 205). The second type of generalizability, retrospective, has emerged from another process. Eisner (1991) called attention to retrospective generalizability:

It [retrospective generalizability] is developed not by randomly sampling and using findings to anticipate the future, but by encountering or formulating an idea that allows us to see our past experience in a new light. Retrospective generalizations find their subject matter by examining history rather than by anticipating the future (p. 205).

These two types of generalizability have normally been associated with specific research paradigms; that is, anticipatory generalizations are associated with quantitative paradigms, and retrospective generalizations are associated with qualitative paradigms.

Eisner (1991) articulated who determines the generalizability within each research paradigm. Comparing quantitative and qualitative paradigms, Eisner (1991) wrote:

[In quantitative studies] the construction of a generalization is left to the researcher. Whereas, in qualitative case studies the researcher can also generalize, but it is more likely that readers will determine whether the research findings fit the situation in which they work (p. 203-204).

These generalizing qualities are not so much located in truth, as in their ability to refine perception and to deepen conversation (Rorty, 1979). Such a conception of generalization, as posited by Eisner (1991) and Rorty (1979), lightened the burden on the researcher. This lightened burden should not be regarded as an invitation to irresponsible description, interpretation, or evaluation, but rather as a reflection of the recognition that generalizations are tools with which we work and are to be shaped in context. Generalizations have been a part of the substantive exchange between

professionals with their own expertise, not prescriptions from the doctor. Generalizations are determined and limited by the research paradigm that generated the findings (Eisner, 1991).

In regard to the generalization of findings from qualitative studies, Eisner (1991) put the responsibility on the user of the research and not the researcher:

Since no generalization can fit an individual context perfectly, modification is always necessary. The modification requires judgment on the part of intelligent practitioners. Hence, they are the ones who must act upon the situation after researchers have finished their work. In the end, it is practitioners, the users of ideas, who must determine whether the ideas that are available are appropriate to their situation (p. 212).

Generalizations from this study's findings should be made with the cautions mentioned above. Individuals generalizing from this study must adhere to Eisner's postulations and determine if the findings are appropriate to their situation.

Sampling. When determining the generalizability of a study's findings, the user of these findings should consider the research sample. Creswell (1994) noted the need for purposeful sampling: "The idea of qualitative research is to purposefully select informants (or documents or visual material) that will best answer the research question" (p. 148). When employing analytic induction, purposeful sampling has normally been utilized because it is believed that the chosen subjects will expand the development of an emerging theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Therefore, the method of sampling for this study has been purposeful. Subjects were chosen because they were either a middle-level manager or a follower, and it was believed that their participation would assist the development of an emerging theory regarding followers. The subjects for this study represented several different sites.

This research study involved a multi-site design incorporating organizations

representing education, business, and government agencies. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) recommended a multi-site study incorporating more than two or three sites and subjects to develop a theory.

Data Reporting

After the data were collected from the subjects in this study, checked for accuracy, and analyzed, it was reported in the form of a narrative. This section, Data Reporting, consists of two parts, "The Role of the Researcher" and the "Narrative." The first part, "The Role of the Researcher" is of particular interest as it addresses any inherent bias by the researcher.

The Role of the Researcher. Researchers of qualitative studies have brought to their studies their own biases, values and judgments (Creswell, 1994). Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman (1987) believed that it is important and useful for researchers to be aware of, and acknowledge, their biases, values, and judgments. Miller (1992) highlighted the importance of researchers identifying their personal values, assumptions, and biases; especially in light of the fact that the researcher is the primary data collection instrument. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) also viewed the bias of the researcher as worrisome, "particularly when the data must 'go through' the researcher's mind before they are put on paper" (p. 46). LeCompte (1987) stated that qualitative researchers should be aware of the effect their bias may have on the data. Other scholars such as Bogdan & Biklen (1992) noted that qualitative researchers attempt to bring objectivity to their interpretation of data as they "constantly confront his or her own opinions and prejudices with the data" (p. 46). Researchers need to be aware that they can bias the data they receive.

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) regarded detailed field notes, which incorporate reflection as well as the researcher's subjectivity, as a primary guard against the inherent biases of the researcher. To guard against researcher bias, the use of an interview form

(see Appendix B), recording explicit as well as implicit data, was used to create detailed field notes. In addition to the detailed field notes, reflective notes, in the form of field memos, were available for each interview (see Appendix C). Every effort was made to either eliminate researcher bias or identify existing bias.

Eisner (1991) drew attention to the fact that the researcher's background can influence the interpretation of the data. Therefore Eisner (1991) suggested that "knowing who the researcher is and where he or she has come from is not altogether irrelevant" (p. 193). This researcher's perception of followers has been shaped by ten years of experience as a high school art teacher and coach, nine years as a public school administrator, and nine years of graduate studies in educational leadership. For the past three years, this researcher has been viewing leadership literature through the lens of a follower. He has witnessed first hand the power of followers, in their support of leaders as well as their actions to undermine the efforts of leaders and those choosing to follow those leaders. This researcher's interactions with leadership theories have been influenced by authors writing for the business community. He enters this study with a bias that the perceptions of followers are similar among business, government entities, and public education. The researcher of this study acknowledges these biases. The actions of the researcher can also bias data.

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) have noted that researchers have a responsibility not to influence the response of the subjects by making pejorative comments during the interview. The researcher should also take special care to make the subject feel relaxed and safe during and after the interview. Eisner (1991) as well as Bogdan and Biklen (1992) believed that the researcher should take care to conduct the interview as a good conversation. According to Eisner (1991), researchers should be "listening intently and asking questions that focus on concrete examples and feelings rather than an abstract

speculations, which are less likely to provide genuinely meaningful information" (p. 183). Researchers also have other responsibilities.

Eisner (1991) has noted that researchers also have an important responsibility to "leave a site clean." Leaving a site clean is a camping analogy representing the need to leave an area as the camper found it, and therefore not contaminating it for the next user. To maintain this ethical standard, researchers must adhere to their promises, maintain confidentiality, as well as being respectful of the site and its subjects during and after the study.

Narrative

After the data for a study have been collected and analyzed, it is reported in the study's narrative. Scholars have recommended that the findings from a qualitative study be reported in narrative form (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 1994; Eisner, 1991). There appears to be no single way in which to present qualitative findings (Lofland, 1974). Bogdan & Biklen, (1992) noted that formats for qualitative narratives exist along a continuum from traditional didactic (even though data is gathered inductively) to nontraditional presentations that have been described as portrait writing or storytelling. Creswell (1994) suggested that narratives present information in text or image forms. Regardless of the presentation style, Eisner (1991) believed that "this narrative should be supported by evidence, structurally coordinated and coherent, but it cannot be a disembodied listing of what somebody did or saw" (p. 190). Eisner (1991) articulated the thematic structure as providing the conceptual nucleus for the story, "being derived inductively from the material researchers have put together and from the observations they have made" (pp. 190-191). Rich, thick descriptions were used to present the findings of this study in a narrative format. The narrative incorporated quotations to amplify

categories that have emerged as suggested by several research scholars (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 1994; Eisner, 1991).

Summary of Methodology

The methodology for this study employed a qualitative research design. Through the inductive process of qualitative designs, a grounded theory was pursued during the analyses of data. This grounded theory was based upon the perception of followers and their perceived role in organizational success. Data collection occurred through semi-structured one-on-one interviews with followers in organizations representing education, business, and government agencies. Each interview was conducted utilizing a standard interview protocol. During the interview, data were recorded through note taking by the researcher. Field memos were also used to supplement data collected during the interviews. Member checks were used to verify the collected data.

The methodology described in this chapter provided the framework for this study's data collection. The findings of the analyzed data are reported in the following chapter. Chapter Four, Findings From the Qualitative Inquiry describes the procedure of analytic induction and explains the emergence of a grounded theory.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings From the Qualitative Inquiry

This study was guided by two general research questions: (a) How are followers perceived? and (b) What role do followers believe they play in an organization's success? Data pertaining to these two questions and the analyses of that data are reported in this section. Twelve subjects were purposefully selected for this study and interviewed within an eight day period. Three of the subjects, two males and one female, are employed in a K-12 public school; six subjects, all male, are employed in two private businesses (three subjects from each business); and finally, three male subjects are employed by the federal government. The subjects were individually interviewed by the same researcher in a confidential setting at the organization in which they are employed. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using a standard protocol and included 28 questions that sought data pertaining to the two general research questions previously mentioned.

For the purpose of this study, descriptive data are reported in a narrative form and amplified using direct quotations extracted from the interview notes. These quotes are presented verbatim and connected to the correct source even though a fictitious name is consistently used for each of the 12 subjects. The identities of the subjects and their place of employment have been purposely concealed. The confidentiality of this information did not detract from the collection or analysis of any data.

The analysis of data from each subject in this study to determine relationships, processes, and phenomena yielded seven important categories. One category, Perception of Followers, emerges as the core category. This core category encompasses the remaining six subcategories and has a direct relationship with each subcategory. The six subcategories are: (a) Motivation, (b) Involvement, (c) Commitment, (d) Independent and

Critical Thinking, (e) Effectiveness, and (f) Relationships Within the Organization. The relationships between all categories and their properties comprise the narrative of this study. This narrative could not have evolved without the depth of data provided by each subject.

Subjects for this study provided data through detailed descriptions of their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. General information pertaining to the subjects for this study can be found in Table 1. Table 1 presents demographic information for each subject; the type of organization in which they are employed; their gender; the number of years they have been in the organization; the number of years that they have been in their current position; their organizational designation based on the gatekeeper's identification of the subjects as middle-level managers or followers; and their self-selected position as a leader or a follower.

Table 1

Subject Information

subject	organ.	male/female	years in organ.	years in position	designated position	self-selected position
#1	Education	male	18	10	follower	leader
#2	Education	male	11	7	leader	leader
#3	Education	female	9	3	follower	leader
#4	Business	male	12	4	leader	leader
#5	Business	male	4	3	follower	leader
#6	Business	male	13	6.5	follower	leader
#7	Business	male	8 mo.	8 mo.	leader	leader
#8	Business	male	10	8	follower	leader
#9	Business	male	10	10	follower	leader
#10	Government	male	32	3	leader	leader
#11	Government	male	26.5	10	follower	leader
#12	Government	male	25	6	follower	leader

The analysis of data for this study follows the format suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and utilizes the process of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. These processes of taking the data apart, analyzing relationships and re-contextualizing the data form the basis for the narrative report. The first step used to examine the data from each subject was an open coding process.

Open Coding

Open coding involved the making of comparisons and the asking of questions (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Utilizing an open coding methodology, data collected from this study were initially broken down into discrete parts and examined for relationships. This process revealed the following six general categories: (a) Motivation, (b) Involvement, (c) Commitment, (d) Thinking, (e) Effectiveness, and (f) Relationships Within the Organization. These six categories were then examined for their properties and dimensional range. Strauss and Corbin (1990) stated that the process of open coding stimulates the discovery not only of categories but also of their properties. Properties, within the open coding process, have been defined by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as "attributes or characteristics pertaining to a category" (p. 61). Properties were also analyzed to determine their dimensional range. The first of these categories to be examined was motivation.

Motivation

Table 2 presents the category of motivation, and the dimensional range of the properties related to motivation.

Table 2

Properties and Dimensional Range of the Motivation Category

Category	Properties	Dimensional range	
motivation	acting as leader	by default	----> providing needed leadership
		working alone	----> working with others
	continuation in the organization	can't leave	----> fulfills personal need
	fair salary	no	----> yes, because of the total compensation

Each property and dimensional range of the category Motivation is supported with descriptive narratives. These narratives are derived from data collected from each subject of this study and are listed in the table preceding the narrative. After data for each property have been reported in narrative form, the data is related to the literature review. This stage of the open coding process begins with the property: "Acting as a Leader" and refers to Table 2.

Acting as a Leader. Subjects justified their self-selection as a leader by reflecting on past experiences that they believed led them to their current position. Whatever they perceived as the reason, the subjects were firm in their belief that they are leaders. The dimension range for acting as a leader included a subject who felt that they were a leader by default to those who perceived themselves effective in achieving organizational goals whether it be through efforts of their own or through teamwork. Two subjects reported a history of being put in leadership roles. One subject, Philip, reported: "Since youth I have

been put in leadership roles, often by peers." Lack of leadership was alluded to as another reason for subjects becoming leaders. Tom, laughingly proclaimed that there are "too many lame-Os around here to follow [sic]." He believed that there were two reasons why he is a leader, (a) his personality style; he gets things done and (b) his ability to provide quality leadership. Another subject in this study stated, "part of the reason [that I became a leader], I can provide better leadership than what I saw above me [sic]."

