

WHAT'S YOUR STYLE?  
*Individual Leadership and Diversity Management*

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Steady and substantial demographic changes have affected organizations, including the increasing presence of women, racial minorities, and immigrants in the workplace and in client and customer populations (Abella, 1984; Towers Perrin and The Hudson Institute, 1990). The issue of managing a diverse workforce is increasingly gaining recognition as an important topic of research and theorizing (Konrad, 2003). However, not much research exists regarding the combination of tailored styles of leadership and its application to different demographic groups.

By analyzing themes regarding the adaptation of leaders to the differences among their subordinates, we can gain greater insight into improving diverse workplaces. A large discrepancy exists between the intervention as proposed in the theoretical literature and what actually happens in the workplace under the name of managing diversity. Diversity programs are frequently limited to awareness or skill-building training. Diversity management practices vary widely, and the results of these programs are rarely measured and evaluated (Agocs and Burr, 1996). Ultimately, this thesis is necessary for understanding the connections of (individual) leadership methods and diversity in the workplace. Through a series of structured, qualitative, and richly descriptive interviews of a broad set of leaders from varied industries, organizational levels, and demographic backgrounds, this thesis is an attempt to investigate what those connections might be. Analysis of the qualitative data will find themes of how to tailor (or not) leadership styles to diversity in one's teams or units within an organization.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Executive Summary

Steady and substantial demographic changes, including the increasing presence of women, racial minorities, and immigrants in the workplace, and in client and customer populations, have produced considerable changes in the composition of organizations (Abella, 1984; Towers Perrin and The Hudson Institute, 1990). By 2000, ethnic minorities were 29% of the total workforce, up from 22% in the mid-1980s (EEOC, 2000). Today, ethnic minorities make up nearly 36% of the workforce (BLS, 2018). Therefore, the issue of managing a diverse workforce is increasingly recognized as an important topic of theorizing, research, and practice (Konrad, 2003). Much of the debate in this area has been focused on narrow issues, with themes revolving around problems of representation and discrimination (Ogbonna and Harris, 2006). However, not much research exists regarding the combination of *tailored* styles of leadership and their application to different demographic groups.

To promote the development of more positive organizational cultures that would support the effective development of a more diverse workforce, many companies offer training programs aimed at “valuing diversity” (Kochan, Bezrukova, Ely, Jackson, Joshi, Jehn, Leonard, Levine, and Thomas, 2003). However, there are tensions between a collective approach to managing a diverse employee group and a more individualized approach focusing on personal needs and abilities (Agocs and Burr, 1996). Programs that help manage diversity do not change leadership styles, and this change could improve the individual relationships between managers and employees.

That is, there is little research connecting leadership style to effective diversity management. Programs for current organizations and teams are inadequate because they neglect the impact of conflicts of perception about ‘appropriateness’ among actors at different organizational levels (Ferner, Almond, and Colling, 2005). Discrepancies exist between the interventions as proposed in the theoretical literature and journals, and what actually happens in the workplace under the name of managing diversity (Ferner, Almond, and Colling, 2005). By analyzing themes regarding the adaptation of leaders to the differences among their subordinates, we can gain greater insight into improving diverse workplaces.

Diversity programs are frequently limited to awareness or skill-building training. Firms have continued to use diversity training to reduce bias on the job, hire diverse talent, and provide resources for employees. These initiatives and programs have been used to ensure equality in policy and procedure (Dobbin and Kalev, 2016). Diversity management practices vary widely, their goals often appear nebulous, and the results of these programs are not often measured and evaluated (Agocs and Burr, 1996). Ultimately, this thesis is necessary for helping to understand the connections of (individual) leadership styles and valuing or capitalizing on diversity in the workplace. Through a series of structured, qualitative, and richly descriptive interviews of a broad set of leaders from varied industries, organizational levels, and demographic backgrounds, this thesis is an attempt to investigate what those connections might be. Analysis of the qualitative interview data will induce themes of how to tailor (or not) leadership styles to diversity in one’s teams or units within an organization.

## **Thesis Question**

Following a review of academic journals and articles on diversity management programs and diversity management research, such programs aim to treat all within an organization fairly through inclusion principles, diversity composition targets, and standard leadership procedures. Diversity management programs, when implemented, serve this purpose and can create a change in diversity's value. However, there are gaps in understanding how individual leaders adapt their style based on involvement in nuanced situations or different identity groups. These gaps include individual leadership philosophy, distinct diversity compositions of groups, and the overlap of diversity and leadership style. Tapping into individual leadership styles to find emerging themes in leading diversity on an individual level might include the personal evolution of style, formal leadership training, or intended management philosophy. Themes in this context might include how individual leaders think and process different situations to make decisions in their respective roles. Analyzing emerging themes from a content analysis of qualitative interviews could help formulate new theories that can grow the current knowledge base of diversity leadership. These theories could then inform models applicable to a variety of situations a leader is faced within a diverse organization. Individual leadership standards might remedy the effectiveness of leadership in diverse organizations.

This conceptual and practical area will continue to shift as group compositions and institutional structures change. By sampling broadly from "real world" leaders, this thesis aims to find themes within individual leadership styles than can traverse different scenarios and arrangements of diversity. The interview process and qualitative data intend to contribute new models of how individual leaders tailor their style based on the diversity of their subgroups. The models may not be universally applied, but they can create a framework within which leaders

make decisions and act. A framework proposes standards within which to operate. The framework I develop includes both cognitive and behavioral aspects of the way in which leaders of diverse groups process different situations. However, liberties are taken based on each leader's personality and the specific diversity composition of his or her groups.

Due to the breadth of theories within diversity management and leadership styles, key interview questions that will serve as the basis of the data for the thesis research include:

**What is the diversity composition of the groups you lead?**

**What is the greatest challenge in leading a group of diverse individuals?**

**How do leaders balance treating everyone the same while still recognizing differences?**

In interviews, leaders will be asked the above questions and others relating to the intersection of diversity and individual leadership style. These questions will provide richness to understanding applicable themes of diversity management that contribute to mental models across industries. Ultimately, the literature review and content analysis of qualitative interviews derive themes of individual leadership style and its dynamic nature within diverse groups.

### **Approach of Thesis Inquiry**

To understand individual leadership styles, I take a dual approach. It includes a literature review of diversity leadership research and qualitative interviews with experienced leaders of diverse groups in varied industries. The literature review illustrates the need for individual leadership style and diversity research, and qualitative data collection and analysis constructs a model through this process to contribute to the field of diversity management.

In the context of this research, leadership is defined as “the action of guiding a group of people or an organization toward a goal or set of goals” (Harrison and Klein, 2007); The action of leading a group varies for each leader based on his or her experiences and personality.

Diversity is defined as “the inclusion of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization” (Harrison and Klein, 2007). The aim of the research is to explore the intersection of leadership and diversity in regard to individual leadership style.

First, within the literature review, I research changes in diversity composition over time and the initiatives that have been implemented to capitalize on and manage diversity in organizations. I analyze the elements of diversity management programs and how they affect leadership at an organizational level. This includes an investigation of the current initiatives to understand how they are ineffective in both managing diversity and applying to individual leaders. The literature review provides an overview of the prevailing issues in diversity management and establishes the need to find a model for individual leadership style and its intersection with diversity.

Next, general diversity management and leadership research build a foundation and framework with which to structure my research. I use elements from the literature to form an interview protocol, including a varied sampling pool and targeted individual diversity leadership style inquiry. The interview process will provide rich descriptions of individual leadership experiences and context in different situations. The procedure will provide examples for thorough content analysis to create emerging themes and an overall model for individual leadership style and diversity. The goal of the research is to contribute a model for individual leadership of diversity in organizations and provide illustrative examples for both theoretical and practical applications.

## Chapter 2: The Role of Diversity Management in the Workplace

### Analysis of Literature

This chapter illustrates the status quo of diversity management: where we are today and what we know. First, this chapter will illustrate changes in the workforce, including the burgeoning numbers of women in the labor force and the growth of minority groups. Next, I will analyze the approaches and strategies for effective diversity management programs at an *organizational* level. Finally, the drawbacks of current programs will be highlighted to understand why they often fail. This will culminate in an understanding of the need for greater research into *individual* diversity management styles and how they can overcome inefficiencies within an organization. Analysis of current literature is essential to understanding the need for more effective programs for diversity management.

Diversity programs and initiatives have been created as a response to demographic expansion and organizational change; organizations are managing diversity among customers, employees, and stakeholders (Agocs & Burr, 1996). Equality and fairness for diverse sets of employees within an organization is the ultimate goal, but achieving this goal requires not only awareness and organizational initiatives, but also a personal commitment to change (Abella, 1984). Equality means that no one within an organization is denied an opportunity (Abella, 1984). Although there are different definitions and approaches to creating an environment of equality, for the purpose of understanding and analyzing individual styles, equality is treating employees in an organization as peers with equivalent merit, accommodating their differences. -

Changes in demographics have shifted the culture of the workforce and organizational composition. Enactment of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Employment

Act of 1972 led to changes in the political and legislative environment for business, and commissions were formed to investigate job discrimination (Ferner, Almond, and Colling, 2005). Organizational changes affected hiring processes and interior movement practices for employers that accepted women and minority groups (Thomas, 2005). The white male population has traditionally dominated demographics in the workforce, but minority groups are growing in number to eventually claim the majority (Agocs & Burr, 1996). In 2018, minorities constituted 36% of the workforce, and women made up nearly half of the workforce at 47% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Although organizational composition changes have been rapid, the de facto structural and cultural changes have been significantly slower (Kochan, et.al 2003). As this number continues to grow, more effective initiatives are needed in order to reconcile organizational issues that arise as a result of diversity growth.

Women and racial minorities face discrimination and disadvantage which is systemic, deeply embedded in the culture and structure of the workplace (Agocs and Burr, 1996). Moreover, diversity programs have not changed much over time since women entered the workforce (Kalev, Williams, and Thomas, 2018). In response to this, organizations have attempted to create programs that catalyze change in culture and structure. This change also needs to be systemic and long-term so that it becomes the standard throughout the organization (Lindsey et al, 2017).

There has been slow social acceptance of initiatives within the structure and culture of organizations. That is, tensions exist because the legislation mentioned above does not have matching support from social structures (Ferner, Almond, and Colling, 2004). Different conditions within diverse teams at work can cultivate varying results, but organizational issues still exist with conflicts related to biases or negative stereotypes (Bezrukova and Jehn, 2004).

Moreover, managerial interest inefficiency, as opposed to the inclusion of diversity, can shift an organization's goals away from effective diversity management (Kirby and Harter, 2003). The need to connect both social and legislative practices for effective change has spurred the growth of diversity management programs.

Expected benefits of diversity management programs include improved communication, decreased conflict and stress, enhanced productivity of heterogeneous teams or workgroups, and improvements in morale, job satisfaction, and retention (Agocs and Burr, 1996). The key to a successful program is to change personal attitudes without encroaching on personal will and action. Diversity programs are most successful when those involved can understand the objectives and act freely and individually to match their own style (Dobbin and Kalev, 2016).

To understand the implementation of programs and what types of results they yield, I will use the research from studies carried out between 1999 and 2003. Many of these companies had well-developed policies for managing diversity. For example, one created diversity councils where managers and employees could discuss the application of diversity initiatives. With this, some of the companies only provided a framework to operate within and the different levels of management decided the appropriate policies (Ferner, Almond, and Colling, 2004).

Under these guidelines, it is understandably difficult to create a comprehensive program to manage and capture what might be positive effects of diversity. As a result, few non-managerial participants felt the initiatives significantly impacted them (Ferner, Almond, and Colling, 2004). Moreover, managerial attitudes surrounding involuntary training procedure or negative incentivization may fail to reduce bias, as these feelings go against what is known about motivating groups of people (Dobbin and Kalev, 2016). Incorporating an understanding of the

current impact of diversity management programs may help to reframe the approach these programs take.

When looking at the objectives of diversity management programs, it is key to harness the multiple perspectives of those already in the organization for enhanced creativity and perceptions for problem-solving and organizational growth (Ferner, Almond, and Colling, 2004). These aspects of leadership are key to building a framework and specific policies to catalyze change in an organization. Below, I will explore four key strategies included in many established diversity management programs.

In understanding the ways diversity management programs can be successful, the first two efforts embedded in many programs are *perspective-taking* and *goal-setting*. Perspective-taking involves taking time and effort to understand the challenges or difficulties that (other) minorities may face in a given situation. This can improve one's behavior towards these groups, and behavioral outcomes include more support and less mistreatment towards marginalized minorities (Lindsey et al, 2017).

Goal-setting is another strategy that has proven to have effective outcomes in diversity management programs. This strategy includes making specific, measurable, and challenging goals that are related to proportions of women and minorities within one's roles and organization (Lindsey et al, 2017). These efforts can be used at both the individual and organizational levels.

For example, with perspective-taking, individuals can take this step in their own roles, and the organization can also improve its external image to signal a change in perspective. Goal-setting can be used at each level within a company – individual, team, and organizational. These goals can be effective if they are specific to each management level within an organization and indicate a measurable and actionable item to work towards.

A third way for diversity management programs to be successful is for an authority figure to endorse the efforts that are implemented as part of the program (Lindsey et al, 2017). This can also apply to the efforts of a manager in catalyzing change from the top-down to his or her subordinates. Managerial commitment is essential to the effective functioning of the organization and diversity management initiatives (Hopkins, Hopkins, and Mallette 2001). By endorsing initiatives aimed at improving the efficiency of a team from a diversity standpoint, these values can instill greater effects. This strategy can be used within different aspects of a larger program.

The support of upper-level managers is instrumental to the success and implementation of diversity initiatives. This requires a top executive's personal commitment to change along with a vision of moving the organization towards its goals. This 'endorsement' of positive values, including those involving diversity, needs to start at the executive level.