All but one subject noted the importance of working with others. Bruce reported that he is a loner who is confident in making decisions and being responsible for his actions. The other subjects in this study viewed their ability to build teams and work with others as reasons why they felt that they were leaders. Barry, who occupies a middle level position within his educational organization, took satisfaction in surrounding himself with good people. Others reported their satisfaction when working with their leader. Sue, a classroom teacher, emphatically proclaimed her loyalty to her leader, "I would work for my leader [if I were] staked to an ant hill in the Sahara."

Continuation in the Organization. The majority of subjects reported that they continued to work in the organization because of personal needs being fulfilled. Jim, an upper level manager, reflected that his position offered great personal rewards. Several subjects noted their enjoyment when working with challenges. One of the subjects felt that there is something keeping him in the organization, stating, "I feel God wants me here." Finally, Joe, who has been with his organization for 32 years, reflected that he can not leave the organization even though he has been in it so long that he could retire at any time, pausing, he noted: "I'm too old to do something else."

Fair Salary. Subjects who felt that their salaries were not fair believe that their salaries were too low. Sue was firm in her response: "Fair? (pause) not really (sigh), I think very few people could work with this age group and get the cooperation, attention,

respect, and learning from the kids that I do." Others who displayed dissatisfaction with their salary, spoke of comparisons to similar positions in other organizations. Dave, a subject from the business sector, believed his salary was too low. Dave was confident when he said, "I have a lot of documentation on ways that I have saved money in the past. They [upper management] are now aware of it because of a new leader." Some subjects accepted their salaries as fair for reasons other than the amount of money they take home on payday.

One subject from education and one subject from a government agency accepted the amount of their current salary as they viewed themselves as public servants. One of the public servants, Philip, realized that what he gives up in salary dollars he received back in the security of having a government job. Subjects who felt their salaries were fair referred to more than just their salary, they mentioned their compensation. They used the term compensation to include a combination of benefits, financial and intrinsic. Joe, a seasoned veteran in a government agency, reflected to a time when he was paid "in sunrises and sunsets." Barry realized that his salary allowed him to live in an area that he finds appealing and offers benefits not everyone enjoys.

Motivation and the Literature Review. The subjects in this study perceived themselves as leaders. The leadership literature supports their perception. Numerous leadership scholars concluded that individuals experience leadership as both leaders and followers (Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; DePree, 1989; Hollander, 1978; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Smith, D., 1996; Smith, W., 1994; Yukl, 1998). Some subjects noted that they have become leaders because of a lack of leadership. These findings are in agreement with Burns (1978) and Heifetz (1994) who believed that followers fill the void left when leaders fail to act. Followers, who have perceived themselves as leaders, are

fulfilling a personal need, and this may be one reason why they continue working in the organization. The reasons that followers gave for continuing to work in an organization were related to their motivation and involvement.

Involvement

Table 3 presents the category of involvement and the dimensional range of the properties related to involvement.

Table 3

Properties and Dimensional Range of the Involvement Category

Category	Properties	Dimensional range
involvement	involvement within the organization	defined by job description ----> influencing actions
	confronted with obstacles	passive ----> active
	disagreements	seek clarification ----> attempt to influence

For the purpose of this study, the category "involvement" consists of three properties. The properties are: (a) involvement within the organization, (b) confronted with obstacles, and (c) disagreements. Each property is described and includes the dimensional range as reported by the subjects. Following the three narratives is a brief synopsis of the literature relating to the data pertaining to the category involvement. The first property to be discussed is "involvement within the organization" and refers to Table 3.

Involvement Within the Organization. Some subjects reported their involvement within the organization by giving only their job title, and a short description of their assigned duties, or by describing what they do to enhance their organization. Subjects in

education defined their involvement by position titles whereas those subjects from organizations in business and government were more explicit when describing their involvement. Philip, who works in a government organization, viewed his involvement as providing leadership; direction and decisions both horizontally and vertically within his organization. Mark, who is employed in the business sector, perceived himself as senior management and described his involvement as participating in long term strategies and setting the tone of the organization's actions. Bill, a government employee, described his involvement from a macro perspective and perceived himself as an advocate for people throughout the organization.

Confronted with Obstacles. When confronted with an obstacle, all subjects reported some type of strategy. One subject, Barry, reported his action as no action. He preferred to sit back and wait. Barry had experienced many cases where the problems solved themselves, although he did note that some cases got worse! Explaining his strategy, Barry said, "the natural thing is to find the quickest solution; this may not be the wisest [sic]. I have become slow and deliberate." Several subjects preferred to "jump in with both feet." Bruce's strategy was similar to those who prefer to jump right in; "I'm not good at waiting. I jump in. I get involved. Is it a battle worth fighting? If it is worth dying on, I will." Most subjects expressed their desire to reassess the issue to better understand the obstacle. They repeatedly referred to involving others for that person's expertise or additional information. Ray believed that his job was to get the people together to solve the issue. Part of their reassessment plan was to determine if they wanted to continue to overcome the obstacle. Sue summarized many of the subjects' responses when she said, "I figure a way to get over, under, or around it."

Disagreements. When directions appear to be contrary to expressed goals, all subjects but one expressed the need to voice their concern and seek clarification. Some

subjects determined their response after they had identified where the obstacle was coming from. Philip noted, "I am not a strong objector when it comes from above, even though it may appear contradictory [to expressed goals]." He justified this strategy by saying, "I am a good soldier, I take it the best I can without taking it too personal." The vast majority of subjects reported the need to voice their opinion. Sue's strategy was typical of the majority of responses: "Go to the leader immediately, in a tactful, diplomatic way, and express the concern. Ask for help to better understand it [the obstacle]."

Communicating with the leader when there is disagreement was a strategy reported by all subjects. Subjects reported a range of strategies from seeking clarification to aggressively confronting the leader. Tom was aggressive in his strategy; "I tell him, I flat out tell him. I'm through working for lame managers." The important issue appears to have been that the subject has the opportunity to express their feelings. Several respondents noted that eventually they would accept the decision. Barry stated, "At some point in time, I'll hit a brick wall and [then I will] back off." Being able to express their opinions appeared to be important to the subjects. After they felt that they had been heard, the majority of subjects reported acceptance of the directions. As Joe put it, "As long as I have had my say, then I will do what needs to be done."

Involvement and the Literature Review. The perception of their involvement reported by the subjects in this study are in agreement with Chaleff (1995) who posited that the actions taken by followers impacts the leader's position. Subjects also referred to their involvement as providing leadership. In accordance with the literature, several authors (Kelley, 1988; Kouzes and Posner, 1993; Smith, 1996) have posited that effective following involves the same skills as leading. The strategies reported by the subjects (with the exception of the one subject reporting the taking of no action) when confronted

with an obstacle were in agreement with Yeomans (1996) and Yukl (1998) who believed that followers should take charge when confronted with an obstacle. The one subject electing to use the strategy of no action has been described by scholars (Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995) as a subordinate.

Subordinates are universally viewed as being passive, doing what is asked of them and little else. Bringing in others to help with the obstacle also has support in the literature.

Kelley (1992) reported that people working together can achieve more than they could on their own. When directions appear contrary to expressed goals, subjects reported the need to voice their concern. This type of action has been referred to by Chaleff (1995) and Kelley (1988, 1992) as courageous actions. Numerous scholars have believed that courageous actions involve challenging the decisions of leaders (Buhler, 1993; Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Yukl, 1998). Strategies to communicate effectively and courageously have been recognized by DePree (1989), Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman (1998) and Yeomans (1996). Chaleff (1995) also supported these strategies and he noted that followers should seek clarification through communication, especially before implementing dubious instructions. Being involved was important for the majority of subjects in this study and contributed to their level of commitment.

Commitment

Table 4 presents the category of commitment and the dimensional range of the properties related to commitment.

Table 4

Properties and Dimensional Range of the Commitment Category

Category	Properties	Dimensional range
commitment	identify with organizational goals	identify ----> don't identify
	support their leader	yes ----> no

For the purposes of this study, the category "commitment" consists of two properties. The properties are: (a) identify with organizational goals and (b) support their leader. Each property is described and includes the dimensional range as reported by the subjects. Following the two narratives is a brief synopsis of the literature relating to the data pertaining to the category commitment. The first property is "identify with organizational goals" and refers to Table 4.

Identify with Organizational Goals. Subjects reported a wide of range of identification with organizational goals. Tom wondered what the organizational goals were and questioned if anyone was following them. Bruce viewed himself as a non-conformist and often found himself in opposition with the organization's leadership. He believed that the leadership "sold out" and therefore did not trust them. On the other end of the range were Sue and Bill. Sue stated, "I couldn't pursue them [the organizational goals] professionally if I didn't believe in them personally." Bill chose his career in the government agency because he believed in its mandate and goals; he supports and embraces those goals.

Support Their Leader. All subjects reported having high commitment to their leader. Bruce noted that he would go above and beyond his normal duties for his leader because of the way the leader conducted himself and treated others. Steve believed that as a leader, "you give what you get." Ray was even more emphatic about his leader: "I'd

walk through fire for him." According to Ray, "It is more important who you work for than the job!" Tom noted that when he feels supported, his level of commitment rises.

Communication was reported by all subjects as an important way of supporting or not supporting their leader. Numerous subjects felt that they supported their leaders by being loyal to them when the leader was not present. Ray typified these actions with the following statement: "I never, in front of anyone who works for me, give the impression that the leader is not good for the product line and that he supports us 100 percent." Tom was troubled by a meeting, where the leader was not present, and others began to talk negatively about the leader. Tom stated that he was noticeably silent. Those subjects who referred to communication with the leader as a way of supporting the leader, emphasized the importance of telling the truth. Mark noted the importance of keeping the leader informed with candid feedback. According to Mark, this feedback can be challenging in a supportive way, "if you just have yes folks around, you are in a world of hurt." Tom added to this theme, "Telling him [the leader] directly is important; it's part of my job to assist him." Several subjects noted the importance of making their leader successful. Ray's comment summarized these feelings; "If he [the leader] is successful, we all are successful."

Not talking directly and truthfully was viewed by many of the subjects as a way of not supporting the leader. Mark was adamant that "withholding your view point, [just] following orders is non support." Tom viewed his non-support as not giving his leader feedback: "I didn't say one word. I just let it die. It is not support because I'm not giving positive or negative feedback." Philip also noted that he exhibited a lack of support for his leader by not getting everything done that the leader wanted. Not being adamant enough was identified by several subjects as a way that they don't support their leader.

Philip chose to say nothing; "[I'm] not going to say something negative. I'll be silent."

After a long pause, Bill talked as though he was confessing:

"I don't provide contrary views or the bad news in as a hard hitting fashion as I could. I could be more direct. If I see the leader heading down the wrong road, I could be a little harsher in my advice or comments on his decision."

Subjects reported a variety of strategies they used to support their leader.

Commitment and the Literature Review. For those subjects in this study who reported believing in the organization's goals there is support in the literature. As Chaleff (1995) and Yeomans (1996) posited, supportive actions included meeting the organization's needs. Working cooperatively with the leader has been recognized as a form of commitment by Alcorn (1992), Kelley (1992), and Yukl (1998). The importance of communication has also been recognized as an important skill by DePree (1989), Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman (1998) and Yeomans (1996). Those subjects who reported supporting their leader even though the leader was absent are in accordance with Covey (1989) who believed that individuals should "... be loyal to those who are not present" (p. 196). Speaking truthfully to the leader has been recognized as essential for followers by Chaleff (1995) and Kouzes and Posner (1993). These actions involved analysis of specific situations as well as independent and critical thinking skills.

Independent and Critical Thinking

Table 5 presents the category of independent and critical thinking and the dimensional range of the properties related to independent and critical thinking.

Table 5

Properties and Dimensional Range of the Independent and Critical Thinking Category

Category	Properties	Dimensional range
independent and critical thinking	accomplishing an important task	individually ----> involving others
	encountering a problem	passive ----> active

For the purposes of this study, the category “independent and critical thinking” consists of two properties. The properties are: (a) accomplishing an important task and (b) encountering a problem. Each property is described and includes the dimensional range as reported by the subjects. Following the two narratives is a brief synopsis of the literature relating to the data pertaining to the category independent and critical thinking. The first property is "accomplishing an important task" and refers to Table 5.

Accomplishing an Important Task. When asked how they accomplish an important task, the subjects' responses described the analytical process they utilize. Bruce's comments reflected some caution, "I decide if I want to take it on. I have done it [taken something on] before and shouldn't have. I see a lot of people saying yes to everything." Two subjects described their process without including anyone else. Joe realized that he is not good at delegation, but he is a hard worker and not afraid to take risks. At times, he sees himself as a martyr. Involving others was a strategy utilized by the majority of the subjects. Realizing that he did not have all the answers, Barry surrounded himself with the best people and used their knowledge and expertise.

Many subjects began their strategy by looking to the end. This process appeared to allow the subjects to break the task down into pieces. Sue looked immediately to the end and worked backwards; Jim loved to divide and conquer. Philip's strategy

exemplified this process; he liked to get a handle on the job quickly by breaking off pieces. Within this process, Philip gathered information to determine how long the task would take, who was most likely to accomplish it, identified needed resources, and finally determined if the task was reasonable.

Encountering a Problem. When problems arose while subjects were accomplishing the task, a variety of strategies were reported. Bruce looked first to himself, attempting to see what he may be doing wrong. Sue pushed ahead and let the "chips fall where they may." Jim used a strategy similar to Sue's: "[I] make the decision and go for it. [I] don't worry if it's right or wrong." Most subjects took a methodical approach, looking at their options and seeking more information. Barry believed that there aren't many problems that can't be solved, although he was willing to be flexible and change the decision if need be! Dave reported a simpler process. He sought out more information and if he couldn't solve the problem, he brought it to his leader. Eight of the 12 subjects reported seeking the involvement of others. Joe noted, "I'm resourceful, I don't pretend to know the answers. I can find the people [to solve the task]."

Independent and Critical Thinking and the Literature Review. Several leadership scholars recognized the need for followers, attempting to accomplish a task, to utilize independent and critical thinking (Buhler, 1993; DePree, 1989; Kelley, 1992). Subjects reported utilizing the assistance of others to accomplish an important task. Kelley (1992) and Yukl (1998) stated that followers participate in relationships for a variety of reasons. Creating networks within the organizations can aid followers in their quest as active participants in the organization (Kelley, 1992). The majority of subjects reported utilizing some sort of preconceived strategy when encountering a problem. Their activity was aligned with scholars who noted that followers are active participants who utilize critical

thinking (Kelley, 1988, 1992, 1998; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1992, 1995; Yukl, 1998). Using a variety of strategies and involving others to solve problems enhanced the individual's effectiveness.

Effectiveness

Table 6 presents the category of effectiveness and the dimensional range of the properties related to effectiveness.

Table 6

Properties and Dimensional Range of the Effectiveness Category

Category	Properties	Dimensional range	
effectiveness	enhancing the organization	aware	----> not aware
		individual skills	----> working with others
	actions attributed to leaders	skill driven	----> working with people
	organizational leadership	positive	----> negative

For the purposes of this study, the category "effectiveness" consists of three properties. The properties are: (a) enhancing the organization, (b) actions attributed to leaders, and (c) organizational leadership. Each property is described and includes the dimensional range as reported by the subjects. Following the three narratives is a brief synopsis of the literature relating to the data pertaining to the category "effectiveness." The first property is "enhancing the organization" and refers to Table 6.

Enhancing the Organization. One subject was not aware of his effectiveness; Barry proclaimed, "I have no idea. I don't have an answer." The remaining subjects were aware of their effectiveness and could articulate their perception as to why they were

effective. Several noted their strengths and weaknesses. Most referred to evaluations from their leader and two noted evaluations from people who report to them.

All subjects stated that they enhanced the organization. Several subjects reported that they enhanced the organization by the skills they demonstrate. Philip strove for good communication, giving clear directions and communicating the bigger picture, awarding successes, and providing training opportunities. Other subjects viewed their ability to enhance the organization by helping others to improve and by building teams. Mark tried to draw out others in the decision making process, utilizing their expertise. Celebrating the success of others was also a way individuals can enhance the organization. Subjects also reported the importance of being creative. Several described themselves as creative thinkers, coming up with new and better ways to do their job. Only one subject, Tom, referred to the quality of his performance; when speaking of his effectiveness he reported that he makes the facilities the best that they can be with the budget he is given.

Actions Attributed to Leaders. When asked to describe things they do that are normally attributed to leaders, all subjects were able to immediately respond. Several subjects referred to accepting responsibility as a behavior attributed to leaders. Barry reported that he was responsible for anything that happened in his area. He articulated this by saying, "The buck stops here, in my eyes and the eyes of my leader." Working with others was viewed as a leadership behavior by the subjects in this study. Bruce summarized his efforts; "I try to make myself available to others who look like they need help." Philip believed that he encourages and inspires staff. Mark was positive about people, building up their self-esteem. Barry was in agreement with Mark; he saw his responsibility as making everyone feel good about themselves. Those subjects not preferring to working with others mentioned lists of skills that they felt leaders should possess.

Organizational Leadership. Examining the effectiveness of leadership in the organization yields a dimensional range from positive to negative. Some subjects felt positive about their immediate leader, but not positive about the top leadership. Those subjects that had negative feelings about their leadership were quite assertive in their responses. Bruce remarked that the people in his organization were tired of flunky leaders. Tom, working in a different organization than Bruce, stated that "leaders are driven by the fear of being found out [that] they are incompetent." Leaders were also criticized for not providing a clear direction.

Providing direction or the lack of direction was mentioned by most subjects. Those subjects who felt that their leadership provided direction had a positive feeling about the organization. Ray noted this strength in his organization as he believed that the caliber of upper management was exceptional for his industry. Referring to the upper management in his organization, Ray stated, "there is no doubt they know where we want to go as a company." Lack of direction from the organizational leadership was also noted by several subjects. Barry noted that his organization doesn't have a sense of direction. He reported that they have an organizational mission; however, each area does their own thing, regardless if it interferes with another area. Frustrated, Barry exclaimed, "We lack a constant direction that we are all moving towards." Philip believed that his organization was hurt because of a lack of leadership at the top. Organizational direction is communicated to the followers and how this direction is accepted by those followers depends upon their relationships within the organization.

Effectiveness and the Literature Review. Subjects reporting that they enhance the organization by the skills they possess, as well as demonstrate, are supported by the postulations of Kelley (1992, 1998) and Sergiovanni (1992). The data from the interviews conducted as part of this research contains a plethora of references to the behaviors

followers exhibit that are attributed to leaders. These findings are supported by numerous authors who believe that followers experience relationships as both leaders and followers (Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; DePree, 1989; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Smith, D., 1996; Smith, W., 1994; Yukl, 1998).

Relationships Within the Organization

Table 7 presents the category of relationships within the organization and the dimensional range of the properties related to relationships.

Table 7

Properties and Dimensional Range of the Relationships Within the Organization Category

Category	Properties	Dimensional range	
relationships within the organization	giving feedback	openly	----> cautious
	required to act contrary to conscience	yes	----> no
	with leader	good	----> cautious
	with colleagues	aware	----> not aware
	trust	yes	----> no

For the purpose of this study, the category "relationships within the organization" consists of five properties. The properties are: (a) giving feedback, (b) required to act in a manner contrary to conscience, (c) relationships with leader, (d) relationships with colleagues, and (e) trust. Each property is described and includes the dimensional range as reported by the subjects. Following the two narratives is a brief synopsis of the literature relating

to the data pertaining to the category "relationships within the organization." The first property is "giving feedback" and refers to Table 7.

Giving Feedback. Subjects within the same organization reported similar responses regarding their feelings when giving feedback to their leader. Subjects from three of the four organizations reported positive feelings when giving feedback to their leader. Leaders were described as being approachable and open when receiving feedback. Subjects with positive feelings reported that they felt that their leader listened to them. Mark reported that his leader does not want shaded feedback. He did note that on issues with a larger context, he must be judicious in sharing everything with his leader. Mark reported that his input is valued and appreciated, even though he and his leader don't always agree. According to the subjects, how feedback is given to the leader should also be considered. Dave noted the importance of good communication, including both positive and negative items. Steve was somewhat cautious, he recognized the importance of knowing the culture of the organization. In his organization, feedback is well accepted if you are positive and productive; if not, keep it to yourself! Sue said that she is confident in how her leader will receive her feedback. Not all subjects reported being comfortable giving their leader feedback.

Those subjects who reported being nervous or cautious do so because they are unsure of how the leader will respond to their feedback. Joe, stating that he is nervous because he does not know how his leader will respond, noted, "I'm a buffer, I pick my fights and times to bring some things up." Other subjects, referring to the same leader, described their feelings as apprehensive, saying that, "I'm never quite sure how he is going to take my feedback." and noting "there are times when it is less comfortable [giving feedback to the leader]."

Mark believed that a person should be sensitive to the leader's hot buttons: "If you want to be accepted, the responsibility is with the communicator." Several subjects from different organizations reported providing open and honest feedback. Jim noted that a person shouldn't lie; "Tell him [the leader] the truth. If you do, he will help you make the decision the way it should be [made]." Bruce and Joe recognized the importance of providing accurate information. As Bruce put it, when giving feedback, be "open, honest, and [give it] in a respectful way; not lowering ourselves to yelling and screaming."

Required to Act Contrary to Conscience. The majority of subjects reported situations when they felt that they were asked to do something that was contrary to their conscience. Their responses ranged from not acting on the request to acting as requested. Mark's strategy was to massage the request, even though he noted that "acting against my conscience [is] not a very comfortable situation." This issue seemed to affect Philip. In a pensive manner, Philip reflected:

"I have been asked to act where I personally disagreed; [my] conscience told me there was a better way of doing it. I've wrestled with it on and off the job. How to resolve it internally or externally? (pause) It puts me in a thoughtful mood."

Relationships with Leaders. The majority of subjects stated that they enjoy a positive relationship with their leader. Jim stated that his relationship with his leader is "honest, open, fair, respectful; all the things you would want. If I didn't have them, I would leave." The issues of honesty, trust, and openness surfaced in the subject's responses. Ray felt that his relationship with his leader was excellent; "He trusts my decision skills. He knows I keep the bigger picture in mind. He knows that I will call him with questions. We have a great deal of mutual respect for each other."

Although no subjects felt that their relationship with their leader is negative, several reported a lack of comfortableness with their leader. Tom, who has worked with his leader for less than a year, described his relationships as a "journey." He and his

leader are building trust. Philip reported that his relationship has had its "ups and downs." He rationalized this roller coaster of a relationship as being a result of different personality styles. Summarizing his situation, Philip stated:

"My personality style demands closure. His [Philip's leader] personality style doesn't need closure. He is off on a new idea or direction before staff has had closure. At times this causes frustration as we don't know what idea we should be on." Reflecting, Philip adds, "I ask a lot of questions as a way of coping before I head off on a new task. Sometimes I miss the mark. Sometimes I'm right on."

For the most part, subjects were confident in how their leader felt about them. The relationships appeared to be reciprocal. Subjects based their perception of how their leader felt about them through performance appraisals and the leader's trust in them. Ray reported that his leader respected his abilities, "[the leader] trusts my decision making skills and capabilities." Philip reported his relationship with his leader as mixed:

"At times he [Philip's leader] has said that I'm the best he has run into; at times he has said that with a little training, someone could do my job in six months." Philip adds, "At times I haven't pleased him but it doesn't give me reason to give up."

Relationships with Colleagues. When referring to their relationships with their colleagues, all subjects reported a positive feeling. Two subjects, both in the same educational organization, were not quite sure how their colleagues feel about them, but they believed it is positive. Barry recognized that he has a good relationship with his colleagues. He added, "we talk openly but probably don't say everything on our mind." Mark described his relationships with colleagues as very healthy; "One where they feel comfortable sharing ideas. I know when to call on them for help." Jim viewed his relationship with his colleagues as mixed. He felt that his relationship with one group was strained. Jim thought that they probably say, "... what does he think he is doing; rewarding success?" With the other group, Jim felt that his relationship was excellent. He believes that they say, "God I love what you do. I'm right on board." Most subjects

referred to collegiality when discussing their relationships with their colleagues. Philip noted that "there is a common caring and dedication to our work and sometimes common frustrations." This common caring can relate to trust within an organization.

Trust. Trust in the organization was reported as being paramount by Joe. Holding an upper management position, Joe stated that "you hope the people giving you information are truthful." After a short pause, he added, "I am not naive enough to think people don't do things with a hidden agenda." Steve was in agreement with Joe. Steve noted that he doesn't have time to question someone's trust. He saw a connection between trust and communication. Steve believed that if there is not a high level of trust, people are not communicating. Barry viewed trust as strengthening an organization. He stated: "There are times when you will need unconditional trust. Without it the organization's growth will be stifled." Bruce didn't trust the whole organization. Sue aligned with Bruce and reported that a person has to know who to trust.

The subjects of this study reported trusting their leader. Bruce noted that he trusted his leader but not the organization's leader. Mark explained his trust, "He [Mark's leader] accepts and encourages my view point, even if it is not his [point of view]. We can have good dialog." Philip trusts his leader most of the time, noting that "sometimes his [Philip's leader] actions and words are contrary to what he really wants." All subjects referred back to past experiences when describing their trust with their leader. Dave summed up his feelings toward his leader, saying, "I've never been burned by him!"