Lastly, mentorship is a method that can potentially yield positive results throughout an organization. Although formal mentorship programs do not consistently produce positive results relative to informal programs, there is still progress in diversity management to be made from a leadership strategy that includes aspects of mentorship (Olson and Jackson, 2009). This can be due to attraction theory where similarity facilitates interpersonal attraction (Mannix and Neale, 2005). For example, more heterogeneous teams have higher levels of turnover than homogeneous teams, and values are a mechanism to create social integration (Mannix and Neale, 2005). This is a socio-psychological issue that may not be overcome through institutional intervention, so potential solutions must keep in mind these inherent biases. The focus on the *individual leader* is key to understanding the need for greater research into what themes within the varied styles of management emerge and achieve success.

Managing diversity is concerned with changing the attitudes and behaviors of individuals. Diversity training is usually delivered to volunteer participants by external consultants, or sometimes by internal trainers in larger organizations, using off-the-shelf packages and often working in “diverse” teams (Kalinowski et al, 2013). Training sessions are designed to spark interest but not fundamentally to challenge, question or change organizational routines or power structures (Agocs & Burr, 1996). These approaches aim to complete consistent training and awareness initiatives across the organization, but may not necessarily make changes to cultural or structural issues. The implementation of such programs leads to a ‘one size fits all approach’. With this, a gap is created between organizational or blanket initiatives and individual leadership efforts. Different results are created on an organizational and team level as leaders’ individual approaches may not necessarily align with an overarching program.

Diversity management programs are necessary for modern organizations, but their execution varies and has been ineffective in bridging collective and individual approaches (Agocs & Burr, 1996). There is a disconnect between collective and individual approaches (Ferner, Almond, and Colling, 2004). To further the understanding and efficiency of diversity management programs, bridging this gap is key.

Nuances in personal decisions from managers and leaders make it difficult to draw conclusions about the best techniques and strategies of diversity management. When looking at leadership styles, it is key to note the variety in approaches and their effects on a workforce (Dobbin and Kalev, 2016). To effectively manage diversity and harness greater productivity in teams, an improved approach is necessary. A leadership-based theoretical framework for diversity management is necessary, along with a better understanding of the perspectives and motivation of leaders in diverse organizations (Ng, 2008). Although the approach of any one

leader might be specific to their style, observing underlying themes across leaders can be used as the basis for such a framework.

### **Discussion of Gaps in Knowledge**

Changes in organizations can be made by diversity programs, but managerial actions catalyze change at the individual level that can permeate throughout an organization. Specific managerial recommendations include adopting a more analytical approach, supporting experimentation and evaluation, and training for group-process skills (Kochan, et al., 2003). These initiatives maintain a focus on the leader-employee relationship and interpersonal interactions. Diversity needs to be viewed as an opportunity to learn and create a cooperative organizational culture through each leader-employee dynamic.

The research above primarily covers the status quo of diversity management aimed at the organization's top level. While there are some strategies that can produce positive results, there is significantly less research regarding individual styles, as they are more nuanced and specific to the experiences of each manager. Identity needs to be part of the conversation of diversity management to account for differences and avoid the categorization of groups (Thomas, 2011). An investigation into individual leadership style incorporates identity and might account for nuances by providing context and examples.

## **Chapter 3: Sampling and Content Analysis Method**

### **Sampling and Omissions**

The interview process aims to extract themes of individual leadership for practical and theoretical applications. The discovery of emerging themes aims to form new theories about individual diversity management. The qualitative data includes individual responses to targeted questions, and the goal of the empirical research is to get richness in possible features of how leaders deal with diverse teams. 'Richness' includes a need to sample for variation across factors. Analyzing this data includes content analysis derived from the specific answers. To gather this information, a pool of interviewees were selected from varying industries, occupations, ages, genders, and ethnicities. The interviews cover questions about each interviewee's personal leadership experience, including a focus on the diversity of their groups and situational and general inquiries. The theory behind this sampling pool and interview protocol is that given the same set of questions with such varying backgrounds, similarities in responses may indicate emerging themes in individual leadership. Moreover, the nature of the questions extract elements for both theoretical and practical application. Interviews were conducted primarily over the phone. Each interview was recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy in analysis.

Determining themes is an inductive and abstract process. This process is conducted under content analysis, in which textual material is reduced to more relevant, manageable bits of data (Weber). The raw textual data includes verbatim interview transcriptions. I made the data more manageable through editing and a consistent procedure for analysis.

The content analysis uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text (Weber, 1990). First, I transformed the raw data by using a web service to automatically transcribe the

interviews. Following automatic transcription, I manually reviewed each response and made edits to improve clarity and readability. Moreover, I removed superfluous speech patterns and other pauses and fillers not relevant to the core material. Next, I grouped the responses and began a systematic coding procedure by question. To create a coding scheme, I first defined the recording units as “themes”, meaning a “unit of text having the perceiver, the perceived or agent of action, the action, and the target of the action” (Weber, 1990). With this definition, I analyzed the interview responses to extract and create theme names.

In the analytical procedure, similarities in responses in either implicit or explicit statements are highlighted to generate principles about individual leadership style targeted at diversity. These principles are grouped by question to identify themes. Responses are made more succinct through notation of keywords used by the interviewee. The core meaning and essence of these highlights were examined both independently and in consideration alongside the responses of other interviewees in the respective question. After compiling these findings, a label was created according to my personal interpretation of meaning in responses. My interpretation was generated by using words or phrases that capture the selected keywords and essence. The individual responses were again reviewed to curate the percentage of responses that adhere to the constructed theme. The inclusion of percentages provides insight into how many responses aligned with the general themes from each question. I present evidence to support the creation of each theme by citing interviewee responses and examples. With this, I include an introduction of themes to justify them and their use in thought processes of leaders. The themes integrate into an overall mental model or models that contribute to how leaders tailor their individual leadership style based on the diversity of their subordinates (Weber, 1990).

Before beginning the interview process, initial thoughts on findings included the expectation of similar themes within gender groups and ethnicity. This expectation was based on the review of the literature and the differences in gender and ethnic groups, including the initiatives within organizations created for women and minorities (Kalinowski et al, 2013). The information gleaned from the academic research was kept in mind throughout the interview process as a way to help decipher the ways in which the interviewees responded.

Included below is the overall composition of the interviewees selected for the thesis research. The key characteristics are included to seek rich variation in experience. I tried to sample to get differences in age, gender, ethnicity, and industry. Table 1 includes a breakdown of the sampled interviewees' features.

**Table 1**

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Current Occupation</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age Group</b>
A	Retired	Oil & Gas	White/Caucasian	Male	50-65
B	Chief Technology Officer	Manufacturing	White/Caucasian	Male	50-65
C	Vice President	Construction	White/Caucasian	Female	18-34
D	Consultant	Non-profit, High tech	White/Caucasian	Male	35-50
E	Auditor	Government	Black/African American	Female	50-65
F	Attorney	Law	White/Caucasian	Male	35-50
H	President, Chief Executive Officer	Education	Hispanic or Latino	Female	50-65
J	Retired	Healthcare	White/Caucasian	Female	65+
K	First Lieutenant	Military	White/Caucasian	Female	18-34
L	Regional Manager	Healthcare, Military	White/Caucasian	Male	65+
M	Department Chair	Education	White/Caucasian	Female	50-65

In this research, certain omissions have been made for the practicality and breadth of interviewee selection and content analysis. The omissions include disclosure of sexual orientation, disability, and religious affiliation. Some of the above diversity metrics were

included in interview conversations but were unprompted by targeted questions. The exclusion of particular diversity methods fosters a smaller spectrum of metrics to utilize and analyze for emerging themes. Future research on individual leadership and diversity management may include more attributes in order to extend on these findings or to investigate a variety of intersections of diversity.

Other omissions include revisions to interview responses. In Tables 2-6, the modifications from the original transcription enhance clarity and fluidity. The adaptation derives from personal discernment of the original text. Moreover, superfluous information and/or anecdotes inapplicable to the subject topic are excluded to avoid distraction from the essential qualitative data.

### **Interview Protocol**

This chapter includes the analysis of qualitative interview analysis and a discussion of the emerging themes. I provide an overview of management psychology as a preface for the perspective in understanding the results. Next, each theme is discussed with examples to interpret its theoretical and practical applications. Lastly, I provide a brief overview of what these results mean for the field of diversity management from both an individual and organizational perspective

Before analyzing the collected interview data, I will cover a few important concepts to facilitate understanding of the results in their academic context. These concepts include management psychology, reviewing what is already known and understood about leaders from a psychological perspective. The established theories are critical for analyzing the interview responses and emerging themes in individual leadership style.

The first consideration in the interview process is management psychology and its foundation. The foundation includes considerations for decision-making and the formation of personal goals in contrast with organizational goals (Dobbin and Kalev, 2016). The interviews aim to find situations and different outcomes to discover the factors for varying styles of leading diverse teams. These situations will look at decision-making from a leadership role.

The factors that aid in decision-making are subjective, based on personal experience, personality structure, and interpretations of probabilities and outcomes (Fisk, 1967). These aspects are apparent in the interview process as the sampling pool includes leaders from different industries and personal and professional backgrounds. Decision-making is one of the key actions considered for the analysis of themes, and the feelings and thoughts behind these decisions from these factors.

A constraint with current research in diversity management is the tension between personal and organizational goals. As Fisk describes, “personal values of managers lead to different criteria in evaluating alternatives for a decision” (Fisk, 1967). These values may differ from those listed in organizational guidelines. A conflict may arise between these two goals. Because personal values are instilled as part of one’s personality, experiences, and environment, it is not possible to determine the differences for each individual leader (Lindsey et al, 2017). Personality is an important variable, albeit difficult to interpret in regards to decision making, as personality affects learning and interpretations. Moreover, the problem in studying character is a lack of a “standardized analytic scheme that is a universally applicable system” (Fisk, 1967). The methodology for the interview process, therefore, is to find emerging themes within the personal v. organizational goal conflict and personal experience.

Beyond personal experience and personality is the environment within which a decision is being made. The “environment for management decision includes organization structure, amount and reliability of info communicated by the organization, and external psychological constraints (culture, tradition, social norms)” (Fisk, 1967). These psychological constraints are the main focus of the research, as the composition of an organization may have great diversity in its members, which leads to a variety of psychological components (Brescoll, 2011). The circumstances of each interviewee evoke different responses, and I keep in mind these psychological factors in consideration as I review and analyze the qualitative data.

### **Specific Examples from Interview Data**

The examples presented by interviewees enrich my understanding of their message. These messages provided themes for consideration in individual leadership; however, the diverse anecdotes illustrate practical application. Many examples were used to substantiate the development of emerging themes.

I believe some examples provide richness in understanding some compelling, yet unexpected challenges for leaders of diverse groups. One key piece I recognized was the distinct experience of minority leaders of diverse groups. Their responses may not have always included the keywords found in many other interviewee responses. For example, Interviewee E provided some insight in regards to the challenges of being a minority in a leadership position. “If I’m being honest, I feel, as an African American woman, I have to work 10 times harder than everyone else just to prove my worth or to be paid or to be valued for what I’ve already proven” (Table 7, Interviewee E). Although not pertinent to theme formation, this example gives insight and perspective into the challenges of minority leaders. Many of the themes discussed include characteristics of respect and listening, and I was interested to see examples from a leader’s

perspective where and when these standards were not upheld. Following analysis and creation of themes, the compiled qualitative interview data provides key takeaways applicable to individual leaders and diversity management literature.

An acknowledgment is made to account for the differences in responses due to industries. For example, there is more than one interviewee within education, military, and healthcare in the sampling pool. To comment on these similarities, anecdotes and examples from respondents are included to corroborate the content analysis and theme creation.

In consideration of the interview results, implementing the proposed themes in an organization for individual leaders may be a difficult process. It is easier to implement change from an institutional context, and change on an individual level is challenging due to the personal aspects of leadership. Interviewee B communicated this difference throughout the course of the interviews. “I think leadership is very personal... it’s just this concept and everyone’s story is going to be different and unique and there’s no right one [personal leadership standard] or wrong one to me - it just comes down to leadership, it’s very personal. No formula and you have to develop how you’re going to hold yourself accountable” (Table 5, Interviewee B).

Many of the interviewees recognized the need and benefit of capitalizing on diversity and the variety of opinions and perspectives, “I feel like everyone has something they bring to the table”, and “Sometimes it’s hard to make sure that in a diverse team with diverse ideas, you’re making sure that all of those ideas get heard and get presented because that’s the benefit of it” (Table 2, Interviewee E, Interviewee D). Giving inclusion and a voice to the different participants in a group is crucial, “But I think there’s this equation which says it takes more energy and work to get a diverse team to operate. So, you have to focus in on all those parts. The reward is greater, but the effort is higher to get that result.” (Table 2, Interviewee B). In

analyzing the resulting themes, I emphasize the intersection of the individual and personal responses and managing diversity.

## **Chapter 4: Results: Induced Emergent Themes in Leading Diversity**

### **Findings**

From the data, the content analysis highlighted similarities in responses to the formation of emerging themes in individual leadership styles for diversity management. The response to each question has been reviewed to find an essence of what the speaker both implicitly and explicitly conveyed in regard to his or her individual leadership style. After identifying the core ideas and keywords within each response, the resulting collection is compared across respondents to detect similarities. These corresponding pieces are grouped under an umbrella that is labeled a theme name. Each theme name provides a broad framework within which individual responses are captured (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The themes are not necessarily applicable to all interviewees. The theme analysis includes a description of the characteristics of the theme with citations to responses from the interviewees. The themes are quantitatively illustrated by percentages of the total group in regards to similarities with other respondents. The evidence corroborates the analytical results and enriches the understanding of theme creation.