Trust between followers was viewed differently by the subjects. They recognized that not everyone in an organization has everyone's trust. Barry saw this in his organization; he spoke of followers who have damaged their own trust by previous actions. Many of the subjects reported that trust has to be earned. As Mark put it, "trust begets trust." Several subjects felt that there is trust between followers because they are

followers! Tom believed that trust among followers starts out at a more superficial level. Others such as Bill recognized that trust takes time; "We have a core group that have been here a long time. They know who to trust and who not to."

Subjects in this study believed that the trust between leaders and followers is not equal. Leaders appeared to be more trusting of followers than followers are trusting of leaders. Dave noted that followers don't trust someone because of that person's past decisions, "they dwell on the past." Barry recognized that trust is not unconditional between followers and leaders. He saw leaders and followers being cautious when working with trust issues. Mark and Ray, on the other hand, believed that it depends upon the leader's management style. Mark noted that the trust from the leader to a follower would be directly reflected back to the leader by the follower.

Relationships and the Literature Review. According to the subjects in this study, giving feedback to a leader involved communication strategies. The ability to communicate has been recognized by numerous scholars as an important follower characteristic (DePree, 1989; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Yeomans, 1996). Those subjects who reported carrying out decisions that are contrary to their conscience align with Kelley (1992) who believed that followers tend to do what is asked of them rather than follow their own conscience. As stated earlier, a significant number of leadership scholars recognized the importance of relationships in the leader-follower dynamic. Within these relationships scholars, recognized the need to successfully work with people (Chaleff, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Rosenbach, Potter III, & Pittman, 1998; Yeomans, 1996; Yukl, 1998). Subjects in this study reported trust as an important and integral component of their relationships. The subjects' feelings about trust and its importance in relationships are supported by no less than 16 leadership scholars which include: Bennis (1994), Brown and Thornborrow (1996), DeBruyn (1976), DePree

(1997), Chaleff (1995), Kouzes and Posner (1993) Rosenbach, Potter III, and Pittman (1998), Rost (1993), Sergiovanni (1992), and Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Bommer (1996).

Axial Coding

Through the previously mentioned process of open coding, data have been examined resulting in the identification of six categories. Using the process of axial coding, the data were de-contextualized into segments and those segments analyzed. After their analysis, the segments were re-contextualized in new ways. Following the process outlined by Strauss and Corbin (1990), the re-contextualization of this data identified properties for each category. The properties were then listed with their dimensional range.

Analyzing the re-contextualized data revealed phenomena related to a causal condition and the properties of that phenomenon. These relationships and properties emerged from the axial coding process and are referred to as: "Causal Condition," "Phenomenon," "Context," "Intervening Condition," "Action/Interaction" and "Consequence." These terms are briefly explained below. For a more in-depth study of context and its features, see Strauss and Corbin (1990).

Causal Condition. Causal conditions are events that lead to the occurrence or development of a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The causal condition for all categories, in this study, is the employment of each individual. It is the employment of the individual that leads to the occurrence or development of each phenomenon.

Phenomenon. A phenomenon is a central idea or event (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The phenomenon for this study is each category that emerged during the open

coding process. Six specific phenomena emerged: (a) motivation, (b) involvement, (c) commitment, (d) independent and critical thinking, (e) effectiveness, and (f) relationships within the organization.

Context. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), context is "the specific set of properties that pertain to a phenomenon along a dimensional range" (p. 96). Each phenomenon in this study is linked to the context of that phenomenon which emerged as the data was separated into segments and then put back together in a process referred to as re-contextualization by Tesch (1990). For the purpose of this study, each context has an intervening condition.

Intervening Condition. Strauss and Corbin (1990) referred to an intervening condition as a structural condition that pertains to a phenomenon. Intervening conditions are influenced by actions and/or interactions.

Action/Interaction. Strategies that are employed by individuals to manage, handle, carry out or respond to a phenomenon are referred to by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as action/interaction strategies.

Consequence. Strauss and Corbin (1990) defined consequences as outcomes or results of action and interaction. For the purpose of this study, consequences are listed directly below the action/interaction statements.

Table 8 displays the components of the axial coding process and the analytic flow between each component.

Table 8

Axial Coding Process

causal condition ---> phenomenon ---> context --->
 intervening condition ---> action/ interaction ---> consequence

This process is an analytical flow beginning with the relationship of a causal condition to a phenomenon. Phenomena are then related to context, which identify specific features of each phenomenon. Strategies employed to respond to specific phenomenon are listed under action/interaction. These strategies are affected by the intervening conditions. The process concludes with consequence which is the result of action and interaction.

The first procedure in axial coding is the identification of a casual condition and the phenomena of that casual condition. Table 9 presents the causal condition and phenomena identified during the axial coding process of this study.

Table 9

Causal Condition and Phenomena

Causal Condition	Phenomena
employment within the organization	motivation involvement commitment independent and critical thinking effectiveness relationships within the organization

Each phenomenon has emerged from the synthesis of various contexts and the features of each context. For the purpose of this study, the features of each context have been labeled: intervening condition, action/interaction, and consequence.

To better understand the analysis that has taken place so far in the axial coding process, each phenomenon and the context of that phenomenon is presented in a "Table." Following the Table for each phenomenon is the context of that phenomenon and the features of each context. The features of each context are: "Intervening Condition," "Action/Interaction," and "Consequence." The first phenomenon to be explored in this stage of the axial coding process is "Motivation."

Phenomenon of Motivation

The phenomenon of motivation has emerged from the synthesis of four contexts. Table 10 lists the phenomenon of motivation as well as the four contexts from which the motivation phenomenon emerged.

Table 10

The Phenomenon of Motivation in Context

Phenomenon	Context
motivation	<p>Subjects viewed themselves as leaders because they believe that they have something to offer the organization.</p> <p>Subjects did not focus solely on their salary but referred to their compensation.</p> <p>There is a relationship between what the subject offered the organization and what the organization afforded the subject.</p> <p>The evidence of goals by the subject.</p>

Listed below are the four contexts for the phenomenon of motivation and the features of each context. The phenomenon and its features have evolved from the axial coding process.

Motivation Context #1: Subjects in this study viewed themselves as leaders because they believed that they had something to offer the organization.

Intervening Condition

- Subjects viewed the organization as needing their skills.

Action/Interaction

- Subjects were put into leadership positions because of a particular skill they possessed or because there was no leadership present.

- Once the subjects were in a position where they could act as a leader, they perceived themselves achieving organizational goals by themselves or by working with others.

Consequence

- Subjects acted as leaders and followers.
- Subjects perceived themselves as leaders.

Motivation Context #2: Subjects did not focus solely on their salary but referred to their compensation.

Intervening Condition

- Employment in the organization fulfilled a personal need.

Action/Interaction

- Subjects and their families could live in a location they liked and enjoy a certain lifestyle.
- All subjects would accept more money.

Consequence

- Subjects had positive feelings about working in the organization.
- Salaries were viewed as a hygiene factor.

Motivation Context #3: There is a relationship between what the subject offered the organization and what the organization afforded the subject.

Intervening Condition

- The benefit to the subject and the organization for participating in the relationship.

Action/Interaction

- Working in the organization met a personal need of the subject.
- At times the organization provided the opportunity, and at other times the leader provided the opportunity.

Consequence

- Subjects felt positive about working in the organization.
- Subjects felt that they had some control over opportunities.

Motivation Context #4: The evidence of goals by the subject.**Intervening Condition**

- The goals were predetermined by the subject.

Action/Interaction

- Subjects were aware of their goals and could articulate them without much reflection.

Consequence

- Subjects had goals.

Phenomenon of Involvement

The phenomenon of involvement has emerged from the synthesis of two contexts. Table 11 lists the phenomenon of involvement as well as the two contexts from which the involvement phenomenon emerged.

Table 11

The Phenomenon of Involvement in Context

Phenomenon	Context
involvement	The type of involvement reported by subjects. Subjects employed a variety of strategies to overcome obstacles.

Listed below are the two contexts for the phenomenon of involvement and the features of each context. The phenomenon and its features have evolved from the axial coding process.

Involvement Context #1: The type of involvement reported by subjects.

Intervening Condition

- The ability of the subject to see beyond their job title.

Action/Interaction

- Some subjects participated beyond their position or job title and reported what they perceived as their contributions to the organization.

Consequence

- Subjects perceived themselves as being important to the organization.

Involvement Context #2 Subjects employed a variety of strategies to overcome obstacles.

Intervening Condition

- The importance of the original goal.
- The experience level of the subject.
- The assertiveness of the subject.

Action/Interaction

- Strategies used to overcome obstacles were based upon the value of obtaining the original goal.
- Some subjects utilized no action as a strategy.
- Identifying where the goal originated.
- Where the obstacle was coming from was also important.
- Strategies to deal with directions that appear contrary to the expressed goals were filtered through personal values.
- Strategies ranged from seeking clarification through voicing opinions and finally not following the directions.
- Directions that were contrary to the expressed goals of the organization could be in violation of law.
- Attempting to influence the leader when they disagree.
- Voicing their concern.
- The type of action taken by the subject.

Consequence

- Subjects may decide to not pursue the original goal.
- Subjects took a passive role and problems either solved themselves or someone else assumed the problem.
- Subjects examined the importance of goals from the perspective of others.
- Subjects employed different strategies based upon organizational power structures.
- Subjects modified directions to align with their personal value system.
- Subjects may be bound to follow certain organizational goals.

- Subjects may change the original directions.
- Subjects felt more positive about the directions once their point of view has been heard.
- Subjects felt that they have supported the leader.
- Subjects felt that they are in control of their actions.

Phenomenon of Commitment

The phenomenon of commitment has emerged from the synthesis of three contexts. Table 12 lists the phenomenon of commitment as well as the three contexts from which the commitment phenomenon emerged.

Table 12

The Phenomenon of Commitment in Context

Phenomenon	Context
commitment	The subject's level of identification with the organizational goal. The subject's commitment to the leader. Subjects supporting or not supporting their leader.

Listed below are the three contexts for the phenomenon of commitment and the features of each context. The phenomenon and its features have evolved from the axial coding process.

Commitment Context #1: The subject's level of identification with the organizational goal.

Intervening Condition

- The subject's awareness of the organizational goals.

Action/Interaction

- Identification with the organizational goals is based upon a personal alignment with the subject's values.
- Identification with the organizational goals because subjects are loyal to the organization.

Consequence

- Subjects justified their support of the organizational goals.

Commitment Context #2: The subject's commitment to the leader.

Intervening Condition

- Past experiences between the subject and their leader.

Action/Interaction

- Subjects are committed to their immediate leader.
- Communication influenced the subject's commitment.

Consequence

- Subjects were open to building a relationship with their leader.
- Subjects who felt that their leader did not appropriately communicate to them, have less commitment to that leader.

Commitment Context #3: Subjects supporting or not supporting their leader.

Intervening Condition

- Subject's awareness of supporting or non-supporting actions.

Action/Interaction

- The level of challenge subjects gave to their leader was seen as an attribute of support as well as non support by the subjects.
- Helping the leader succeed was one way subjects supported their leader.
- Non support was demonstrated through non-action (e.g. when a subject withholds their viewpoint).
- The actions and words of subjects toward their leader when that leader was not present.

Consequence

- Leaders were not aware of possible problems.
- Leaders anticipated problems or changed decisions.
- Leaders and followers worked toward mutual purposes.
- Subjects subverted the leader's directions.
- The relationship between subjects and leaders was affected.

Phenomenon of Independent and Critical Thinking

The phenomenon of independent and critical thinking has emerged from the synthesis of four contexts. Table 13 lists the phenomenon of independent and critical thinking as well as the four contexts from which the independent and critical thinking phenomenon emerged.

Table 13

The Phenomenon of Independent and Critical Thinking in Context

Phenomenon	Context
independent and critical thinking	Strategies employed by individuals when they encounter an obstacle.
	Strategies employed to accomplish an important task.
	Subjects encountering a problem when accomplishing a task.
	Subjects determining their effectiveness.

Listed below are the four contexts for the phenomenon of independent and critical thinking and the features of each context. The phenomenon and its features have evolved from the axial coding process.

Independent and Critical Thinking Context #1

**Strategies employed by subjects when they
encounter an obstacle.**

Intervening Condition

- Action or non action by subjects

Action/Interaction

- Strategies depended upon where the obstacles occur.
- The reassessment of the goal and obstacle.
- The employment of risk analysis.
- The involvement of direct or indirect actions.
- Subjects sought the involvement of others.

Consequence

- Subjects needed a variety of strategies.

- Subjects may decide to no longer pursue the goal.
- Enhanced chances of overcoming the obstacle.

Independent and Critical Thinking Context #2:

Strategies employed to accomplish an important task.

Intervening Condition

- The level of the subject's desire to accomplish the task.

Action/Interaction

- Subjects wishing to accomplish the task utilized a variety of strategies.
- Subjects attempted to determine if they could accomplish the task alone or with the help of others.

Consequence

- Increased chances of successfully completing the task.

Independent and Critical Thinking Context #3:

Subjects encountered problems when accomplishing a task.

Intervening Condition

- Different levels of subject activity, ranging from active to passive.

Action/Interaction

- Analysis was used to determine if the solution can be accomplished alone or requires the involvement of others.
- Subjects consciously decided to resolve the problem or to change their decision.

Consequence

- Increased chances of successfully completing the task.
- Subjects were in control of their actions.

Independent and Critical Thinking Context #4:

Subjects determining their effectiveness.

Intervening Condition

- Subject's awareness level of their effectiveness.

Action/Interaction

- Effectiveness is determined using some criteria.
- Subjects used analysis and reflection to determine their strengths and weaknesses.

Consequence

- Subjects can evaluate their effectiveness.

Phenomenon of Effectiveness

The phenomenon of effectiveness has emerged from the synthesis of four contexts. Table 14 lists the phenomenon of effectiveness as well as the four contexts from which the effectiveness phenomenon emerged.

Table 14

The Phenomenon of Effectiveness in Context

Phenomenon	Context
effectiveness	<p>Subjects enhancing the organization.</p> <p>Subjects are aware of their effectiveness.</p> <p>Behaviors used by subjects that are normally attributed to leaders.</p> <p>Subjects determining their effectiveness.</p>

Listed below are the four contexts for the phenomenon of effectiveness and the features of each context. The phenomenon and its features have evolved from the axial coding process.

Effectiveness Context #1: Subjects enhancing the organization.

Intervening Condition

- Subjects enhanced the organization either by themselves or with others.

Action/Interaction

- Enhancements by subjects were individualistic and included actions as well as setting examples.
- Accomplishments of others were recognized and celebrated by subjects.

Consequence

- Subjects take ownership in the organization.
- Relationships are enhanced.

Effectiveness Context #2: Subjects were aware of their effectiveness.

Intervening Condition

- Actions are viewed as effective.

Action/Interaction

- Subjects are effective because they work by themselves.
- Subjects are effective because they involve others.

Consequence

- Subjects may not be aware of other solutions.
- Relationships are built.
- Others felt important to the organization.

Effectiveness Context #3: Behaviors used by subjects that are normally attributed to leaders.

Intervening Condition

- Subject's awareness level of behaviors normally attributed to leaders.

Action/Interaction

- Subjects reported being responsible.
- Subjects reported working with others.
- Subjects reported that they use specific skills.
- Subjects were able to communicate.

Consequence

- Subjects viewed themselves as leaders.
- Subjects employed behaviors that enhance the organization.

Effectiveness Context #4: The general leadership in the organization.

Intervening Condition

- Organizational leadership perceived as positive or negative by the subjects.

Action/Interaction

- Having a clear direction identified as being important.
- Subjects wanted to be involved.
- Utilizing communication.
- A lack of direction is viewed as a negative characteristic of organizational leadership.
- Organizational politics.

Consequence

- Everyone in the organization is aware of what they are trying to accomplish.
- Subjects felt connected to the goals of the organization.
- Subjects felt important.
- Subjects were not sure what they were working toward or why they were being asked to do some task.
- Subjects were cautious in their actions.

Phenomenon of Relationships Within the Organization

The phenomenon of relationships within the organization has emerged from the synthesis of eight contexts. Table 15 lists the phenomenon of relationships within the organization as well as the eight contexts from which the relationships within the organization phenomenon emerged.

Table 15

The Phenomenon of Relationships Within the Organization in Context

Phenomenon	Context
relationships within the organization	The role of feedback.
	When subjects are requested to act in a manner contrary to their conscience.
	Relationships between subjects and leaders.
	The subject's relationship with colleagues.
	Trust within the organization.
	Subject's trust with their leader.
	Trust between followers.
	Trust between followers and leaders.

Listed below are the eight contexts for the phenomenon of relationships within the organization and the features of each context. The phenomenon and its features have evolved from the axial coding process.

Relationship Context #1: The role of feedback.

Intervening Condition

- The subject's ability to predetermine how the feedback will be regarded.

Action/Interaction

- Knowing if the leader is approachable.
- Strategies utilized by subjects when giving feedback.
- Identification of leader hot buttons.

Consequence

- Subjects could decide on an effective strategy to provide feedback.

Relationship Context #2: When subjects are requested to act in a manner contrary to their conscience.

Intervening Condition

- The subject's perception of the request.

Action/Interaction

- Whether or not subjects experienced pressure to act.
- The decision to take action.
- Type of action employed by subjects.

Consequence

- How the subject felt about their leader and the organization.
- How the subject felt about their action.

Relationship Context #3: Relationships between subjects and leaders.

Intervening Condition

- The level of awareness pertaining to how the leader felt about the subject.
- Past experiences between subjects and leaders.

Action/Interaction

- Recognizing the type of relationship between the subjects and their leader.
- The interplay of personalities.
- The defensiveness level of the leader.
- The subject's feelings toward the leader.

- The role of communication.
- The type and quality of the leader's feelings as perceived by the subject.
- The level of trust between subjects and leaders.
- Evidence of a relationship between subjects and leaders.

Consequence

- Subjects could choose certain behaviors based upon their relationship with the leader.
- The subjects' understanding of their leader's response.
- How the subject interacted with the leader.
- Subjects felt more involved when they were communicated to effectively.
- How comfortable subjects felt when communicating with the leader.

Relationship Context #4: The subject's relationship with colleagues.

Intervening Condition

- Subject's awareness level of the relationship.
- Past experiences between followers.

Action/Interaction

- Type of relationship (casual, professional, etc.)
- Characteristics of the relationship between subjects and leaders.
- Evidence of trust between subjects and leaders.

Consequence

- Subjects chose to interact with certain colleagues.
- Subject interacted differently with certain colleagues.

Relationship Context #5: Trust within the organization.

Intervening Condition

- Organizational culture

Action/Interaction

- Existence of trust.
- Lack of trust from the leader.
- Subjects knowing who to trust.
- Levels of trust between subgroups within the organization.

Consequence

- Subjects were willing to present honest, open information.
- Subjects would not trust the leader and would be suspicious about trust in the organization.
- Alliances were developed among individuals within the organization.

Relationship Context #6: Subjects' trust of their leaders.

Intervening Condition

- Opportunities to demonstrate trust.

Action/Interaction

- The existence of trust between the subject and the leader.
- The level of trust between the subject and the leader.
- Leader's inconsistency between actions and words.
- Leader's actions.
- Subject's rationale for trust.

Consequence

- Subjects were open and honest with their leader.

- A relationship between trust and commitment among subjects.
- Subjects would be cautious when interacting with the leader.
- Influences how the subjects responded to the leader.
- Subjects accepted or rejected a leader's trust.

Relationship Context #7: Trust between followers.

Intervening Condition

- Actions that eroded trust.

Action/Interaction

- The existence of trust between followers.
- The passivity of followers.
- Trust initially granted among followers.
- The superficiality of trust between followers.
- Suspicions of followers toward other followers.
- The granting of positional trust.
- How trust is gained and lost.

Consequence

- Followers developed alliances.
- Not all followers developed trusting relationships.
- Trust is granted by followers to followers at a superficial level.
- Followers were cautious when trusting other followers.
- Followers created an "us vs. them" attitude.
- That trust is diminished, maintained, or enhanced.
- Trust was evolving and fragile.

Relationship Context #8: Trust between followers and leaders.

Intervening Condition

- What happens after initial trust?

Action/Interaction

- The leader's actions.
- Trust as a result of good leadership.
- Situational trust granted by followers and leaders.
- Effects of skepticism exhibited by followers.

Consequence

- Determination of trust based upon the actions of leaders toward followers.
- Subjects expected trust from leaders.
- Trust is diminished, maintained, or enhanced.
- Trust must be earned.

This concludes the axial coding process. This process identified the causal condition: "employment of each employee." It is this causal condition that led to the development of each phenomenon. During the axial coding process, the original six categories each emerged as a phenomenon. Each category emerged as a phenomenon because it is the central idea to which a set of actions is related. The de-contextualized data were then re-contextualized during the later stages of the axial coding process. The re-contextualization of data consisted of an intimate analysis of each phenomenon. The six phenomena that emerged during the initial stages of the axial coding process were analyzed by identifying the "context" of each phenomenon, the "intervening condition" of that context, the "action and interaction" related to the phenomenon, and the "consequence" of the action and interaction. As the axial coding process concluded, the

data segments were examined at a new level of specificity in an effort to reveal what was originally not evident. This microanalysis of the data segments revealed interrelationships between the six phenomena.

Selective Coding

Building upon the microanalysis of the axial coding process, data is examined in a more macro approach during the selective coding process. In order to gain the full benefit of the data, a person must pull away from the micro view to a more macro, holistic vantage point during the selective coding process. From this distanced position, data is interpreted within the construct which evolved through the open and axial coding processes.

The narrative report for this study has been developed through the inductive process of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The selective coding process afforded a holistic view of the six phenomena and their properties. This holistic process identified the interrelationships between the core category and the six phenomena. These interrelationships are presented through a story line. The story line is composed of the findings from analyses that took place during the axial coding process and focuses on the six phenomena. Describing the story line in this manner allows for the formulation of a grounded theory.

Within this story line is the context of each phenomenon. To assist in the analysis of this story line, concepts that are related to the context of the phenomena are identified with **bold** typeface. This story line and the interrelationships of the phenomena are presented in narrative form in the following section: "The Perception of Followers."

The Perception of Followers

Followers participate within an organization based upon numerous perceptions that they have. How they perceive themselves within and without the organization

influences their motivation. Followers can assume leadership positions by default; they can be put in a leadership position because of some skill or skills that they possess, or they can fill a void where leadership no longer exists. When **followers perceive themselves as leaders**, they feel that **they have something to offer the organization**, especially when they believe that the organization needs them. There is a **benefit to both the individual and the organization** when a relationship such the one mentioned above exists between the follower and the organization. **Compensation** to the follower can be in several forms.

Salary to followers is not as important as their total compensation which includes financial benefits, the ability to reside in a particular place, and to enjoy a specific lifestyle. Followers can also be compensated by working in environments that challenge their skills and provide opportunities for growth. They bring personal and professional needs to the organization and the potential for these needs to be met **enhances the followers' motivation.**

When followers are motivated to continue working in an organization, they are more likely to **exhibit behaviors normally attributed to leaders. Behaviors, normally attributed to leaders**, that followers identified they utilize include, helping others, providing an inspiring vision, making decisions, building relationships, being organized, positive, and setting an example for others to follow. Individuals who are motivated **experience opportunities for growth; receive adequate compensation** for their efforts, **feel that they are needed in an organization, and become involved within that organization.**

Followers **describe their involvement** within an organization on a continuum. This continuum ranges from a simple description of their position or job title to a macro view of how they enhance their organization, followed with specific examples. Followers

who **perceive their involvement** in the organization as important are able to describe the contributions they make to the organization. Some of these contributions become evident when discussing obstacles that followers have faced.

Followers **use several common strategies when faced with an obstacle**. Waiting to see if the obstacle removes itself or someone else handles the problem are two ways followers can address an obstacle. Most **strategies employed by followers involve an action**, and this action begins with a reassessment of the obstacle and its importance. This reassessment process also involves the inventorying of followers' past experiences and successes to determine if they are **capable of removing the obstacle** themselves, or if they need to involve others. If the obstacle is going to require additional time and effort from the follower, or followers, most followers want to make sure that the original goal is worth pursuing. It is important to followers where, or in some cases who, the obstacle is originating from within the organization. If the obstacle is not related to an individual, followers often revisit the value they place on the task and decide if they want to go under, over, around, or through the obstacle. **Going through the obstacle** is viewed as the least desirable strategy by many followers. Some obstacles require followers to re-examine their personal values.

Followers are sometimes required to assess their personal values when asked to become **involved in activities that appear to be contrary to the expressed goals** of the organization. Directions that appear contrary to the expressed goals are filtered through the follower's personal value system. Followers may even modify the directions to fit within their personal value system. The organizational power and influence a follower possesses plays a role in the strategies they use to change the contrary directions.

Clarification is often sought from the follower's immediate leader. When the directions continue to be contrary to expressed goals, followers seek to understand the

rationale behind the directions from different perspectives and contexts. **Speaking out against the directions** is employed by followers in an attempt to influence the person responsible for the contrary direction. It is at this time that followers may employ the **strategy of no action**, hoping that the directions will fade away. Sometimes taking no action stalls the process and allows the follower an opportunity to seek more information, expertise, or resources, in a final attempt to utilize their influence tactics in the hopes of changing the contrary directions. Finally in this process, once followers feel that their point of view has been heard, they prepare themselves to carry out the directions. There may be special intervening issues that the followers must take into consideration. One such intervening issue is the possibility that the follower's action or non-action may be mandated by law! At some point in this process, followers will reach their limit and may decide to **end their involvement** with the organization rather than carry out the directions.