Each question included in Tables 2-6 targets a different aspect within the intersection of diversity and individual leadership style. I designed the query to distill the underpinning ideas for success in leading a group of diverse individuals. I asked questions to elicit how each leader thinks, feels, and acts in different situations. Given the diversity of situations and examples presented by interviewees, I aimed to understand each subject's decisive points in these situations in regard to the challenges of leading diverse groups. From these points, I analyzed the cognitive and behavioral foundation of his or her answer.

I personally interpreted the responses and examples given by interviewees to induce the resulting themes. I pooled the questions to analyze responses, and overall themes emerged. After review, I created theme names to capture the prevailing core ideology of each. These themes are cross-cutting, meaning they apply to more than one situation or challenge a leader faces. As a result, the themes encompass an array of applications for individual leaders (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Below, I present each theme with a brief introduction and a concise definition. The definitions are corroborated with descriptions and citations from Tables 2-6. The citations consist of quotes and examples that illustrate real-world scenarios and dilemmas for leaders of diverse groups. These descriptions within each explanation justify theme formulation and provide context enrichment.

**THEME: “Receptivity”**

This theme represents the mindset that leaders use to foster an environment of inclusion, empathy, and individual recognition. “Receptivity” means that leaders embrace the challenges that a diverse team presents to them through patience and humility. These attributes are seen in action by *listening*: letting team members be heard. Ten of the twelve interviewees explicitly emphasized listening as the key to problem-solving within a diverse team (Table 4).

Listening in the context of problem-solving involves an intention to be an active and unbiased receiver and processor of information, allowing for the subject to express the situation. “It comes down to the leader having the skills and the competence and the open-mindedness and the receptiveness to allow that team to be successful” (Table 2, Interviewee A). The way a leader listens and is effectively receptive means removing personal biases and remaining open-minded. This is an active process that requires attention and dedication. Itzchakov and Kluger give tips

for being a better listener including “Give 100% of your attention, do not interrupt, do not judge or evaluate, do not impose your solutions, ask more (good) questions, and reflect” (Itzhakov and Kluger, 2018). These elements are integrated into “Receptivity” and in many interview responses, corroborating the ability to be an effective listener.

Around 83% of respondents emphasized that the characteristics of open-mindedness and patience are needed to be an effective leader of diverse groups (Table 2, Table 4), which I also code as receptivity. Interviewee B expressed, “...there’s only one job of a leader at the end of the day, and that’s to make good decisions. And to make good decisions, you have to be very careful that you don’t have a frame of reference biases... you have to have the humility and patience to be challenged and operate in ways which are different than how you operate” (Table 2, Interviewee B).

In understanding the drivers behind a leader’s decisions, the first consideration mentioned results from receptiveness. To be receptive is to allow oneself to be open to diverging opinions and perspectives. This mindset aids a leader in making decisions that account for the ideas and voices of his or her diverse team members.

In addition, the leader can use receptivity to understand and identify nascent problems within a team. To understand a problem, a leader utilizes the skills involved in receptivity: active listening and perspective-taking. For example, Interviewee A emphasizes, “Always listen. The big thing is you got a problem with a team, sit down with the people and talk to them. A lot of people, a lot of leaders ignore problems. Or for instance, they’ll listen to only the people who they are familiar with or comfortable with, and you can’t” (Table 4, Interviewee A). It is important to note here that a leader must be aware of his or her personal biases and potentially

subconscious tendencies towards certain groups or individuals. A receptive leader listens to understand and ensures equal opportunity for those involved in a problem to be heard.

Following the identification of a problem, interviewees presented a couple of solution strategies. Two respondents emphasized a need for the group members to have ownership and responsibility for solving the problem. Interviewee M explained, “Whatever the problem is, before I make any suggestions, I want them to suggest three options that they would plan to correct the problem. That way I’ve put the onus upon them... now they own the problem, and I’m giving them the responsibility as adults or team members to figure out how to correct it” (Table 3, Interviewee M). This approach capitalizes on the principles of voice and inclusion of a diverse team (Harrison and Klein, 2007). The team members in this situation must voice their grievances or objections and provide solutions.

By creating the solutions, the group members are using their input and perspective which is most connected to the root of the problem. It allows individuals to identify their own solutions without prejudicing. This puts the leader in the pivotal position to be receptive as he or she will need to listen to these solutions from the perspective of the team members. The leader is still listening to potential solutions and not jumping into action. The leader can now make a decision knowing that the team members have presented their best opportunity to remedy the situation. Giving ownership to the team members can only be done if a leader is receptive to his or her team members, placing value on their input and opinions.

Another method for problem-solving in a diverse group entailed revisiting expectations of the team. To do this, a leader must clarify the goal and drive the focus towards attaining that goal. Included in the identification of a problem is how it impacts the goal of the organization. When identified, the leader can take the appropriate steps to realign focus and expectations. For

example, “the challenge is to make sure that whatever the goal is if it’s a diverse group that you’re trying to lead, they all have to be on the same page as to what the goal is” (Table 2, Interviewee L). The problem-solving angle of this question elicits elements of effective communication.

**KEYWORDS: Listen, Understand, Identify, Open-mindedness, ‘Giving People a Voice’, Empathy**

**THEME: “Invigoration”**

Another theme discerned from the responses was a need to introduce variation and rotation of roles and projects for group members. “Invigoration” is the stimulation of the group. Stimulation involves creating initiatives to “keep the group fresh” by establishing rotations in assignments, groups, and opportunities (Table 3, Interviewee A). This fosters varied interactions within the team and opportunities to learn. These opportunities may cultivate new ideas for the team.

Moreover, the perspective for a leader in this theme to actively consider is, “How do you keep stretching your team? How do you keep pushing them, keeping them on their toes, keeping them sharp, keeping them interested, keeping them excited?” (Table 3, Interviewee A). This mindset necessitates that a leader consistently finds ways to stimulate the team, taking action to grow their potential. 67% of interviewees included component of this theme through considerations of initiatives and standards to maintain growth (Table 3). As another example,

Moreover, the invigoration of a diverse group may also have practical applications for issues regarding the formation of factions in a diverse team. As many interviewees described, “...People migrate towards people that are like them no matter what. I truly do think that’s human nature” (Table 3, Interviewee C). Although this is a phenomenon that may be difficult to avoid,

invigoration helps a leader “make sure that doesn’t translate into professional cliques forming” (Table 3, Interviewee D). Stimulating this group in this context, a leader can “keep a good rotation going on projects so that everybody has a chance to and is expected to work with everybody else at some point” (Table 3, Interviewee D). This action allows a leader to operate within a standard to ensure that team members are ‘kept fresh’ by receiving new endeavors.

**KEYWORDS: Rotation, Growth Opportunities, Mix**

**THEME: “Collective Consideration”**

This theme emphasizes the need for diverse individuals to work together and understand that success flows from teamwork. In consideration of the group as a whole, individual members must recognize the merits in the collective of their individual contributions. This includes the recognition of interdependencies within the group and a common goal.

The key for leaders in this position is to actively ensure that roles of co-equal importance are distributed within the team. This emphasizes the significance of individual contributions to the common goal. Roughly 58% of interviewees within his or her response included a need to actively bring team members together (Table 3). For example, Interviewee F describes, “Essentially it's finding these distinct roles for everybody so they're not stepping on each other's toes, and in a way that keeps everybody together because you don't have people that are trying to do it on their own. It encourages, but it almost necessitates the need to bring people together to have these group meetings where you all get together and talk about what's going on. Everyone's got an ownership interest. They get to be the executive on a certain project.” (Table 3, Interviewee E). The approach illustrated in this example allows for team members to have autonomy in their own pieces, but it drives “Collective Consideration” by bringing the team together and illustrating the impact that their diverse roles and contributions can create together.

This theme encompasses a few fundamental principles that are exercised with similar intent and complementary function. “Collective Consideration” also includes weighting the individuality of team members in decision-making. This term is meant to comprise the framework leaders create to deliberate the circumstances and character of their team members in making decisions and implementing procedures. Consideration in this theme bridges a couple of definitions including ‘a matter weighed or taken into account when formulating an opinion or plan’ and ‘an opinion obtained by reflection’ (Merriam-Webster, 2019). Both include an opinion formulated by reflection and are used for taking an action.

Regarding the first definition, a leader ‘takes into account’ the collective, or his or her team, when making decisions or forming opinions. The consideration includes perspective-taking and listening. These two actions allow a leader to understand the group composition (Lindsey et al, 2017). For example, employing these skills, a leader places value on the collective.

The crucial traits that drive this standard are empathy and respect. Expanding on these elements, 92% of respondents explicitly included ‘listen’ and/or ‘respect’ (Table 5). These two keywords comprise a multitude of individual interpretations and applications for leaders.

One practical application of this theme relates to communication with and motivation for team members. For example, Interviewee F describes “... it all comes down to finding the strengths and weaknesses of people and how best to motivate them.” (Table 2, Interviewee F). Here, a leader considers the individual and utilizes what he or she knows to tailor an approach.

**KEYWORDS: ‘Help Others’, Listen, Focus on Common Goal, Team Identification**

**THEME: “Fairness & Flexibility within Standards & Structure”**

This theme provides a solution for the primary intersection of the thesis, leadership, and diversity. “Fairness & Flexibility within Standards & Structure” is the use of a definite framework within which to alter conduct based on principles of equity. This means that a leader will use a set of standards through “process, policy, and procedure”, but make decisions within that framework by understanding the strengths and weaknesses of his or her team (Table 6, Interviewee D). An effective leader is viewed as fair, but the reconciliation between equality and diversity is key to understanding how to manage diverse groups.

“Fairness & Flexibility” is more difficult to define due to the personal nature of decision-making in a diverse-group. The best way to understand the adaptability of this theme is through equity. Equity is defined as ‘dealing fairly and equally with all concerned’ (English Language Learners Dictionary, 2019). The primary emphasis is the concern for others. To be equitable, a leader needs to know his or her team members and be able to adjust based on their needs. Accounting for differences, a manager may be flexible on communication style, adjusting his or her approach based on the personality and/or circumstances of a team member. For example, Interviewee F describes “I think as you get a more diverse group, it becomes a little more difficult to have your message focused and centered in such a way that it speaks to everybody in the way you’re intending to... so you have to take different approaches with different people” (Table 2, Interviewee F). A leader may also make adjustments to team strategies as a way to leverage strengths and minimize weaknesses within a group. These two examples can help progress to a collective goal while maintaining standards for policy and procedure within an organization.

The essence of this theme is to “stay firm on the big picture, stay loose on the day-to-day” (Table 6, Interviewee F). There must be a standard by which to operate and impart fairness among the group. Within the standard, a leader adjusts his or her strategy and approach to individuals based on their differences, strengths, and weaknesses. Another way to visualize this theme in its practical application was described by Interviewee B, “The analogy I’d give you is thinking about a football game: You’re not going to change the rules of the game. Whoever scores the most amount of points wins, regardless of how you get in the end zone it’s six points. Everyone’s got to play by the same rules. That being said, when you look at your team... we have to develop a fundamentally different game plan based upon our talents of our team that still plays within the same rule.” (Table 6, Interviewee B).

This approach allows leaders to capitalize on diversity while maintaining fairness within the organization. A leader must understand the talents of the team and know how best to leverage those based on the goal. Stated more plainly, “It’s a concept of some of your basic framework, expectations of excellence, meeting commitments, operating within certain values and norms don’t change, but you’ve got flexibility to create different game plans based upon the talent level and diversity of the team on the field” (Table 6, Interviewee B). The flexibility portion of this theme utilizes elements of receptivity, understanding your team members, but the standards under which everyone operates establish fairness.

**KEYWORDS: Standard, ‘Know Your Team’, Flexibility**

**Table 2**

Interviewee	What is the greatest challenge in leading a team of diverse individuals?
A	<p>The best teams I ever ran were diverse individuals. I think the biggest thing is as the leaders, you've got to put your own personal biases behind you. Everybody has their own biases. I'm a white guy, I've been working in the white man world for a long time. Basically the issue always comes down to the leader. It's not the team. It comes down to the leader having the skills and the competence and the open-mindedness and the receptiveness to allow that team to be successful. It always comes down to the leader, you've got to make it happen, which is having faith in people, giving people the floor, giving people opportunities, dealing with people's unique situations. That's what it's all about for me.</p>
B	<p>I think a team of diverse individuals gives you your best results. I think one of the biggest problems, if you think about leadership, there's only one job of a leader in the end of the day. And that's to make good decisions. And to make good decisions, you have to be very careful that you don't have frame of reference biases. So a diverse leadership team of different experiences, life backgrounds, and that always kind of pushes and challenges so that you're always looking at things from different angles. But the challenge with that is as a leader, you have to have the humility and patience to be challenged and to operate in ways which are different than how you operate. And I'd go in my last leadership team, I mean, had this guy from India that at times, just freaking drove me crazy. But he brought something to the team of looking at things fundamentally different than I did. And in the end of the day, it would've been more comfortable for me to have a bunch of folks that thought like me. And as a leader, that would have been awesome, that would have been easy, I go into my staff meetings at we all get along, we all think the same way. I mean, I know this sounds generic but it's true. We all have the same interests. It's a lot harder to be like, 'Ah, okay, I got this guy in India, why is he saying that?' and then he would push me and I would push him. And then the guy who was born and raised in Iran really looked at things differently. My leader in China was a PhD that had really done some different things and was really different, and so I got the better result with that team. But for the leader, you have to have great patience and great humility and willingness to be challenged and to rethink about how you look at things. And as you look at it, I always think it's situational too. I would say having huge diversity on a team that is doing strategy work is great cause you're really thinking. Now, the inefficiency is it takes a lot more coordination and there's a degree of inefficiency to get the team to operate. Because you come at things. So in a certain way I could almost argue, and this is counter-diversity. If you're in a crisis situation where you just have to act fast and get things done. Now it's tough because you take this earthquake example. Like now you still need diversity because you can act fast, but if you're acting the wrong way, you're hurting yourself. But I think there's this equation which says it takes more energy and work to get a diverse team to operate. So you have to focus in on all those parts. The reward is greater, but the effort is higher to get that result.</p>
C	<p>I think it's finding, getting people to get to the level of, we all do deep down, have similar interests. I think once you're able to establish those similar interests and similar values, we'll start to have empathy for each other and with some empathy it starts to mesh a bit better when you have super diverse backgrounds.</p>
D	<p>Well I think that the greatest challenge is making sure that you capitalize on that diversity. Sometimes it's hard to make sure that in a diverse team with diverse ideas, you're making sure that all of those ideas get heard and get presented because that's the benefit of it. So I think that's the biggest challenge is making sure that you're taking advantage of the benefits of having a diverse team.</p>
E	<p>I think their strengths, their weaknesses, cultural differences. I ask a lot of questions, that's me.</p>

	<p>I want to know. And so I asked X, “How do y'all celebrate the holidays?” Or I think her grandmother passed and she told me something, and I was like “How does that work? What do you guys do?” So I'm always searching for knowledge. Our team, especially when it's diverse, I like to understand because sometimes what one culture takes as disrespectful or bad, another may not. It's treating everybody the same, but also getting to know someone on an individual basis. Not necessarily, ‘I know your life, we're Facebook friends, I'm calling you’, but to respect and understand their culture sometimes because the more you know, the more you grow. So knowing things... and you learn new things. I feel like everyone has something they bring to the table, and respecting that we're different, but essentially we're all one paycheck from homeless, except Bill Gates. We're all one paycheck from homeless and we're typically all in a work environment for the same reason. So respecting that we have differences, we have lives, we have families, we have cultural differences, but maintaining that level of respect.</p>
<p>F</p>	<p>That is definitely a couple things. One is that it all kind of comes down to finding the strengths and weaknesses of people and how best to motivate them. A couple of examples of that. One specific thing is it's difficult; not everybody is motivated by the same thing. I see this with partners that come in that are heading teams, and they almost do kind of the general approach, come in with like the general or the football coach approach, come in and do the war metaphors and blah blah blah. I think that speaks to some people, but it certainly doesn't speak to everybody. Then you get people that come in and try to do more of the cool teacher, turn the chair around. That works for some people, but it doesn't work for everybody. I think as you get a more diverse group, it becomes a little more difficult to have your message focused and centered in such a way that it speaks to everybody in the way you're intending it to. Cause what's going to come off as motivational to somebody is going to come off as terribly cheesy to somebody else. And similar to that, your job as a leader is to try to motivate people and keep them on target, keep them caring about what they're doing and focused on what they're doing. That all plays into that, so you have to take different approaches with different people. I think what can develop on any team where you're taking different approaches like that with different people is you'll occasionally get people that are thinking you're playing favorites or that there's a degree of jealousy or something like that because you have to take a different style with somebody else. Somebody might view that as treating them with kid gloves or with a more personal touch or something like that and wonder why they're not getting the same attention. I think that is one of the problems with more diverse groups that are motivated by different things and come from different places is that you run the risk of other people on the team not necessarily understanding what you are doing to try to motivate other people. Well, and the challenge for you as the leader is figuring out those different ways that are best to motivate people. So I guess that's what I would all tie it into. It's one of those things with the law firm too. With law firms it's all a lot smaller. You're on much smaller teams. Everybody, at least all the attorneys on it, are all people that have gone to law school and feel like they're highly credentialed and it's a lot of type A personalities. So that kind of gets bred a lot in the law firm of people, almost looking at it as a competition with other people on the team. Who's getting the most attention, who's getting the best feedback, that sort of thing, which you don't necessarily want that to breed resentment or anything, but certain people respond differently to different motivations. So you might need to pay more attention to somebody to keep them motivated, and other people might kind of wonder what's going on if you do that, like why are they not getting the same degree of attention. I think that can be a challenge just above and beyond figuring out what motivates everybody.</p>
<p>G</p>	<p>I think one of the hardest things was to show them that they're all on the same team. They do very different aspects, and some of them would never bump into each other in this district whatsoever, but that's exactly why I wanted to bring them together. I have the guy, X, who runs our small business development center, he's usually out working with business and industry, setting up small businesses, meeting with bankers, blah, blah, blah. The noncredit part of my job where I have all of continuing education, I'm trying to start to run that more like</p>

	<p>a business rather than an academic unit, and he has some great insight. I think it's showing them that you have a very diverse team, but everyone has a unique insight, and the more diverse the opinion is and the input, the better product we're going to have at the end. This group I brought together, we were only going to meet quarterly cause I'm not a real big meeting person. I had to step out of our last quarterly meeting for an HR issue, and I've popped back in about an hour later, and they had decided that they needed to meet monthly because they were getting so much accomplished and good input. That to me was an incredible win. But again, it took a while to get them to understand, instead of having 'why is business and industry looking in on my turf', you're in these little silos, but to show that diversity of opinion, diversity of background, these individuals were genuinely interested in helping you and your team do better. As a leader, my job a lot of times is to sit back and provide resources and support them and let them go. They can check back. But I am the last person in the world to micromanage, and it's exciting to see them really grapple with an issue together and come up with solutions. I mean, obviously they didn't need me there at that meeting. They were doing much better actually without me. As a leader it's to know when do you back away from the table and say, "Have at it, let me know when you need resources". I was really excited to see how that worked out. That was just a couple of weeks ago. It was great fun. Well, it's interesting, it all depends on your self- esteem. If you have a healthy self-esteem, you're not trying to prop yourself up all the time. What your job is, is really to support. And I think especially for me now that I'm in the twilight of my career, how can you support others and how can you help them? I think if you have a healthy self-esteem, you are going to try to hire a team that is smarter than you. You want to achieve more, and you want your goals to be achieved, and you are all about making your team better. Now, you have some leaders that don't have a very good self-esteem that have to always have the final word. I feel sorry for individuals that are in those teams. I am a member of that team with my chancellor knowing everything better than everybody else. It's too bad, because you squash the dynamic of the team, and why are you going to do everything? Cause at the end up the day they're going to have the right answer or you're going to have to do whatever their right answer is. To recognize that the team makes you look good and you hired the best team ever, and all you need to do is to really get out of the way and let them go. I know my boss always says, "You think your people are so special". Oh, I said, "Of course I do, aren't yours? I have the best people!", and that's the way I feel. And this is terrible but true: If there's somebody on somebody else's team that I think has huge potential, I will steal them away and put 'em on my team if I can. You know, why would I not? And it's worked really well for me, for over 30 years to do that. It's not about me. At the end of the day, I walked in with my leadership team, and I didn't need to be there. They were just bouncing off the walls with stuff that they needed to do and were excited to do. Where you saw these little side conversations with people that never interacted with each other, and you're like, 'This was great. My work here is done. Just come back and let me know what you need'. But that's because you know that you put on your team, you had incredible hires. Now the opposite of that is if you see that one of those team members aren't contributing, my job is to try to help them and bring them up to speed. But at the end of the day, if you realize, and their counterparts realized that you are not a good fit, or you don't really want to contribute, then you have the difficulty of moving that person out. I had to do that many times and people say, "Oh my God, isn't it hard to fire somebody?". And I'll say, honestly, at the end of the day they fired themselves. I would have given them every opportunity to be successful and would have supported them. If they chose not to do that, then they themselves chose to fire themselves.</p>
<p>H</p>	<p>The biggest challenge has been the difference between cultures, not languages. Punctuality, dress, how my employees speak to clients and comport themselves in the workplace, are all very important to me. Some cultural habits need to adhere to the discipline of the company as a whole, so that "one professional face" of the company is presented to the client. Also, most of my employees are female – so there are gender challenges that I must contend with. Problems that always arise must always be handled out of view of the client and this is an ongoing challenge. Finally, I find increasingly that younger (millennial) aged employees have</p>

	<p>different work challenges that require my attention. These are all normal, and natural challenges that come with managing the company. The best solution, I've found, for all of these is – for now – to lead by example and deal with conflicts, personal/professional issues, etc. face-to-face. As the company grows, the biggest challenge will be ensuring that my “style” of handling these issues is mirrored and replicated by whomever I choose to manage employees.</p>
<p>J</p>	<p>Well, I think you always have among a group of women, you always have the problem of peers. Supervisors are our problem. They're middle management. They're not trained to be supervisors, they're just people who walked in and started washing dishes, cooking, and doing things in the kitchen, and now suddenly there are supervisors, they don't even know how to do it. That's not fair to them, but it's what happens. And sometimes they're not fit for it at all. It's difficult to know. But that's a problem. If there's favorites, it will really tear a team apart. And that's hard to do. And then scheduling is extremely difficult. It's very, very hard with 80 people and around the clock schedule because people don't want to work in the middle of the night. They want to sleep then, and it's best for them to sleep then, but it's hard to find good help for night. That's a real challenge. Then on a daily basis, out of 80 people, you're going to have at least six that don't show up. So you're scheduled six long, and you're still short. You know that if you don't give them their vacations and their time off, you will burn them out and their attitude will fail. And that was happening before I took over. You have to convince administration that you need more staff so that you've been cycled through there and keep going on a daily basis, because for every position that you need, you've got to have about two behind that because suddenly the first person's supposed to be there, he sick and then next thing you know, the second one, his dog is sick. He has to go to the vet. And even the third one may fail. Maybe there's been a death or the car won't start. I've heard it all. And on bad weather days, it's especially bad and you've got a hospital to run. These people are waiting for their food, they're in the bed waiting. And what are you doing? Well, you're down here trying to get people into work. I have gone out and picked them up in the truck. I've done all types of things to make sure we had coverage, I've done it myself just cover the slot myself. Scheduling is a very difficult problem. And with that many people and around the clock, it's tough.</p>
<p>K</p>	<p>I think from what I've seen it can be either getting everybody to get along with each other, or having empathy for one another because whenever you have a group that is so different, sometimes it's hard to realize the difficulty if you're not. So I guess learning how to deal with different skill levels too, because I have certain soldiers that like working out, it's super easy for them, but they can't do an Excel spreadsheet and then vice versa. I guess just getting everybody to get along and realize that you have strengths and you have weaknesses and you need to realize that just because you're really good at one thing doesn't mean you're going to be great at the job that you have right now. And maybe it'd be better you gave it to someone else to do because they'd be better at it.</p>
<p>L</p>	<p>The challenge is to make sure that whatever the goal is, if it's a diverse group that you're trying to lead, they have to all be on the same page as to what the goal is. There might be different tasks toward that goal. You have to be very sensitive to different backgrounds, but let's just say Hispanic, Latino, Black, Women. If your team is composed of all of the above or more, I think in your instruction or whatever goal you have in mind, you have to be sensitive to the fact that each one may interpret your instructions differently. And if need be you would state whatever the goal is, and then you would ask them if there's any misunderstanding. Is there anything culturally or even literally, but I think you can always invite anybody on that team to face with you, person-to-person, group to the to the leader to clarify anything. I think the biggest challenge though is making sure that however diverse the team is, to make sure everybody understands, and if it's not clear that it should be clarified. The challenge is to make sure that your communication is sensitive; depends on what the task is, but you've gotta be very sensitive to different cultural backgrounds in your instructions. But yet, I think a true leader will not give favoritism to any one group, that they all must buy into the fact that they're equal.</p>

	They are equal in the task to completing this, that no one has given any favor, that everyone is needed and that they're all to be counted on as a group to make this thing happen.
M	Giving everybody a voice. I just went through strategic planning training, and they gave us a lot of insights into using of all things, flip charts to record people's ideas in a meeting so that everyone in the meeting sees their voice on the board and feels valued rather than doing it in a conversational style where they feel like they're not heard. And I thought, 'That's pretty brilliant'. I'm going to implement the strategies in my future department meetings so that everybody feels equally heard. Then we can consolidate the ideas and come up with some final plans. But I think that's been the hardest. Plus, there's a hierarchy in higher ed. There are lecturers, clinical faculty, there's assistant professors, there's associate professors, and there's full professors. And bridging that hierarchy can be challenging.