Committing themselves to organizational goals also requires followers to assess the alignment of their personal values to the goals. Strong alignment of personal values and organizational goals **strengthens the commitment** of the follower to the organization. Organizations that have clear and inspiring goals attract individuals who share common values with the organization. Articulation of the organizational goals is critical for this type of alignment and relationship between followers and the organization. Followers may also **align with organizational goals** because of their loyalty to the organization. Loyalty to an organization and alignment of personal values can be achieved by including the follower's input into organizational decisions and goals. In either case, strong alignment of organizational goals with personal values or loyalty to the organization creates strong bonds between followers and the organization. Followers can also be **committed to their leader**.

Commitment of followers to their leader is more evident than the follower's commitment to the organization. Followers tend to be **committed to their immediate leader** and less committed to leaders higher up in the organizational hierarchy. Followers base their **commitment to their leader** on past experiences between the two individuals. Followers want to **support their leader**, but they look to the leader's actions for evidence of trust.

The commitment level of the follower is a factor in the follower's **support or lack of support for the leader**. Communication is an important factor in this relationship. Followers who feel that they are not appropriately communicated to by their leader express **less commitment to that leader**. The level of communication and trust between leaders and followers is a significant factor in the followers' behavior toward the leader. Talking honestly to the leader can be difficult if the information is contrary to what the leader wants to hear. Followers speak out and challenge a leader's direction as a way of **supporting the leader**. Followers report that they generally feel that they should be more adamant when telling a leader that there is a problem with what the leader wants done. Followers who tell the truth are a valuable asset to leaders. On the other end of the continuum, followers report that one way they demonstrate a **lack of support to their leader** is by not telling the leader that there may be a problem with the leader's decision! Followers **support their leader** by what they say, or in some cases, what they don't say.

The bond between followers and leaders can be quite strong. Followers strengthen that bond by what they do and say to support the leader. Not talking negatively or behind a leader's back is viewed by followers as a way of **supporting the leader**. Even more significant is when a follower **supports the leader** when that leader is not present. Followers want their leaders to be successful. If their leaders are successful, followers also feel successful.

To make their leaders successful, followers utilize multiple strategies that involve independent and critical thinking skills. If followers are to be successful, they must be proficient at accomplishing tasks that are given to them. Followers report using individual filters to determine how they will go about **accomplishing a specific task**. At the heart of these filters is the subject's desire to accomplish the task. As previously stated, followers first determine if they really want to accomplish the task and if they want to expend the effort required to be successful.

Once they have decided to accept the challenge, followers report "owning it." **They determine** the necessary resources, time, money, and people to get the job done. Followers are aware of the importance of bringing in other individuals for their added experience and ideas. Those followers preferring to accomplish tasks on their own are in the minority. Most **strategies**, reported in this study, involve breaking the task into smaller pieces that are easier to **accomplish** while keeping the end goal in mind. Some followers prefer to start small and initially attack little pieces that they know they can be successful in accomplishing, saving the larger more difficult sections for a time when the follower will have built up confidence and thereby increasing their chances of success. Other followers prefer to jump right in and attack the entire task. Followers are driven to be successful and will employ whatever **strategies** appear to be necessary to **accomplish the task**.

When **problems arise**, followers are quick to reassess the task and the problem. Looking for creative solutions, they utilize an analysis process that has proven to be successful for them in the past. This process of reflection and implementation helps the followers to **determine their effectiveness** not only on the task at hand but their overall

effectiveness as well. Followers use their own judgment as well as formal evaluations from leaders, colleagues, and those who answer to them, when **determining their level of effectiveness**.

Followers view their effectiveness as consisting of past accomplishments, building teams and relationships, as well as enhancing the organization. Interestingly, when speaking of their effectiveness, the subjects of this study did not refer to efforts that did not result in accomplishing a task or goal. Followers need to be flexible enough to work in teams and individually. For the most part, followers recognize the importance of working with others, whether they are helping a colleague or seeking help themselves. Even though followers do accomplish tasks alone, when a **problem arises** they quickly involve others. Followers are aware of their limitations. Followers are also aware of responsibilities that they have within the organization.

As a member of an organization, followers have responsibilities to the organization as a whole and to individuals within the organization. Recognizing their responsibilities and responding within those responsibilities are behaviors followers recognize as being **associated with leadership**. When followers are demonstrating **behaviors normally attributed to leaders**, they are **enhancing the organization**. Followers are acutely aware of **leadership behaviors**.

Followers are affected by the leadership behaviors of the organization. Followers desire organizations that have a clear direction. Setting goals and direction are seen by followers as important activities, and they desire input on these activities. When organizations have a clear direction, followers feel connected to the organization and tend to be more understanding of directions that appear to be out of the ordinary. Followers **want to be involved**. They want to know what the organization is attempting to accomplish, and followers want to be part of that effort. They **want to communicate** with

the leaders of the organization. Followers are also aware of the politics that can be evident in organizational leadership. They see the politics as a negative factor that takes away from the clarity of the organization's goals.

Organizations with no direction stifle followers. In this environment, followers become cautious when deciding what type of action to take. Followers are very cognizant of organizations that have no clear direction or goals. In these organizations, followers are not sure what they are working toward or why they are being asked to do some task. Followers are also critical of leaders, especially when they believe the leaders are deviating from the organization's goals or the followers feel that their leaders are incompetent. In these situations, followers are not shy in reporting that the organization either has lost its direction or never had any direction! During these times, followers have no trouble **giving feedback**-- to anyone.

When giving feedback, followers prefer to know how their feedback will be regarded by the leader. Followers prefer an environment that is non-threatening to them when **giving the leader feedback**. Followers recognize their **responsibility when giving feedback**. It is part of their job to give the leader open and **honest feedback** in a timely manner. If the leader is defensive, followers will **alter their communication**. When followers are unable to predict how the leader is going to react to their feedback, they become nervous and apprehensive in their communication strategy. Followers' communication strategy may include picking the times they choose to bring things up to the leader as well as being cautious about what information they will provide to the leader. When followers have to be concerned with how the leader is going to respond, they are unable to **provide feedback** in a manner that is beneficial to the leader. Followers may also find themselves faced with other types of situations that cause them to be uncomfortable.

When pressured to **act in a manner that is contrary to their conscience**, followers are put in an uncomfortable situation and have several options to choose from in order to resolve their dilemma. They may choose to not carry out the request. Most often, followers try to seek clarification by discussing it with their leader. The followers may alter the original request to fit within their value system, or they may choose to take no action. Taking no action is different than opposing the action. Taking no action is a passive strategy where the follower hopes that the issue will just go away. Followers who choose to **give into the pressure** and carry out the action justify their actions in several ways. Some alter their values, thus minimizing the personal impact. Followers may also just do the action and then live with it. This last strategy has been reported as resulting in anger. Followers who have done the latter, appear to reflect on the issue for a very long time. Dilemmas such as those previously mentioned, influence how followers feel about their **relationship with the organization and their leader**.

Positive relationships with their leader is important for followers. Followers seek positive working environments. **How the leader feels about them** is very important to followers. They have a need to be successful and feel wanted within a positive working environment.

Some followers will leave an organization if they are unable to have **positive working relationships with their leader**. Past experiences between followers and their leaders are important ingredients in the **follower-leader relationship**. These past experiences have a great impact on future events between the two individuals. Followers use several methods to determine how the leader feels about them. Two common methods reported by followers are open communication with their leader and performance appraisals. Followers also have a general impression of how the leader feels about them. This impression is based upon either numerous interactions or a single incident with their

leader. Followers report that their feelings toward the leader is a reflection of their perception of how the leader feels about them. An ill advised comment from a leader stays with followers and **negatively impacts the relationship** for quite some time.

Followers also **develop relationships with their colleagues**. These relationships tend to begin at a superficial level. There is an initial open acceptance between followers as they feel that they share something in common because they are followers. Followers may decide to not interact with other followers, therefore making it easy to avoid relationships. Some followers will be suspicious of other followers if it is thought that they are getting too close to leaders within the organization. Similar to their **relationships with leaders**, followers base their **relationships with colleagues** on past experiences with that individual. Followers can build **strong relationships** among themselves, and these **relationships can be positive or negative toward leaders**.

Trust is an important issue for followers and organizations. Because of the previously mentioned way followers develop relationships, they tend to not trust everyone in the organization. Followers also tend to **trust their immediate leader** but not the whole organization. They know **who can be trusted** and **who can not be trusted** within the organization. Followers **base trust** upon actions, communication, and relationships. After trust has been granted, it needs to be cultivated within the organization. Even as tenuous as it may seem at times, **trust is a paramount issue for followers**.

Followers tend to **trust their immediate leaders** for a variety of reasons. Since there is a certain amount of initial trust given in a relationship, as well as positional trust afforded leaders, some **followers trust leaders** because they have never been "burned" by them. Followers rely on a person's reputation when initially **granting a leader trust**. Other followers **trust their leaders** because of the way the leader treats them,

even though trust between the two has never been tested. Followers are very cautious and will withdraw their trust, and eventually their support, if a leader's words are contrary to their actions.

Followers **expect trust from leaders**, even though followers are more cautious when **trusting leaders** than they are when **trusting other followers**. They view trust as a result of good leadership. Followers are willing to give their best effort when they **trust their leader**. The attitude a leader demonstrates to a follower will be reflected back to the leader by the follower. As it appears with other relationships, followers must **earn the trust of their leader** beyond the initial, usually superficial level of trust.

Articulating the story line during the selective coding process exposed the interrelationships between the phenomena. During the final integration of data during the selective coding process, a core category emerged. This core category is labeled "Perception of Followers," and it is related to the six phenomena that were examined during the axial coding process. It is important to note that once the core category has emerged (from a holistic analysis of the phenomena) the phenomena are now referred to as subcategories. The terminology changes to reflect the relationship between the core category and its subcategories (previously referred to as phenomena). The core category and its interrelationships with the subcategories form the backbone of the narrative report.

Core Category

The core category is based upon the interrelationships between the subcategories that emerged from the selective coding process. The core category is related to the following six subcategories: (a) motivation, (b) involvement, (c) commitment, (d) independent and critical thinking, (e) effectiveness, and (f) relationships within the organization. These six subcategories are also related to each other.

Subcategories

Under the heading of each subcategory, the interrelationships between the subcategories are briefly discussed. The first subcategory discussed is "Motivation."

Motivation. Subjects in this study self-reported themselves as leaders. In their justification of their self-selection, followers routinely mentioned their ability to work with others and build teams. Therefore it appears that there is a direct connection between the subcategory "Motivation" and the subcategory "Relationships Within the Organization." It stands to reason that there is a relationship between motivation and a person's level of effectiveness. Motivation is also a factor in a follower's desire to become involved within the organization.

Involvement. Involvement has a direct connection to the subcategory Relationships Within the Organization. Part of a follower's organizational responsibility is to provide feedback to those around him. Followers also seek help from others as well as lending their support to members of the organization. Followers who are involved within an organization beyond their official position, display behaviors normally attributed to leaders, thus enhancing their effectiveness. Followers report using independent and critical thinking skills when they attempt to remove an obstacle. When followers are involved in solving an important task, overcoming an obstacle, and building relationships, they increase their commitment to the organization.

Commitment. Commitment by followers is most often recognized by actions or words that support their leader or colleagues. These acts of support are critical building blocks to forming positive relationships within the organization. Support of a leader or colleague, a demonstration of commitment to that person, also increases a follower's effectiveness. Using independent and critical thinking aid followers in their support of people and organizational goals.

Independent and Critical Thinking. Followers employ independent and critical thinking for the reasons mentioned above. When these skills are utilized to help others or obtain organizational goals, they become a factor in the follower's ability to build and maintain relationships. Independent and critical thinking are essential skills for followers to possess if they are to be effective in their organization.

Effectiveness. As previously stated, the subcategory Effectiveness is related to the subcategories "Motivation," "Involvement," "Independent and Critical Thinking," and "Commitment." "Effectiveness" is also related to the subcategory "Relationships Within the Organization." Effective followers are able to work with others as well as build and maintain relationships.

Relationships Within the Organization. The subcategory "Relationships Within the Organization" is related to the other five subcategories for the reasons mentioned above.

Summary

The qualitative procedures of open, axial, and selective coding were applied to the data collected from semi-structured interviews. These analyses produced the findings reported in this chapter. During the open coding process, several themes emerged from the data collected during semi-structured interviews with the subjects of this study. These themes were de-contextualized into data segments during the initial stages of axial coding. The data segments were then re-contextualized according to relationships that emerged during the micro analysis procedures in axial coding. Concluding the axial coding process, analysis procedures identified six phenomena from the data as well as components of each phenomenon.