**Table 3**

Interviewee	How do you keep a team from splitting into subgroups?
A	<p>I think the best thing is how you manage the work. Some people just have an affinity for each other. Through history, through background, through culture, right? That's just normal. The key thing is how do you make sure that you keep the group fresh, which is different work assignments, putting people in different groups, giving people different challenges, giving people leadership opportunities with different groups. Part of it is just keeping the pot stirred. If you got an organization and you just need people in the same place doing the same things, it gets stale. And the other thing is you're not cross training people. You're not giving people opportunities to grow in that, not only worldwide, but that's culture wise too. So really the key thing is how do you keep stretching your team? How do you keep stretching the people? How do you keep pushing them, keeping them on their toes, keeping them sharp, keeping them interested, keeping them excited. And I think if you're doing those kinds of things that the atrophies, going into groups, kind of correct itself.</p>
B	<p>That's human nature that you get into factions and cliques and everything. I think as the leader you have to drive your operating principles from the beginning. And I think some of those always have to be, 'we're a group that is very transparent', 'we're a group that is open to debate amongst ourselves', 'we don't operate like a political group that we have factions or not' then, and you've got to come right out and say, 'we put things on the table, we work it together'. And some of the things that I do is, and happens in every job. Everyone wants to come to you. So people send me an email going, 'you know, X, I'm looking at this and it's about impacting somebody else'. Whenever I get an email like that, whenever I respond, I CC that other person. Instantly people know they can never come talk to me about someone else's business because I'm going to live my principle, which says 'we're just a transparent organization'. If you've got something to say about another person's group that you're coming to me on, you better have the guts for them to see what you're saying. Cause I don't operate that way. I just want everything on the table. I think as a good leader, you have to be a master at body language and all this EQ stuff. You have to see when the little conversations are occurring and when the little factions are occurring and bring it out saying, 'Hey, you guys have some concern over there. What's the issue?' Whenever you sense an us/them, I mean it's almost like leadership is almost this marriage-counseling thing. You're bringing people together all the time. You're forcing them to communicate, you're forcing them to work through issues because natural human nature is to move into the faction. So it's just active management all the time.</p>
C	<p>I think it's difficult because people migrate towards people that are like them no matter what. I truly do think that that's human nature. But I think you have to lead by example. So, I think if you're in a group setting, don't gravitate towards the group that you would normally feel comfortable with. You have to put yourself out there and lead by example and have events where you kind of mix groups together. So there's not always the opportunity to just go into your comfort zone.</p>
D	<p>To some extent, I don't think you can prevent a clique from forming because certain people just personally gravitate towards, and some people don't gravitate towards others. And I don't think that's a problem. I think what you want to do though on the leadership side of things is you want to make sure that doesn't translate into professional cliques forming. And the way you do that is you just make sure that you keep a good sort of rotation going on projects so that everybody has a chance to and is expected to work with everybody else at some point.</p>
E	<p>It's hard, and it depends on the amount of employees you have. And the truth is I don't think it's something you can. This part of an example. I've had those issues where if you have one</p>

	<p>person who poisons the well and then they suck everybody else into the well and sometimes people don't really even understand why. 'I'm just stuck in the group creating havoc, and I don't even know why'. But in what I'll say in events that directly affect the workplace, I think you can somewhat [prevent them], but I don't think it's something that any manager or any supervisor would really ever be able to do. Cause you can't dictate who someone eats lunch with or who someone socializes with. I don't think you can do that because we all tend to gravitate towards what we're most comfortable with.</p>
<p>F</p>	<p>I think one way to do that is to embrace the fact that it's going to happen to a certain degree. So we call it siloing sometimes when it happens, which is you don't want one person going off in their silo by itself and not communicating with anybody else. This might be another thing that's a little bit unique with attorneys in that everyone having that type-A personality is that everybody wants to take charge of something and run with it. So, embracing the fact that that's going to happen if you try to keep everybody on one straight hierarchy and plan for it and say, "Okay, for the damages portion of this case, you're going to be the person who is going to be owning that, so this is going to be your area of expertise. You're going to go through it. When we meet and talk, you're going to be the one who we're gonna ask questions about on this". And then you could do the same thing with somebody else on liability and in my case for like patent stuff, infringement, and validity. Essentially it's finding these distinct roles for everybody so they're not stepping on each other's toes and in a way that keeps everybody together because you don't have people that are trying to do it on their own. It encourages, but it almost necessitates the need to bring people together to have these group meetings where you all get together and talk about what's going on. Everyone's got an ownership interest. They get to be the executive on a certain project. They're not necessarily concerned about going off and doing their own thing, but how are they going to present it? How are they going to talk about it, how's it going to integrate with the larger team picture? Splitting off of that, I would say it's as if from the management point of view, in addition to that anticipating it breaking apart in a way that's like a soft break and not a hard break, is to stress the importance of what everybody's doing and keep the big picture in mind when you have your group meetings, so when you talk to people they can see where their role is playing a role in what your final project or your final results is going to be. And that way everybody's got responsibilities. Everybody's got ownership, but everybody still needs to come together at the end of the day. Another thing that I think is important is, and this is something that certainly wouldn't be feasible on bigger teams of tens of people or hundreds of people, but our smaller teams, which is generally what our legal teams are, it's just making sure everybody's copied on emails and stuff like that. So even if they're not fully reading, engaging in every email that comes in, they stay in the loop in what's going on. I think part of the key of that is breaking stuff apart into chunks that are manageable for people to do on their own but isn't going to be the whole of the project or the whole of the case. If you give somebody too much, they're going to say, well, "I'm basically in charge of this case that I'm doing my thing. Why are these people off doing their own thing?" It's giving everybody almost a co-equal role, or at least a coequal importance.</p>
<p>G</p>	<p>I think you can break into subgroups, depending on the task that you're doing, but then come back. I think if you've got a goal that you're working on, you may need to break people into subgroups. But then you have to corral them back for the entire team. It goes to what I was just saying, if you see someone that's not producing, or let's say two people are kind of going off and not participating, it's my job to say, "Hey, what's up?" and try to push them back and to cooperate and collaborate with everybody else. I don't mind if the team splits up a little bit to work on different tasks, but at the end of the day, I want them all to recognize who's all on their team and respect everybody that's on their team.</p>
<p>H</p>	<p>This is very, very difficult. It has caused some of the most painful problems, and lessons I've experienced. Sub-groups tend to divide naturally between the three languages (my Anglo teachers with other Anglos, Spanish with other Spanish, Portuguese with other Portuguese).</p>

	<p>Very specifically, in Spanish. For example, I recently dealt with a group of Spanish teachers from Venezuela, who banded together and decided to create competition to the company. They segregated themselves from other Spanish-speaking teachers from other Latin American countries, and other teachers with who they did not speak English well. I dealt with the problem by putting in firm non-compete policies, counseling, and select firing. It was a painful, but necessary exercise and it worked. Team-building is a process that I'm working on, but while on paper this sounds good, in practice it is not easy. This is a highly-competitive, dynamic industry, and the best way of keeping sub-groups from festering is close monitoring, select incentives, and when necessary – after appropriate counseling – firing.</p>
<p>J</p>	<p>Yes. You're always going to have that. But as long as you are vigilant to all that, and as long as you take care of people's needs. The first thing a good leader ought to know is when you give out an award, which I gave many every month, we had a meeting and I would give out awards every meeting. There'd be an award for doing something the best, all kinds of awards. But the minute you give an award, you have just now got a worry. And that worry is, what about those that didn't get any? What have you done for them? Because they're sitting there just wondering, what's wrong with me? Why not me? Why didn't I get that award? It means that you have to make sure that everybody understands how you feel about them on a daily basis. And if you don't let them know, you can't wait until it's time for their evaluation to let them know how good they are. You need to let them know that every day. And even if you tell them something different to do or change what they're doing or ask them to not do something, they need to know that it's okay. 'Just change it. Just go ahead, do what I asked you and you'll be fine. We're just fine. We all make mistakes'. And they all knew that it's just fine to make mistakes. We'll somehow figure it out. And it may turn out to be the fun of the day. It was just fine, but they always knew there would be a way out, and sometimes it would be hilariously funny. One time we had dressing that was too runny and we put some breadcrumbs in the dressing, rolled them up in balls and put them in the deep fryer, and they bought every one of them. I don't even remember what we called it, but we were constantly having a failure of some kind and turn it into something that everybody would buy, and it was just hilarious. We had a good time fixing things like that. It was just funny because they trusted me and I trusted them, and they knew I did [trusted them] and they knew I was depending on them. They knew I expected them to do what they're supposed to do, and they knew that we would succeed because we always find a way to pull through together, and I allowed them to have input, to tell me what is wrong. I would tell them over and over, "I cannot fix this process unless you share with me what's going on in the guts". And I'm going to be looking to see what's going on myself, but I'm only one person. "I need you to tell me what is going wrong here. Is your equipment failing? Is the product, is the ingredient that I bought terrible? Is it a cheap ketchup? What's wrong here? Why isn't this perfect? Why isn't it like we want it to be?" And I took their comments, I took their suggestions. I tried. If they gave me a suggestion, I tried my best to figure out how to do it with their suggestion because I knew that would help. I named recipes after them. I had them bring recipes in from home. I let them pick out the uniforms they wanted to wear, I provided uniforms for them at a discounted price. I just tried to do everything supportive. I had a toy bag in my office so that if they want to bring their little children to visit and see where they worked, bring them in the office, let me meet them, let them have a free toy. I just tried to do everything I possibly could think of to show how much I cared for them, how much I loved them, how important they were to me and just treat them like gold. They'd never had a boss like that and they've told me over and over, never had a boss like that. It just shows you what happens when you respect people and you work with them and you try to understand their culture, understand where they come from, understand their problems and how they see things and try to help them grow. I was interested in growing people. I wanted the food to be good and the service to be great, but I wanted to grow the people and they knew that I was investing into them, and they knew that they were going to take away from there things that they never would have learned otherwise.</p>
<p>K</p>	<p>A common enemy. I mean, honestly. I hate to say it, but if I pissed everybody off underneath</p>

	<p>me, guess what? They work better. They're all like, 'She sucks. I hate her, but we still have to get this done. And I know if we don't get it done, she'll get mad, so I guess we'll just work together.' I know that's not the perfect answer, but if they're mad at you, then maybe they'll work together. And then, I'm all about humor and making it fun. You make it fun, or if you added something, humor or even, I don't want to say reward, but if you're like, 'Hell yeah guys, this is the last thing we have to do today. If you get it done, we get to go home!'</p>
<p>L</p>	<p>First of all, you'd want to know why they're breaking up. Is there something in the makeup of the team that is causing it, and whatever is causing the breakup has to be addressed. I guess how to prevent it is to, if there are benchmarks along the way to this task and there's a first benchmark that has to be met or you know what that benchmark is, and if it's not met on time or if there's some problems, you catch it early and find out why there's a breakdown. If their personality breakdowns, that's probably why they're breaking into subgroups. Usually it has to do with personalities. It's staying on top of the benchmarks and noticing if they're not being met, why, and then address them right from the start. You don't want it to fester and to further complicate the tasks. Just the further the task goes along and if the underpinnings are built on sand, then it's going to fall. The biggest challenge is to find out early on why it's breaking into subgroups and to prevent it from happening. I think the only way you can prevent it is to address it early on. And there's nothing wrong with asking how things are working. You have to be on top of it, too. It's one thing to be a bystander and not see if benchmarks are met, but you also have to just ask, it can be casual. You know, "How are things going?". But you can't be separate from it once you start it, you've got to be a part of it. And if you're the immediate supervisor, you have to be on top of it and find out, even if it's just asking, 'How are you progressing? How are things working?' Just general inquiry. It's for the supervisor to remain engaged.</p>
<p>M</p>	<p>We have to have a common goal. We have to stay on the same track. I had just met with my chair recently and we've been charged with coming together with a marketing plan. One of our faculty had done a really good job of increasing enrollment in her program. So, I asked her to come and speak as a leader in this group, which empowered her and made her feel valued to share her marketing ideas. Then another group came up with a good spreadsheet, and so I called them all together and I complimented them on what they had done and said, rather than everybody recreate the wheel, let's work as a team using the expertise of everybody individually to build this marketing plan. Since they all felt like they were contributing, they all came together, but they had kind of split off into their little separate corners and each program was going to do its own marketing plan. But now they're seeing the value of 'Wait a minute, if we all do it together, it's less work for everybody'. So, getting them to see that there is a value in the common collaborative. It's always just trying to find what could they all take away from it that it's a win-win. We see it a lot. And when we write journal articles together, 'Who gets top billing? Well, who needs it most?'. Last year I submitted four proposals to a conference. I put myself the fourth author. I'm not getting promoted anymore, but my junior faculty need to, so it's learning what chair to sit in. In fact, the leadership book I picked out, it was about a team that did extreme sports and the lady that writes the book, she said sometimes you have to be the one pulling everybody up the mountain. Sometimes you're the person they're carrying down the mountain. But you're still on the same team. That's my philosophy. It takes a team, and you have to learn what your role is in the team. And sometimes you're not the best at it. So you have to be able to say, "Oh, X, you have tripled your enrollment in your library science program. Will you come and teach us what you did?". Sometimes letting somebody else be the leader is the best thing to do</p>

**Table 4**

Interviewee	What is your thought process in facing a problem within a team?
A	<p>Always listen. The big thing is you got a problem with a team, sit down with the people and talk to them. A lot of people, a lot of leaders ignore problems. Or for instance, they'll listen to only the people who they are familiar with or comfortable with, and, you can't. I'll give you a great example. I am technical manager. I have this employee and he is from India. Very talented engineer, but was desperate to have a supervisor's role. He just wanted to be supervisor. So within X I'm pushing him. There was a plant up in Robinson, Illinois, and they were looking for a technical superintendent. I talked to the project manager there and they agreed to bring this guy up and interview, and they interviewed with him and they really liked him. Really liked him. He was very excited. So they wanted to bring him up and interview again. Remember, this is a company where all these people have worked for the same company for 30 years. They all knew each other and we were the new kids on the block. They wanted him to come up and interview again. The big risk: 'We're bringing in this outside guy, the supervisor'. We went up there and he had a very successful interview. They liked him. He's a smart guy, very personable guy, and they liked him. So, they made him an offer to come up and be a supervisor, and they can maybe give him a pay grade. Typically he was a grade 11, and a superintendent is a grade 12. And so they basically said, 'Look, we want you to come up and be a superintendent and supervise all these people, but we're not going to do the compensation for it'. He was like, 'What the hell? You're asking me to come up here and move my family from there to Robinson. And you're not going to pay me alone in supervising seven people'. So he said no. He goes, 'I want to go there and be a supervisor, and the situation you're putting me in, it just doesn't make sense for any person'. And during this whole process, he was talking and asking my advice. He and I talked for a long, long period of time that I knew the situation. Then he finally came back and said, 'I'm not gonna take the job because I'm not gonna go up to Robinson, Illinois, with no guarantee, and they're not giving me the grade'. I think, 'Fine. It's your choice. I understand'. So then I'm with the new plant manager, and he goes off the rails in this meeting, talking about, 'You know what, we tried to do this blankety blank guy a favor. We had this guy who wanted to be a supervisor. He's here at Texas City, we went out of our way to make an opportunity for him, one of the Galveston Bay, Texas City people, make an opportunity for him to be a supervisor and that guy turned us down'. I basically said 'Stop. That's not what happened. This is not his fault. This is not because he's unappreciative, it's because you want the guy to come up to Robinson, Illinois, and you're not even gonna compensate for the role'. But again, a situation where people just aren't listening. I mean, all they have to do is give this guy a 5 or 7% pay increase and change his grade, and it would have been a huge success. Everybody would have been happy. Instead he is unhappy and even worse, the leadership at X, they see this unappreciative guy. Oh, I was just fit to be tied. He was very open with them. He told them he said he's not taking the job because they're not giving him the pay rate for it. He says, 'I want the job. I want to come, my family wants to come, but all I'm asking for you to do is compensate me and give me the grade.' And they weren't. And because of that, within X, he's now this ungrateful person. To me, it's just bad leadership. They weren't listening to him, they weren't being flexible, they weren't being smart. Again, here's an opportunity. This is a diversity candidate. This is an Indian American. To me, it's like you give them the pay grade and you make a big deal out of it and now that's diversity. You don't try to screw over the diversity candidate. It's leadership. It's the people who are in charge which defines whether or not you have a successful diversity program or not and how they handle it. And that was just a great example of a completely white man company talking the talk, but absolutely failing to do the right things that they got to do to get a diverse organization. It was crazy. I even told them, all I'm hearing is X, X, X, diversity, diversity, diversity. And you want to screw over your diversity candidate? Not only are you screw them over, they're gonna make you the bad guy anyway. What kind of idiots are you? I lasted about three months longer than that before</p>