The final stage of analysis included the application of selective coding on the re-contextualized data. Selective coding utilizes a macro analysis of the data. Presenting the

results of this macro analysis in a narrative format allowed a "core category" to emerge from the phenomena identified during the axial coding process. At this stage of the analysis, the phenomena are referred to as "subcategories" of the "core category" as they are related to the "core category." These "subcategories" are interrelated and form the basis for the grounded theory. The grounded theory was articulated in the form of a narrative report. This narrative report occurred at the conclusion of the selective coding process and is titled: "The Perception of Followers."

In the next chapter (Chapter Five), the findings from this study are summarized. This summary includes the findings from open, axial, and selective coding processes. Beginning with "Holistic Analysis" the findings are examined to answer the two grand tour questions of this study: (a) How are followers perceived? and (b) What role do followers believe they play in an organization's success? The chapter concludes with postulations and implications for practitioners and further research.

CHAPTER FIVE

Interpretive Summary, Postulations, and Implications

Introduction

The inductive process of qualitative research is not guided by strict rules and procedures. This is a strength of the qualitative paradigm as it allows for the unique abilities of the researcher to interact with the data facilitating the new understanding of a phenomenon. Chapter Five summarizes the findings from Chapter Four of this qualitative study. This summation includes a holistic view of the core category "Perception of Followers" as well as the six subcategories of (a) Motivation, (b) Involvement, (c) Commitment, (d) Independent and Critical Thinking, (e) Effectiveness, and (f) Relationships Within the Organization. For the purpose of this summary, the six phenomena will now be referred to as "subcategories" of the "core category" since they are directly related to that core category. This approach to the summative analysis moves away from the micro analysis, that identified each phenomenon, to a more macro view; one that recognizes their original labeling as categories. The difference now is that this holistic view acknowledges the interrelationships that exist between all categories that emerged from the detailed analysis procedures that were applied to the qualitative data.

The first section of this chapter, Holistic Analysis, describes the qualitative process of formulating a grounded theory by utilizing a micro-to-macro perspective on the previously analyzed data. This section concludes with an explanation of the interrelationships of the categories and their relation to the literature. It is followed by an exploration of the grand tour questions and sub-questions that frame this study. The holistic view of the qualitative data reveals three postulations from the findings reported in Chapter Four. The postulations and their explanations are contained within the section

Postulations. Implications for practitioners and future research are described and conclude the chapter. The summary begins with a description of the qualitative procedures employed during the open, axial, and selective coding processes.

Summary

Holistic Analysis

A synthesis of the analyses applied to the original qualitative data produced a grounded theory concerning the "Perception of Followers." This grounded theory is a culmination of several analysis procedures. These procedures included the qualitative processes of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, following a format suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990). The grounded theory for this study is based upon six categories. These categories emerged during the axial coding process. During the selective coding process, a seventh category emerged that encompassed the original six categories. This encompassing category is referred to as the "core category." For the purpose of this study, the core category is the "Perception of Followers." The core category is significant because it is integrated with the following six subcategories: (a) Motivation (b) Involvement, (c) Commitment, (d) Independent and Critical Thinking, (e) Effectiveness, and (d) Relationship Within the Organization. Together, these categories form the backbone of the grounded theory which was presented in Chapter Four.

By analyzing the data from a micro perspective (during the axial coding stage) and then re-examining the data from a macro perspective (during the selective coding stage), a grounded theory began to emerge. Reporting the grounded theory through a story line which uses rich, thick descriptions allows the viewer to look at the phenomenon in a way not previously imagined. The perception of followers and their role in the success of an organization was revealed through this process. A holistic view of the data, which was generated from the various analyses conducted in this study, revealed that

followers are viewed as active individuals who pursue the fulfillment of personal and professional needs resulting in ownership.

Exploration of Grand Tour and Sub-questions

Analysis of the collected data from the semi-structured interviews illuminated categorical relationships among the core category "Perceptions of Followers" and the six subcategories of (a) Motivation, (b) Involvement, (c) Commitment, (d) Independent and Critical Thinking, (e) Effectiveness, and (f) Relationships Within the Organization. Analyzing these categorical relationships as well as the components of those relationships provided an interesting and enlightening perspective on the two grand tour research questions that frame this qualitative research design. These research questions were:

- How are followers perceived?
- What role do followers believe they play in an organization's success?

For the purpose of this study, each subcategory was linked to a sub-question. The following section refers to these sub-questions in a holistic approach derived from the qualitative process of open, axial, and selective coding. These processes are described in the previous section and articulated in Chapter Four. This approach begins to build a picture of how followers perceive their role in an organization's success. The first subquestion addresses the perception of followers and motivation.

What motivating factors do individuals experience in their roles as followers?

Subjects for this study were selected because they had organizational responsibilities as followers. An unexpected finding from this research was the adamant proclamation by followers that they are leaders! Regardless of where the subjects are located on the organizational hierarchy, all subjects reported that they perceive themselves as leaders (refer to Table 1). Subjects supported their self-selection as leaders because they perceived themselves as having something to contribute to the organization. Subjects

reported that their contributions result in the intrinsic and extrinsic compensation afforded to them by the organization. Intrinsic rewards were reported by subjects as the feeling they get when they know that they have been successful. They also described their overall well-being, such as the quality of life that their job afforded them. Extrinsic rewards were described as their salary, financial incentive plans, and retirement benefits. Contributing to the organization is one way followers demonstrated their involvement.

How involved are followers in the pursuit of organizational goals? Subjects reported their involvement within the organization at two levels. The first level is reported as their job title or position. The second level goes beyond their official position and included behaviors and actions that they utilize throughout the organization. A relationship exists between the complexity of behaviors that subjects described and the level of involvement they reported. The complexity of organizational involvement followers reported participating in is related to their level of commitment to the task or organization.

How committed are the followers in the organization? Subjects stated that their identification with organizational goals is based upon two perceptions. The first perception involved the alignment of the organizational goal and the subject's value system. Subjects reported that they may attempt to change their perception of the organizational goal to make it align with their personal values or in extreme cases, alter their personal values. The second perception involved the commitment of followers to their leader. Subjects in this study reported that commitment to the leader is based upon their perception of the past actions they have had with the leader. They also commented on the significance of how leaders interact with others in the organization. Followers participated within the organization at a variety of commitment levels. A factor in the follower's commitment level is the perception of their effectiveness.

How do followers perceive their overall effectiveness? Data from the semi-structured interviews revealed that followers enhance an organization through a process of analysis and action. Subjects were able to describe how they utilize strategies that employ both analysis and action as they strive to be effective within the organization. Subjects in this study stated their effectiveness by articulating the success of past tasks that they were responsible for accomplishing. These actions were related to some problem or challenge that the subject had to overcome. Often, the strategies reported included the use of independent and/or critical thinking.

What types of independent and critical thinking strategies do followers report using? Analyzing the qualitative data revealed a variety of strategies that were used by the subjects to overcome obstacles and accomplish tasks. The strategies followers described using were based upon their perception of where the obstacle occurred within the organization. They were more cautious in their selection of strategies when the obstacle came from someone higher in the organizational hierarchy. Breaking a problem down into manageable pieces was a common strategy that subjects reported utilizing. Within the process of breaking the problem down into pieces, subjects continually reassessed personal and professional rewards associated with the risks. Subjects admitted that they might decide to quit pursuing a task based upon their perception of the risk. If they decided to continue pursuing the task, the most often described strategy by subjects in this study was the involvement of others.

What types of relationships are followers engaged in within the organization? More than any other category, the data from this study revealed that relationships are dependent upon the perceptions of those involved in the relationship. Whether giving feedback, building relationships, or trusting others, subjects reported the importance of knowing how their messages and actions would be perceived by others. Subjects

mentioned that the ability to predetermine the actions of others is a critical factor in their working relationships. Knowing who can be trusted within the organization is considered essential by the subjects in this study. Trust emerged as a foundational element for followers regarding relationships with their leaders and/or colleagues.

It is essential that any examination of the previous subquestions include a synergistic process that recognizes the interrelationships of the components of each category. The two Grand Tour Research Questions, "**how are followers perceived?**" and "**what role do followers believe they play in an organization's success?**" cannot be answered in an acceptable manner unless the core category and its six subcategories are examined in a holistic manner. This holistic approach allows for the evolution of interrelationships that combine to illuminate the construct of followers.

Holistic Analysis Related to the Literature. Re-contextualized data from the semi-structured interviews has been examined to answer the six subquestions and the two grand tour questions that frame this study. This data has support in the existing leadership literature. Motivating factors described by the subjects align with Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs, as well as Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory. Subjects report that they are involved members that contribute to the success of the organization. Chaleff (1995) and Kelley (1992, 1998) recognized that followers who make contributions to the organization are involved in the pursuit of organizational goals. It is through their involvement and commitment that subjects perceived themselves as effective and therefore important to the organization. The impact on the organization reported by subjects in this study is also recognized by numerous scholars (Bennis, 1994; Kelley, 1992; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Smith, 1996; Wilkes, 1992; Yukl, 1998). Leadership scholars, such as Sanford (1950) and Kelley (1992), posited the importance of followers who are involved in an organization and support their organization with

strategies to ensure their effectiveness. Relationships are critical to the subjects in this study and a plethora of leadership scholars in the last 25 years have recognized the importance of relationships within organizations (Bennis, 1994; Buhler, 1993; Burns, 1978; Chaleff, 1995; Cooper, Higgott, & Nossal, 1991; DePree, 1989, 1997; Dwyer, 1994; Heifetz, 1994; Hollander, 1995; Kelley, 1992; Kouzes and Posner, 1993, 1995; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Nahavandi, 1997; Rost, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1995; Wheatley, 1994; Yukl, 1998).

Postulations

This study has produced three major postulations that will be discussed in this section. The three postulations have been labeled: (a) Followers as Leaders, (b) Followers Quest for Ownership, and (c) Re-conceptualization of Leaders and Followers. These themes are a result of a holistic analysis of the reported data evolving from the qualitative processes of open, axial, and selective coding.

Followers as Leaders

All followers in this study described themselves as leaders. This finding does not conform with the traditional dichotomous view of leaders and followers in the Western tradition. Traditionally, organizations are composed of a few leaders, and everyone else is considered a follower. Recently, leadership scholars posited that leaders and followers exchange positions and that following is a prerequisite for leadership. Subjects in this study perceived themselves first and foremost as leaders, even though they are considered followers by their position in the organization.

Individuals who perceive themselves as leaders rather than followers do so for several reasons. There is a perceptual, semantic, and cultural problem with the term follower. Follower is not perceived in Western cultures as a title or position that people strive toward. As Chaleff (1995) contended, the term follower evolved from the idea of

the survival of the fittest; the winners are leaders and everyone else is viewed as a follower. The negative connotation associated with the term follower is very strong. Gatekeepers, in one of the organizations represented in this study, accurately cautioned that individuals in their organization would be insulted if they were referred to as followers. Regardless of the semantic differences posited by leadership scholars, "follower" is a term that conjures up condescending feelings. Attempts at mitigating the negative connotations of the term "follower" appear to be unsuccessful.

Subjects reported that their involvement within the organization includes behaviors that are normally attributed to leaders. This rationale supports their self-selection as leaders. Subjects justify their self perception of leadership by describing their successful accomplishment of goals. From the data collected during the semi-structured interviews, subjects in this study do meet standard definitions of leaders.

Follower's Quest for Ownership

As previously stated, followers in this study perceive themselves as leaders. They self-report that they are involved within the organization. Their involvement is driven by their need to feel ownership. There is a clear impression that followers in this study equate ownership with the congruence of personal values and organizational goals.

Followers continually reassess their personal alignment with the organization's goals. The more articulated the organization's goals, the easier it becomes for the follower to assess this alignment. It holds to reason that, the more input a follower has into the organization's goals, the closer the alignment between their personal values and the organization's goals. This postulation may help to explain the positive characteristics associated with followers and organizations engaging in mutual purposes. In this

imperfect world, perfect alignment between the follower's personal values and the organization's goals appears to be an elusive target. This target is even more elusive when there is confusion regarding the organization's goals.

When organizational goals are not articulated or the organization appears to not follow its expressed goals, followers look elsewhere to measure the alignment of their values to what they now perceive as a substitute for the organization's goals. One of the areas followers pursue in their quest for alignment, is a relationship with their leader. Followers, in this study, report a positive relationship with their leader.

Leaders act as two-way filters for followers. They interpret the organization's goals for the follower, whether those goals are dynamic or static. Leaders also interpret the actions of followers and then give feedback to the followers. From the data collected in this study, it appears that the less clear the organization's goals, the more critical the follower-leader relationship. In these cases, the leader may become a substitute for the organization's goals, resulting in the followers' attempt to align their personal values with the leader's actions. This may be one reason why followers stress the importance of their relationship with the leader. Subjects report that their relationship with the leader is based upon their perception of how the leader feels about them.