	<p>they fired me. I'm not going to sit and keep my mouth shut. I'd see something that's just stupid. I'm going to tell you it's stupid. It gets back to I'm not part of their culture. Because I'm not gonna follow the rules. I'm going to try to help. Again, it's leadership. X had an individual, me, who was working in various diverse organizations, and I'm telling them, I want to help you guys be successful. I want to help you guys build a diverse organization. And they're like, 'Oh, you're a problem. We're gonna fire you'. But that's what you run into. It's the leadership. It has nothing to do with diversity program, that has nothing to do with anything except for the people at the top. And it's action. It's not words. Most companies, when you go, they have these big fancy diversity programs, they'll send you diversity training. It's gotta be action.</p>
<p>B</p>	<p>Particularly when you're senior levels, I always assume that there's good intent. 90 to 95% of the time there's good intent, right? What happens is when you have conflict on the team, to me it is normally one of two issues and I think they're really important as a leader. One is, 'Does everyone have the same definition of winning?'. What I mean by that is you have conflict. A lot of people are chasing different goals that conflict, and that is probably the number one area of conflict. As a leader you have to clarify, 'Hey, in this area where there's conflict, let's step back. What are we trying to accomplish? What's the definition of winning? The ultimate', there may be multiple things: 'Hey, I'm trying to reduce inventory.' 'Hey, I'm trying to do this.' Yeah, but why are we doing that? So, when there's conflict, let's be clear about what the end goal is. Number one, that helps remove a lot of conflict because people start running so hard, they lose track of the big picture. Number two is, and I say is that again cause 99% of the time people have good intent. They're either chasing misaligned targets or number two, they're operating on different sets of facts and data, and you got to pull back and get everyone to communicate and get everyone on a similar set facts and data. One of the techniques I do on that is in today's world, things are moving so fast and everything's by emails and the next thing you know people are pissed off at each other and that, and you're like, 'Hey, before I get involved in this... sounds real simple, but bring this all down. I want a one page summary: What's the issue? What's we're trying to accomplish? What's the concerns? What's the view on both sides?' It's amazing, it's a very simple exercise, but what you find is everyone's running so hard. They say bits and pieces and they're responding. They take a deep breath, you go through an exercise just to document it. And then all of a sudden people are like, 'Ooh, wait', and they're forced to put the whole story together. And normally both sides learn when they're forced to do that. So everyone laughs at me at work because they know whenever there's an issue, they're like, 'Ah, he's gonna ask us for one-pager before he'll weigh in'. And I'm like, 'Hey, if you're impacting the org cause you guys have an issue, if it's important enough and if you're going to pull me in, then you better be able to distill it succinctly into one page, and I don't want to talk to you until I see that one page.' I kind of always have a group of operating principles and one of them is put it in writing because if you step back, people today communicate by PowerPoints, but PowerPoints... you could have five people read key parts of it and come away with different interpretations, right? Or people have email strings, this or that. And so if we got a decision to make, it's put it in English, or put it in writing. And then I'm like, 'Use Walmart English'. And I stole that from a boss. He's like, 'I don't want to see acronyms. I don't want to see a bunch of fancy language. I want you to be able to communicate that if you're talking to the clerk at Walmart, they could understand. So give me plainspoken straight forward English'. So, I've copied that from him and I'm like, 'Put it in writing and I expect you to use Walmart English'.</p>
<p>C</p>	<p>I typically try and get a sidebar with all of the individuals involved. I do think there's something to addressing it head on, but I think a lot of people feel uncomfortable in that type of situation, so I think it's best to kind of start with individual conversations and get a pulse on everyone's side of the story and how they're feeling and then go from there.</p>
<p>D</p>	<p>I really, really, really try and promote and encourage people to take ownership of solving their problems with others directly with the other person. I've always tried to position myself more</p>

	<p>as an escalation point. If somebody came to me and said, 'X is constantly late on his deliverables.' Then my first question to that person is going to be, 'Have you talked to X?' And then they might say, 'No, I haven't'. And I say, 'Is there anything that would prevent you from having that conversation other than it might be a little uncomfortable?' And if the answer's no, then I'm going to say I'm happy to coach you, but I want you to have that conversation. If that doesn't solve the problem, then I prefer to be an escalation point. Come back to me. If X doesn't respond, or is continuing to be late, and so on. I try and avoid [involvement in the problem] at all costs because I think it just undermines the organizational culture that I like to build, which is typically very flat and transparent and very open with communication. I try my best to stick to my guns and really promote that, go solve the problem on your own or just come to me if you can't solve it on your own wherever possible.</p>
E	<p>Well, it depends on what the expectation is. If it's an expectation for the entire team, then you approach it as an expectation for the entire team. If it's a problem that the entire team is a part of, then you approach it on a team level. But if it's not, I believe in addressing the individual, because too many times problems are addressed in a team setting or addressed as a team, and the attributing person, it kind of flies over their head because they feel like you're talking to everyone except them. If you say it's a team problem and it's truly a team problem than you approach it as a team problem. And then if it's not, you approach it as an individual problem.</p>
F	<p>I think some of that hearkens back to what I was talking about where different things motivate different people on the team, especially if you've got more diversity. The first step of that is just figuring out what's going on and where each person's coming from, wherever the problem is arising. Because if you don't understand the problem, then you have a good chance of making it worse if you try to try to step in. Other than that, I think a lot of it focuses on coming back to the big picture. You have to look at what the overall goal is, try not to get buried down in the nitty gritty and try to keep moving towards that overall goal. Problems are gonna arise, and that can be inner team conflicts, that can be somebody missing a deadline, that can be opposing counsel dropping something that is unexpected and causes some hardship for the team. As long as you keep your overall goal, what you're trying to get to. We call it our main theme, essentially our case theme. What is the one to two minute pitch that, if you were in the elevator and had to sell it to somebody on why you should get what you're asking for in a case, as long as you keep building everything towards that, I think that is kind of a thought process. Well, 'What do we need to do to advance towards that goal?'. And that's gonna vary based on the type of the issue that arises. Identify what happens, identify as best as you can why it happened, identify how that impacts your overall goal, and then identify what steps you can take to keep moving towards that goal. I think that's kind of the thought process. The other thing that I think is interesting that comes up a lot, and it's something I've learned as I've been more of a manager of teams is that a lot of times you want to just get real mad at somebody. They miss a deadline, they drop a ball, what they turn in is not nearly as good as what you were hoping for or expecting. There's more work involved or something like that, or just something generally goes wrong. You can't really take the time in the moment there to get mad at the person. Something I've learned a lot is you got to keep people positive, at least until everyone gets a chance to catch their breath and the problem's solved, you've hit whatever deadline you need to hit, that sort of thing. A lot of the thought process is also dealing with your immediate reaction to not want to chew somebody out or do something like that. And some people have a stronger sense of self in their professional career that you can be a little harsher on them and that's not going to impact their work. But there are some people where if you're harsh because they've done something wrong or anything like that, they go in a shell a little bit. They're not going to work as efficiently, they're not going to keep moving things forward that need to be moved forward. Probably more importantly now that there's a crunch or an issue. So you have to put away some of your own anger or disappointment or something like that and just focus on 'Okay, we gotta get this done and we can talk about it after this'. It becomes very much, 'Focus on the goal, and what do we need to do to accomplish the goal?'. Once that's done, then there can be time to debrief and see what</p>

	went wrong and deal with how to prevent that from happening in the future.
G	<p>I'm not afraid of conflict, and I'm pretty direct. I like to get my cards out on the table, even if it hasn't gotten to a problem yet or a challenge, I would rather address it sooner rather than later. None of this beating around the bush. It's like, 'Okay, I see this occurring. Maybe I'm wrong. Let's sit and talk about it. What are you feeling? What do you see?' So I kinda jump right in. I know a lot of people aren't comfortable with that approach, but I think it's who I am. I'm used to differing opinions. I'm used to speaking my mind. You have to temper it with a person, you have to know your audience. I'm sure you've read the book emotional intelligence, and if you haven't read that book, you should read it. It's amazing. But what that basically says is you have to tone your approach based on your audience. If I need to get someone to change their behavior, you could have a type-A personality and a type-B personality. You're going to have to tackle it different with each one to be most effective. Getting to know your team members, getting to know the dynamic, knowing that one size doesn't fit all, you will have to approach that individual based on how they're going to perceive your intervention, if you will. That's why I go to a lot of meetings, even if I'm just sitting there. Our CE group, our continuing education group, there's probably 30 people in there. They don't need me at every meeting, and I can't make every meeting, but a lot of times I like to go there so I can just see the dynamics of how they interact with each other and get a feel for the personalities of those individuals. I know if I'm dealing with them directly on something, I've got a better context of how to best relate to that and try to figure out the best approach. And it doesn't have to be negative either. You could have some great celebration you want to do. Now, some people love to have that done in front of everybody else and they want everybody in the world to know. Some other people would rather you just send them a note or give them a call and do it more personally and quietly. Again, as a leader, it's important for you to understand the different personalities on your team and try to interact the most effectively with them.</p>
H	<p>First, I remain calm and non-committal. No matter how I feel. I ask each person their version of the story, based on that I decide what to do. I do not trust, but I verify facts before making a decision.</p>
J	<p>Well, sometimes you can work through the problem with all that nice stuff. Then sometimes there's a problem there, and this individual is just not carrying their load. They're just not. And they're showing an attitude that shows you that they're not intending to and that they're sloughing off on other people and they're abusing other people. And that cannot be tolerated. So now we have to sit down and we've got to talk about this seriously, and we're going to have to figure out a way to either get this person to see that, 'Hey, this is not okay. You understand you're abusing your team players here, you're abusing all them and this is hurting us and we cannot have that'. So now what can you do? How can we fix this? Over a period of time, work through it and see if we can either find a way to move that individual, if they're worth saving, or they're just gonna have to go. It's just we've done all we can. There's just no saving it and we're just gonna have to be dealt with it. I caught a young lady, she stole over \$15,000 out of the cash register and I finally caught it. I didn't catch it early enough, but I did finally catch it. I did not have enough safety features on that register to catch her earlier. And I made a mistake there. I should have gone in and worked on that register more to be sure that I would capture that. Because it's just like with keys, you don't want to ever give out very many keys. You want to arrange yourself so that the fewest possible people have a key because if something goes wrong and something's missing, now you've got so many people to look like they're accused, and you don't want that for them and you don't want it for you. So you want to try to narrow it down so that just as few keys as possible are needed and just as few people that have keys is necessary. So you put in a safe where you can just drop the money in and it's locked. So they're not exposed to any of this kind of thing. But when you have a worker that just isn't cooperating and just won't show any effort to get in line, then there just comes a time when you have to say to that individual, 'Look, this is not working,</p>