Because the leader acts as a filter for the follower, the follower may in some instances view the leader as a barrier to the follower's attempt to align with the organizational goals. Faced with this confusion, followers may choose to respond with inactivity, passive behavior, or subversive behaviors. These strategies are attempts to influence the behavior of the leader and in extreme circumstances may result in the demise of the leader.

Followers create relationships with colleagues for reasons similar to those that prompt interaction with leaders. Relationships are very important to followers. They seek

to build relationships with leaders and colleagues through honest communication and actions. One reason colleague relationships are created is for a validation of the follower's behaviors. These relationships with leaders and colleagues and interactions resulting from the relationships form the basis for the follower's involvement.

Positive involvement by followers is an indication that their needs are being met. Followers pursue continued feedback as they attempt to align their actions, which emanate from their personal values, with organizational goals. Followers are aware of their effectiveness, and they can articulate the rationale for their self-reported effectiveness. When the benefit of achieving a goal is greater than the risks, followers employ a variety of strategies to overcome obstacles in their pursuit of these goals. When followers are comfortable with the alignment of their personal values and the organization's goals, they report ownership of the task.

Re-conceptualization of Leaders and Followers

Findings from this study attest to the condition that the terms "leader" and "follower," when applied to organizations, are obsolete. Followers perceive themselves as leaders and perform functions that fall within the traditional definitions of leadership. Joseph Rost (1993) was on the correct path when he posited that "followers do not do followership, they do leadership" (p. 109); but he missed the crux of the issue when he stated that "a distinction between leaders and followers remains crucial to the concept of leadership" (p. 108). Without the distinction between leaders and followers, Rost contended that ". . . leadership as a meaningful construct would not make much sense" (p. 108). Rost's (1993) contention is based upon a construct that requires dichotomous components. This dichotomous construct of leadership may no longer be appropriate for the organizations of the twenty first century.

Replacing the dichotomous leadership construct described by Rost (1993) is a new construct where there are no "followers" but only "leaders" who demonstrate nuances of leadership. Leadership in the purest sense is self-leadership. With self-leadership, there can be perfect alignment between desired goals and personal values. This postulation is in agreement with Abraham Maslow's (1962) concept of "self actualization." Maslow stated that self actualization involves ". . . an unceasing trend toward unity, integration, or synergy within the person" (p. 25).

In organizations, the nuances of leadership are practiced in emerging interrelationships that respond to evolving needs, both personal and professional. This new construct aligns with Margaret Wheatley's (1994) concept of Leadership and the New Science. Looking at organizations from a quantum perspective, Wheatley (1994) stated:

What is critical is the relationship created between the person and the setting. That relationship will always be different, will always evoke different potentialities. It all depends upon the players and the moment (p. 34.).

As an active member that contributes to the success of the organization, individuals act as leaders demonstrating various levels of leadership. Some of these leadership actions involve working with others to accomplish agreed-upon goals. These individuals work together with no structured titles of "leader" and "follower," but as "leaders" creating relationships among themselves to achieve their mutual purposes. Their nuance of leadership will evolve as different challenges will require different relationships with other leaders.

As a final synthesis of the data presented in this qualitative study, the following definition of leadership is put forth: *Leadership consists of individuals acting as leaders who assume roles within evolving influence relationships requiring their contributions in order to achieve mutual purposes.*

Implications

Findings from this study have generated numerous implications. These implications are divided into two sections (a) "Implications for Practitioners," and (b) "Implications for Future Studies." The first section describes implications for those wishing to utilize the findings from this study in their current occupation.

Implications for Practitioners. Stories emanating from the perception of followers can afford consumers of this study an opportunity to examine their personal perceptions in regard to followers. Subjects in this study wanted to be contributing members of the organization. When employees appear to be passive or subversive regarding their involvement, organizations need to take notice and explore the deeper issues behind those actions.

Organizations that use the stories presented in this study to enhance their effectiveness will need to explore the alignment of their employee's values and the organization's goals, whether these goals are implicitly or explicitly stated. Findings from this study are supported by Douglas McGregor's (1960) "principle of integration." MacGregor defined the "principle of integration" as "the creation of conditions such that the members of the organization can achieve their own goals best by directing their efforts toward the success of the enterprise" (p. 49). Employees are individuals and they bring their individual values to an organization. When a difference exists between individuals' values and the perceived goals of the organization, individuals feel that their needs are not being met.

Every need is different and it is not practicable for the organization to believe that there will be perfect alignment between the organization's goals and the values of everyone in the organization. This fact should not make organizations complacent in attempting to meet the needs of its employees. Organizations need to recognize the

benefit when there is alignment with the individual's values and the organization's goals. Organizations that wish to capitalize on their employee's attributes must involve the individual in shaping the organization's goals. This practice will increase the opportunity for personal alignment with organizational goals.

To maximize the strengths of their employees, organizations need to rid themselves of their current perceptions and biases toward followers. Discarding these biases and pejorative terms will allow for the replacement of the current concept of followers with a more positive unrestricted construct of individuals who are actively pursuing organizational goals within the constraints of their personal values.

Implications for Future Studies. Researchers interested in promoting a new image for those who interact within an organization should focus on the relationship of the individual and the organization. Specific areas that are in need of additional research are:

- issues of loyalty between individuals as well as the loyalty within organizations.
- nature and effects of ethical dilemmas on the commitment level of individuals.
- how relationships are affected when individuals disagree.
- a causal-comparative analysis between organizational job descriptions and self-assigned label ("leader" or "follower").

The time has come for organizational scholars to redefine the roles of individuals and even the terms used to describe them. Individuals do not prefer to be passive, uninvolved within the organization and lacking in commitment and support toward their leaders. They are affected by the goals of the organization and continually strive to align their personal values with those goals.

Individuals want to participate in environments that fulfill their personal and professional needs. The closer the alignment between their personal needs and the goals

of the organization, the more ownership they have toward the tasks. Individuals utilize a variety of strategies and resources available to them in accomplishing those tasks, always striving for success. Organizations must work with their employees in efforts to align the goals of the organization with the employee's values.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letters

(date)

(Name)
(Title)
(Address)

Dear (name):

I am asking your help in regard to a leadership study I am conducting for my Doctoral Dissertation in Educational Leadership at The University of Montana. This study will contribute important information to the existing literature on leadership by expanding our current understanding of followers. The focus and design of my research has received international recognition by the University Council for Educational Administration.

I am proposing to conduct interviews, in selected organizations, with mid-level managers and their followers. I would like to interview one middle level manager and two followers from your organization. Each interview can be completed in one hour with the possibility of additional contacts with the subjects to check the accuracy of my notes. I purpose to conduct the interviews at your location to minimize any inconvenience this study may cause. The interview questions will focus on followers and will not seek specific information regarding your organization.

Confidentiality of information can be a concern for any organization. Information from this study identifying the subjects and the organization that employs them will be held confidential at all times. There are two governing bodies to ensure this confidentiality; my Doctoral Dissertation Committee and the Institutional Review Board at The University of Montana.

At the conclusion of my study, I will be happy to provide you with a brief summary of my findings.

Attached is a letter of support for this study from Dr. John C. Lundt, Department of Educational Leadership Chairman and the Chairman of my Doctoral Dissertation Committee at The University of Montana.

I will be contacting you by phone to answer any questions you may have and to discuss the possibility of conducting my interviews in your organization.

Sincerely,

William P. McCaw
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Educational Leadership
The University of Montana

March 2, 1999

Dear

I would like to encourage your participation in a research project developed by Mr. Bill McCaw. His study, *The Perception of Followers*, represents cutting-edge scholarship and is typical of the high quality research that I have come to expect from Bill.

Mr. McCaw has served as a research fellow in the Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling and I have had several opportunities to participate in graduate-level studies with him. I have always been most favorably impressed by the quality of his scholarship and the thoroughness of his work. Bill is a gifted scholar and creative thinker who produces documents of the first order.

I strongly encourage you to actively participate in this innovative study of followership and assist Bill McCaw in making a significant contribution to the field of leadership. Bill has the unqualified support of the Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling as well as the support of The University of Montana. Your participation in this groundbreaking research activity would be very much appreciated.

Sincerely

John C. Lundt Ed.D.
Professor and Chairman
Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Form: The Perception of Followers

Date: _____, 1999 Time: _____ (am / pm) Male: ___ Female: ___
 Subject Code: _____ L / F Interview: 1 FU# _____
 Position: _____ Longevity: organization _____ position _____

If required to select leader or follower, where would you put yourself? L F
 Setting: _____

Opening Statements:

Thank you for agreeing to take time from your busy schedule to participate in this research study. There are a few things that I would like to make sure you understand before we get started.

- I will be asking you some general questions and writing notes as we proceed.
- All information from this interview will be confidential. That is, you will not be identified by name, location, or place of employment in this study or in any report from this study.
- You will only be identified as "S" in these notes. A confidential subject code will be used to identify you for any follow up questions.
- No direct quotes from you will be used in the study without your prior permission. When quoted your identity, location, and place of employment, will remain confidential.
- Your name and place of employment will only be known by this researcher and Dr. John C. Lundt, Department of Educational Leadership Chairman, The University of Montana. Dr. Lundt is my Doctoral Dissertation Committee Chairman and oversees all aspects of this research study.
- The confidentiality of your name and place of employment is also under the purview of the Institutional Review Board at The University of Montana.
- You will hear the term leader used throughout the interview, I am referring to the leader you immediately report to.
- The term follower refers to anyone responding to organizational actions.

Please be assured that there are no correct answers to the questions that I will be asking. What is important, are your thoughts, feelings, and experiences. The intent of this interview is to gather your thoughts, feelings, and experiences, not to make judgments on your responses.

FOLLOWER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Earlier you labeled yourself as a _____, why?
2. What is your involvement within the organization?
3. When you encounter an obstacle, what do you do?
4. How do you identify with the goals of the organization? Explain.
5. How do you handle directions that appear contrary to expressed goals?
6. What is your level of commitment to your leader?
7. What do you do if you don't agree with your leader?
8. How do you support your leader?
9. How do you not support your leader?
10. How do you enhance your organization?
11. How would you describe your effectiveness?
12. How do you accomplish an important task?
13. What if there are problems as you attempt to solve the task?
14. Why do you continue to work in this organization?
15. Is your salary fair for what you do?
16. What things do you do that are normally attributed to leaders?
17. What can you tell me about leadership in your organization?
18. How would you describe your relationship with your leader?
19. How does your leader feel about you?
20. How do you feel when giving feedback to your leader?
21. How should feedback be given to a leader?
22. How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues?
23. Have you felt pressure to act in a manner contrary to your conscience? Tell me more.
24. How do you feel about trust in your organization?
25. Do you trust your leader? Tell me more.
26. What can you tell me about trust between followers?
27. How would you describe the trust between followers and leaders?
28. What personal goals do you have?

Appendix C: Field Memo

Field Memo

DATE: (Date of Reflective Notes)

REFERENCE

Interview Date: (Date of Interview - if Applicable)
Subject Code: (Reference to Specific Research Subject - if Applicable)
Interview Number: (Reference to Specific Interview - if Applicable)

CATEGORY

Emerging
Categories

NOTES

Reflective Notes

Appendix D: Interview Codes

INTERVIEW CODING
FOLLOWERS

CONFIDENTIAL

CODE		FICTITIOUS NAME	L/F	EMPLOYMENT
QLF9901G	1	Joe	L	Government
QLF9902G	2	Philip	F	Government
QLF9903G	3	Bill	F	Government
QLF9910E	4	Bruce	F	Education
QLF9911E	5	Barry	L	Education
QLF9912E	6	Sue	F	Education
QLF9920B	7	Mark	L	Business
QLF9921B	8	Ray	F	Business
QLF9922B	9	Steve	F	Business
QLF9923B	10	Jim	L	Business
QLF9924B	11	Tom	F	Business
QLF9925B	12	Dave	F	Business

CODING EXPLANATIONS

QL	Indicates Qualitative Design
F	Indicates Follower Study
99	Year of the Study
01	Subject Number
	01-09 Government Employee
	10-19 Education Employee
	20-29 Business Employee
G	Government Employee
E	Education Employee
B	Business Employee
L/F	Designated leader or follower by gatekeeper

Appendix E: Permission to Quote

RELEASE FORM

Permission to use Quotations

The purpose of this form is to secure the permission to use quotations from the semi-structured interview(s) conducted as part of a research study regarding followers, conducted by William P. McCaw.

Subject's Name: _____

The undersigned (*subject of the study and originator of the quotation*) hereby grants permission for William P. McCaw to utilize quotations by the undersigned to be reported in his research study on followers and any subsequent publications resulting from said study.

The anonymity and place of employment of the undersigned will remain confidential at all times.

(Signature of Subject)

(Date)