	<p>it's not working for you and it's not working for us and we're going to have to find another way'. Sometimes you could sit down and have a meeting and talk through the problem and change the process so that it works better. Sometimes it's a personnel problem, sometimes it's equipment problem, sometimes it's a timing issue. All kinds of things can be, you just have to sit down and with them and say, 'Here's what we're trying to do and here's the timeline and we're not getting there. So let's see, what can we do about this?' One of the worst problems to have is a slow worker in a team. That's a real hard problem because some people, I had 26 out of 80 that were handicapped and they're slow. Every single person that's handicapped, they're going to be slower than a normal individual. They just are. And they can't help it. They're trying their best, but they have the most wonderful attitudes. They're so thankful to have a job at all. They will work extra hard to measure up and do it. The girl that worked in front of me that was fired, she absolutely hated the employees. She couldn't stand them. They were really beneath her and she just considered herself so much, just high and mighty. She didn't even want to see them and she would just kind of hide in her office. She even put up a bulletin board on the window so they couldn't see her and she couldn't see them. And it's just so poor, that's never gonna work. Never. The lady they have now operates on fear. They go to work, they do their job, they don't talk because they know that she's got people out there that's listening to them and she uses what they say against them. So they don't dare say anything. They just do what they're told and they go home, and it's a very unhappy place. Very unhappy. And it shows in the product in the service. But that's what happens when you operate with fear. You have to find a way to control it. And that's what she does. They're just scared of her. I've always told my children and my employees, if you have a boss that is really hurting you, get another job because it's changing who you are and that is not a good thing. If you're not changing for the better, then you need to do something. You need to change it. You need to get out and get a different boss, and there are so many bad bosses in the world. So if you've got one of them and you're angry and you're upset and you're frustrated and you're nervous and you're tense, you need to get out of there because no amount of money is worth that. That's your health. That's your whole being. It's your life. The work that we did, that is work, you don't feed 350 patients and 1500 employees in a day time every day around the clock. That is work. That takes a lot of work and so we didn't have a fluffy job. None of us did. A lot of times what an employee says is a real big clue to a manager. Like if you heard an employee say, "Well, I just wish that my boss could just do my job just one day". Lots of employees think that, and right then and there is such a big opportunity. Why don't you do that? Award them a day off and you go do their job one day and you will find out why it doesn't work. It takes just so much understanding and patience, lots of patience. But if you do that, the payoff is just absolutely huge for the organization. It cuts turnover. The amount of money that saves and the reputation for the hospital here, for your organization. You can't buy that. You can't spend any amount of money to get that, it's huge. So it's just amazing to me how that all fits so well. And some of us really didn't feel like we were working so hard. We worked hard, but we loved it. We were happy. And when you're happy doing what you love, it's not really work.</p>
K	<p>I guess the first thing would be make sure the problem you're seeing is the actual problem. Because a lot of times there's an underlying problem. So I would talk to the source immediately. Don't talk to anybody else. Talk to them first. Don't come up with your own opinion until you get the full story. And then don't just go off of what someone else says. Handle it yourself.</p>
L	<p>If I'm noticing something that's gone awry or that's not right, I would call the team together. I would call the entire team because I don't know the genesis of it. I don't know how widespread it is. I don't know if it's a single individual, but my thought process would be to immediately call the team together and tell them what I'm noticing and then have them tell me, 'Is what I'm noticing wrong? Is what I'm noticing right?'. If what I'm noticing is wrong, then okay, I will go with that. It could be just a quirk. But if what I'm noticing is correct, then I would want to know what the problem is. If what I'm seeing is correct, there has to be a</p>

	<p>problem, and I want them to tell me about it. Whatever the problem is, before I make any suggestions, I want them to suggest three options that they would plan to correct the problem. That way I've put the onus upon them, just to let them know that, I've noticed it, and I've asked them if there's a problem. If they said yes, okay, there is a problem. Now they own the problem, and I'm giving them the responsibility as adults or team members to figure out how to correct it. I want them to give me three options and then, it could be we schedule another meeting in a couple of days, and then I say, 'Okay, what are the three options? What have we come up with?' And from that we go forward and figure out how to solve the problem. That's how I'd do it. If I just sit there and dictate, that's not going to get anywhere. They need to go inside and figure out what it is and then we discuss it.</p>
<p>M</p>	<p>Listening. People just really want somebody to listen to them. They really don't want you to fix it. Fixing it just annoys them. They just really want [you] to listen. They want somebody to vent to. Once they finish, then they come back to fixing it. Working with the grant team, somebody wants to blame somebody when something doesn't work. It's all got to be about the team. I encourage mine to read research on positive interdependence. It's a value system that no one wins if everybody doesn't win. And then also to believe in collective intelligence. I don't have to know everything, but I may know that one piece that's missing that makes it all work.</p>

**Table 5**

Interviewee	What is your advice for people in this role/being a leader?
A	<p>Make your group diverse by your action, give them a voice, give them an opportunity, listen to them, challenge them, and you'll reap the benefits of it. I mean, if you walked in there and you find out your group was 10 white guys. As long as you keep working with 10 white guys, you're stuck. I mean, you're going to get the same opinion. Unless you as a leader start figuring out how to get women in there, how to get different cultures, different nationalities in your group, you have to make it happen through your actions. You have to make a change. And that might be painful. You're going to have to take a look at these guys and you may find out that seven or eight of them are cutting it and then the other three or four need to go. You need to go hire or bring in and attract talented women, talented minority to add to your team. I worked at X. I was an operations manager at X and X was CEO of the refinery, plant manager. He came from X and his staff, we had a woman HR manager who was gay. When we have functions, she would bring her girlfriend. The finance accounting guy was gay. His ops manager was white. Another was a woman. For me, it was eye opening, because half the staff was gay. Half the staff was women and minorities. I mean, he practiced what he preached. He was completely comfortable with anybody in his role that he thought that they were the best for the job. And I remember I went to a Christmas party and it was just bizarre because, X was there with her girlfriend, X was there with his boyfriend, husband and the secretary was gay and she was there with her girlfriend and we were amazed at the staff. X is one who was just completely open minded and he had no blinders up and he just put people in the roles that he thought were the best. It didn't matter who they were, what they were, which was for me, a great education. It was a fascinating diversity of social events. It was fascinating. There was more gay people there than there were straight people. It was fascinating. At the time I was like 34 years old. I'm a young kid. One of the guys it's called to council was like 65, so we had every age group, every nationality, straight, gay. X was an amazing guy. I feel, I've learned a lot seeing how open minded and colorblind, anti-stereotypical X was</p>
B	<p>Make sure that you walk in other people's shoes. Which means, one of the most important parts of leadership is, 'Can you look at a situation or issue from someone else's perspective?'. It's hard to do. If you've got a confrontation with someone or with your team, can you pause, be humble enough to know that you may not know everything, and that your frame of reference may be skewed. How do you look at things from different angles? That skillset is massively huge, not only for leadership, but particularly operating with diverse teams and culture. I'll give you my general one. What I always tell my teams is that the single most important thing for you as a leader over time is to develop and understand what is your personal leadership standard. What I mean by that is I think leadership is very personal. There's great things you can read in books, and you can steal things from books, but there's no magic formulas in book. To me what leadership is, is, at the end of the day, no matter what level you're in, and no matter what the challenges are, no matter how rough the day is, when you go home and start to assess yourself, 'Did I do the right things or not as a leader?' What is the standard that you're judging yourself against? Again, I don't think there's any magic formula. I think it develops over time and that. I'll give you a very short version of you know what I say is part of my leadership framework, right? I do give little leadership talks once in a while to teams. And so I tell them that my leadership standard is 'free beer'. And everyone's like, 'Why?'. And I'm like, 'My personal leadership standard, and how I judge myself is a free beer'. And everyone's like, 'What?'. Anyway, the short story for you is, it's personal. But maybe about two years after my dad died. I was back home at some break. A buddy of mine's dad owned a bar. So hey, you're a college student, you've got a friend whose dad owns a bar, how can you beat that? So I'm in that bar drinking with somebody and there's a group of guys, they look like blue collar workers, sitting at the bar. This was known as more of a blue collar</p>

	<p>bar. Anyway, partway through the night, a couple of these big rough guys come up over and then they go, 'Hey, don't mean to interrupt, but we overheard you, is your last name X?' And I'm like, 'Yeah...'. I'm like, did I do something? Am I going to get beat up? And I'm like, "Yeah". And they go, "Are you related to X?". And I'm like, 'Yeah, he's my dad'. And they're like, 'Wow, if you're his son, your beers are on us for the night, your drinks are on us, we've got your tab'. And they were all hourly guys that had worked at the plant where my dad was the plant manager. So it was kind of cool. And so then they came and joined us for part of the night and they spent the night telling me stories about my dad. And it was more not just he was a good guy, but he was Mr. Integrity, you could always trust him. He was always honest whether things were good or bad, transparent, all these things. Now, they thought enough of him that two years after he died, they go buy drinks for me. So, it took years. But as I started to think, if you're caught in tough situations and you're having to make decisions, and you're never perfect as a leader... What became the base of how I judged myself, whether I think I'm doing the right thing or not, and I think about it a lot is, 'With how I'm operating in this group and the decisions I'm making, am I doing it well enough and with enough integrity that, if it's five years from now and, and I've happened to walk into a bus and I'm no longer on this earth, will I have made enough of an impact that people that would have worked several levels under me if they ran into my kids, would go out of their way to buy them drinks and tell them stories about kind of the principles and how I operated'. To me, I think about that story a lot. And particularly when I'm at really hard leadership decisions that you have to do, I think about, 'Am I doing the right thing? If I'm not here, will I have done the right things that someone would buy free beer for my kids?' I think over time you, there's all these things about leadership. 'I'm going to be a servant leader' or 'I've got different leadership toolbox things', and I think all that's right, and you should steal and learn from people. But over time, you have to develop the core basis, because, you can get performance reviews and you can do that... But in the end of the day, you hold yourself accountable. And I think over time you have to be clear about what are you holding yourself accountable to and what is your personal leadership standard. And it's a hard one, in the end, I'll actually choke up when I tell that story, and I'll only do it the small groups, and that's what I mean by personal leadership standards. They're personal. They probably don't relate to other people. It's just this concept and everyone's story is going to be different and unique and there's no right one or wrong one to me - it just comes down to leadership, it's very personal. No formula, and you have to develop how you're going to hold yourself accountable.</p>
C	<p>We have this silly phrase at work from a management perspective, like leaders should be humble, hungry and smart. I think the key there from a leadership perspective is being humble. I think if you're able to build people up and make them feel like they are contributing and they are really respected, that's probably the key.</p>
D	<p>I always said there's a guy that I worked for that I tremendously respect. He was, still is, one of my best mentors. But what he always said was as a manager, you have two arms, one to reach for the stars and the other to pull everybody up with you. To me, that is the definition of leadership. It's very easy and more commonly easy to just want to reach for the stars. But good leadership means you're helping others achieve their dreams as well. It has lots of high level philosophical application, but it also has practical applications. If you're in a job and you're striving for a promotion, you're not going to get promoted to an executive role until you can tell the person promoting you who's going to replace your current position. Which is the pull people up piece of it. I think that was the most profound lesson he taught me. I don't even know how long ago it was 15 years ago, but it just really clicked and made a whole lot of sense. Great leadership does both: Reaches for the stars, but also makes sure that others come with you.</p>
E	<p>It's to be open-minded. Nothing is never, nothing is ever, and nothing is always. I do believe in being open-minded. I do believe in setting expectations. I do believe in as a leader, you must delegate. In most environments, a leader is not just responsible for one task. They're</p>

	<p>responsible for a multitude of things. I do believe that you do have to assign tasks and assign people to handle things, but I think you shouldn't be willing to ask anyone to do something you're not willing to do. And lead by example, present yourself in the way that you want to be perceived. That doesn't mean that it's always gonna happen. But you are responsible for you and your reaction, not someone else's. And so I think you have to embrace diversity. I think you have to embrace different cultures, ethnicities. I think engaging and asking questions and being communicative is the approach that I like to take. It's finding that balance between opening yourself up to learn new things, but also being competent enough to express knowledge that you learned throughout your work, your career.</p>
F	<p>Listen, observe your team members. Everybody responds to stuff differently. The most effective leaders know what motivates the people on their team and is able to speak to that. I think that's something very important to do. The other thing is keeping your cool. I've been on teams with people that are a little bit more hot headed and people that are a little more calm and collected in a crisis, and the people that get things done better when something goes wrong are the people that are able to keep their cool and not panic. So keeping a cool head is very important. Getting to know the people on your team, the looking and listening for what motivates them, and just generally being able to be somewhat flexible. You lead your team and you get to set some of the parameters on that, sure, but each team is different and each team's gonna work different ways. If I come into one case team and we've got multiple cases going on at the same time, it's not even like we're done with one case and then it goes on to this other one, it's totally different. I might go from a morning meeting with one team, do an afternoon meeting with another team and need to take a fully different approach. And that doesn't mean there's anything wrong with your leadership style. It just means the you're adjusting on the fly for your team. I think that's important, that degree of flexibility. I think you get some people that are very much, this is my style, this is the way I do things my way or the highway, and I think that's an overly rigid approach.</p>
G	<p>I think the most important thing leaders can do is to listen. I think as you get higher up on the food chain, you think you know everything and you don't listen. That's a huge flaw. I think listening is very important because so many of the decisions that need to be made are going to be made below you. The best decisions many times are done by those individuals who are closest to where it's impacted. Maybe it's equal with respect others at all levels, because if you respect others at all levels, you will listen. But I think when I look at why I feel I've been successful, I think the respect is there. I have to work on my listening skills with everybody. My personality is to jump ahead because I've already figured out the answer, and that's not fair to do. Many times it's just having someone walk through all of the steps so that they get to the answer is the real experience, that learning. So, I think I've got the respect thing down pretty well. I am always trying to do that better, listening to others and not trying to jump ahead of other people. I think if you look at your style inventories, I am more assertive and I'm more extroverted, and I have a lot of those tendencies, and it's very important for me to realize that's just one style. There's all different kinds of styles. I need to respect them and I need to listen to them because that's how I'm going to get a better outcome at the end of the day. But we are kind of attracted to people who are like us. You get somebody who's not quite as talkative, or it's very intimidating for them, so we need to remember that may be our group we flex to. But we need to be cognizant that luckily not everybody's like us or life would be pretty boring. Maybe it's just respect. Maybe that's the final end of the day. And if you respect everybody, then those other things come with it.</p>
H	<p>I never thought of myself as a leader, to be honest, until someone told me to look over my shoulder and see how far I'd gotten, from where I started. Being a leader, is hard work and requires attention to detail and knowing your business better than anyone else. And then not being afraid of taking a risk – marching into unknown territory when everyone else is telling you not to go there. I have never had a problem with that. I march, either they follow or not. So, bottom line is I believe that being present and accounted for – being there no matter what,</p>

	<p>available to the team at every hour of the day, in any country, time, or place...that is what works for me. I will help my employees, no matter how I feel, when I sense they want that help. I will help show them how important they are for the company. I always show them my respect for the work they are doing and their opinions. I am a Mexican woman, and even when I don't feel like smiling, I smile. When I don't feel like hugging, I hug. I care about my employees, because for now, my company and me...we are the same. If that is a leader...well, that is me.</p>
<p>J</p>	<p>Well, I think that in the first place you're gonna have a whole lot more success if you're passionate about what you're gonna lead, about what you're gonna do, what you're trying to accomplish. If you're not, then I'm not sure you're going to do very well. I had been a clinical dietician and working with food that was absolutely terrible, and I had patient after patient telling me all day long, I can't eat this. This is lousy, this is cold, this is hot, this is it. Just terrible, terrible food. I knew the importance of it, and I'm a nutritionist, so I knew the importance of it, and I knew that doctors are depending on it. I knew the importance, I knew the customer, I knew what needed to be done and I wanted it done so bad. I wanted that. Well then I got attached to the employees who were working in other parts of the hospital and wanted to take care of them. This is their one time of the day when they're not on the job and they're going to have a nice lunch. I wanted them to have flowers on the table, so I grew them in my garden, took them to work and put them on there, roses for them, every day. And food, I worked hard to have something different all the time. You didn't have the same menu every day. We had something different, something new coming and then I would be sure that that food's going to be good. I buy nice groceries. I would train people to do the work and train them how to cook. It was a passion of mine. I wanted it. Well, unless a leader really believes in what they're trying to do, it's not going to trickle down. You can pretty much go to almost any place in the world and walk into a store or whatever it is and tell how passionate the leader is. You can tell it the way the body language is, you can tell the way they talk, you can tell the way they move, you can just tell whether this is a place that's a happy workplace or whether it's somebody who's just there because they have to be. You can just figure it out. You can see how their systems are developed. You can figure it out if you just watch what's going on and watch how they conduct business and how they treat each other. You can see it. You can see it so clearly. Passion I think is the number one thing. You've got to really want to do what you're going to do. If you've got that, it's no telling what you figure out. It's no telling what's you'll create. It's no telling how you'll get things turned around. But believe you me, if you want it bad enough, you'll figure it out. If you don't have that push and drive, that passion for it, then it's probably gonna just be lackluster. I think what happens to people is they lose their focus when you're not passionate about the customer. For instance, let's just take your customer. I want that customer to have the good experience. That is my job. That is my goal. That is what I want. That is what I want for my business. Well then I'm going to be driven on that. Now people that don't have that, they're going to come to work. And what are they doing? Well, all of a sudden now we've got people in line backed up, the system isn't working and here, what are you doing? You're not on the basic problem. You're not on the basic goal here because your mind is just not there. And that's just not okay. That's just not gonna work. If you're a leader that's gonna show, and your employees are going to know it and you're all going to be miserable, I think.</p>
<p>K</p>	<p>Most of the time you're going to have people underneath you and adjacent to you that are going to know more, and they're going to have more experience than you do. So, just because you have the role of boss, don't for a second think that that means you know more and that you don't need them. Because that's stupid to believe that. Ask questions. Soldiers and people under your authority love whenever you ask them questions because that makes them feel valued, a hundred percent. So ask questions.</p>
<p>L</p>	<p>This is very simple to me. As a leader, you have to be yourself. You can't be a put on. You have to be genuine. You have to be direct. Forceful when need be, but open even sometimes</p>

	<p>to criticism. I think again you have to be a pretty solid person to know who you are. But again, it's being a reed and being able to bend, not being so rigid as a leader or a manager that you almost look like you're unapproachable or can't listen to new ideas because you want the people underneath you to be as good or better than you are, because that's what pushes everybody upward. You want everybody underneath you to be good enough to take your job. Not that you want them to take your job, but if they're that good, they're going to make you look that much better. So, I think the best advice for a leader or a manager is to lead with a vision, to have a clear vision, to be open to change if it comes, to be supportive of those underneath you, to have a sense of humor, and to sometimes not take yourself too seriously because we're only here on this earth for a short time and you're there to help them, and they're there to help you, you just happen to have the name on your door. The worst thing you can do is to pit people against you, that's when you lose them. And always above everything else in addition to being genuine is to be honest with them.</p>
<p>M</p>	<p>To be comfortable with your decisions. My Dean told me when I took over as department chair, he called me in and he said, 'You have to be able to not take this home with you'. He said, 'You have to leave every day and tell yourself 'I made the very best decisions I could make with the information I had''. And he said, 'Then you have to walk away from it, but you can't worry and second guess'. My advice would be run it your way. You can't run it like somebody else did. You have to be your own leader, but be comfortable with your decisions. I have to make some decisions sometimes that don't make people very happy, but I have to explain it to 'em, 'This is the decision that has to be, based on the information we have. Maybe it'll change. Maybe it won't. But this is a decision that has to be made right now.'.</p>

**Table 6**

Interviewee	How do you balance treating people the same while still recognizing differences?
A	<p>It's very simple because the thing that you treat people the same on is performance. I don't care if you're black, white, Indian, Pakistani, woman, man, gay, straight. If you are performing, you're getting the results, you're communicating, you're working with the team, I could care less about your difference. To me, the thing that holds it all together in the end is performance. I think you gotta not let the other parts of it color performance. I might have diversity if someone who's not from this country or a woman who gets the results completely different. So, they think differently. They handle people differently. Ultimately it is the boss. Obviously we've got ethics, we treat people with respect. We have values of what we do. I mean, there's a certain way to get things done. And if they're getting it done, but in a different way, that will be it, celebrate the results and celebrate the fact that they get it different.</p>
B	<p>The way I'd frame it is that there are no simple answers. I think basic framework within an organization needs to be the same, but how you manage within that framework has to be different. If you've got certain rules of generally, 'These are the types of experiences you need to be eligible for this job'. There are some tenants that just for organizational stability need to be the same. But to me that's the framework. Then you gotta be smart. What's your framework? But then you have to create freedom within the framework, which says every individual's different, you have to motivate, engage with people differently. I treat a lot of my employees differently, but that's more about how I coach them, how I engage with them, how I help develop them. Because every personality is different. But I can still create a very distinctive relationship, and a coaching and development path, even if I would say the basic structure of what you consider as normal HR guidelines are the same for everyone. I've got some folks that really they perform better when challenged, they want a certain degree of edge, they're very sports minded, and they want someone on them. Then you've got other folks that if you treated them that way they would just go into a cocoon, and you got to have a different encouraging coaching style. It doesn't mean my expectations differ for performance. I've got high levels of excellence for performance, but how I coach and engage to enable that person to reach that level has to be fundamentally different because people are fundamentally different. The analogy I'd give is you think about a football game: You're not going to change the rules of the game. Whoever scores the most amount of points wins, regardless of how you get in the end zone it's six points. Everyone's got to play by the same rules. That being said, when you look at your team, you may sit there and think, based on the personalities of this team, we are going to have to be a speed team, we're going to have to be a team that's kind of passing and finesse, and we have to develop a fundamentally different game plan based upon our talents of our team that still plays within the same rule, but our game plan is going to be different based upon the team. Whereas another team, maybe I got all these 400 pound linemen, my game plan is going to be to run the ball down there. It's concept of some of your basic framework, expectations of excellence, meeting commitments, operating within certain values and norms don't change, but you've got flexibility to create different game plans to meet those objectives based upon the talent level and diversity of the team on the field.</p>
C	<p>I think there's exceptions for everyone. I generally try and be very flexible with everyone, but I think you know people's strengths and weaknesses, so you know where you can give on certain issues or where you just know someone won't be effective. It's assessing who the person is and then helping them create boundaries in the way they work so that they can be successful. Usually if you put it as, 'Hey, I want to help you be your best. Let's think of ways that we can do that'. And that solution is different for everyone cause everybody has a different way of working.</p>

D	<p>The way you ensure that people are treated the same is through process, policy, and procedure. I can ensure that any employee, regardless of their heritage, background, gender, et cetera is treated the same if I have a very robust performance evaluation process that's well-defined, that's documented, that we have published job descriptions that everybody adheres to. If I have a very robust, well documented performance evaluation process, from an HR perspective, I can ensure that people are treated equally in terms of being reviewed based on their jobs. Whereas recognition of diversity and taking advantage of diversity comes more to me through on a day to day, managerial level. So if I'm a good manager of teams, I'm making sure that diversity is promoted, appreciated, heard. That the diversity of thought comes through in our team meetings and our project management meetings. That is more to me as day-to-day operational leadership, and management needs to be on board with it. Whereas making sure people get treated fairly is more of a process procedure kind of thing.</p>
E	<p>It goes back to getting to know. Getting to know your team and your people as individuals and getting to know some of their life. That's not to say that you know every aspect of someone's life. But when you know more things about someone, then I feel like you know which way to go sometimes. Of course, when you're in a work environment... if there is a standard that everybody must adhere to, then that standard doesn't change. The standard is the same for everyone. But realistically, we all have had issues and things that have happened and in our lives and in a different time. Knowing that someone's a mother or knowing that someone doesn't have a child, your eyes are open in a different way. Now that's not to say that because you have a child, you don't have to come to work on time or you don't have to perform, you don't have to do those things. But you if you know your team, you're able to meet people where they are and then from there you give them the encouragement that they need to move forward. I think you always have to get to know them as individuals within a team, but that isn't a friendship or 'I'm your friend, I'm not your friend'. You have to know something about the people that you work with or work for. Because again, the more you know, the more you grow. If you know better, you do better. And so I just think it's getting to know individuals within a team.</p>
F	<p>If people on the team think you're giving special attention to somebody and not to them, are they going to get mad? I think part of it comes into what I was saying before about giving everybody a good defined role where they know they're in charge of it. I think that's important. I think it's important to make time for everybody. I don't think you're going to be able to necessarily make equal time for everybody. Some people are gonna need a lot more attention to stay focused, stay motivated, do their best work. Some people are going to be able to be relatively hands off, but then you need to make the effort to show that you are checking in and open to hearing everybody's concerns and just seeing what everyone's doing. I think a lot of the resentment I was talking about that you're treating people differently comes from not really having a level of understanding of the person who is maybe getting mad about that, not having the level of understanding about how you interact with someone as maybe other people on the team. It's making sure that you reach out and basically cultivate the idea. You're not saying this explicitly, but based on your behavior, based on listening to them, based on taking a unique approach to each person that, 'Hey, I'm not playing favorites'. What I'm doing here is I am talking to people and I am there for you if you need me for this. I'm not going to cut things short. I'm not going to ignore something from you that I would pay attention to you from somebody else because I care more about that other person. What I'm going to do is I'm going to make sure I am there to be available if you need that extra attention, if that's what motivates you, if that's what helps you, I'm going to be trying to give that. And that's different for every person. I think if people can kind of see that, then they know you're just doing your job as a manager. But if you don't do a very good job of being transparent about that, then I do think that breeds some resentment. The other thing is the flexibility that I was saying is that you can't just come in and say, 'This is my style as a leader. Everyone's got to basically shape up or ship out on it, and it's gonna work better with some people and not with other people'. You need to be a little flexible. Some people are gonna want more hands on time so</p>

	<p>you gotta be willing to give it. Some people are gonna want a more firm, almost drill sergeant approach on what needs to get done, cause that's what motivates them. Some people are going to want a little bit more of the mentoring, nourishing kind of role, walk them through the process a little bit more, that sort of thing. I think it's being a good manager, a good leader in that sense is having that degree of flexibility. But, there's one thing that you can be flexible on, and as sort of the overall goal, the theme that I was talking about before, the big picture, you've always gotta be advancing towards that. If that's your guiding light, and then you can be flexible everywhere else and it's okay to be flexible as long as you're moving towards that goal, I think you're doing what you need to do. And if you're transparent enough that your team knows that that's your style and that's what you're doing, that you're going to be flexible, you're going to give people what they need, but you're always going to keep everybody on the path moving towards this final goal you're trying to get to. My hope is that that accounts for a lot of the differences in how people might get treated based on their various motivations and various styles. I guess stay firm on the big picture, stay loose on the day to day.</p>
<p>G</p>	<p>I think you have to understand where someone's coming from. The easy thing is a type-A versus a type-B person, how you can interact with one. You can do the same thing, but you do it in a different way. I think that's your job as a leader, is to really understand people and understand what's gonna be most effective to get your message across. And the other thing, this is relationship theory, it takes an art to say this, because you don't want to really say, 'Tell me what I just told you'. That sounds demeaning, but to make sure that the message is received and understood. Again, I think it's taking time to understand your teammates and subordinates and knowing how best to convey the message to them. One size does not fit all. It may be the delivery of the message may be different, but the message is still the same. So you're trying to be fair across the board. It's just the delivery may be different. Be very intentional on how you do something. Being aware of how you do something or say something, and try to listen for feedback and to see how it's perceived. And listen, have them tell you, 'It really bothered me when you did this'. Perception is reality. To create a safe space goes to respect and goes to trust. I have an open door policy that anybody can come in and say anything. And I've had a lot of people come in and they're venting, not necessarily at me, but I'm like, 'Okay, this is like Switzerland in here, you can do whatever you need to do. Get it off your chest and then go back out'. But letting individuals know that there's a trust, that they can come in and tell you something. And this is again, where it's not personal, they can say something and not be fearful that they're going to lose their job, that they disagree with you. Again, it goes respecting people. 'I respect your opinion. I want to hear your opinion, even though it's different than mine, who's to say my opinion's right. I don't know. That's why I'm asking you'. You have to create that respect, that trust, so that they will come forward if there's something that's divergent from what you've thought, and then thank them when they do and say, 'Hey, that gives me something to think about. I appreciate it. I may not do what you want me to do, but I really appreciate that, and that's gonna make me think before I act'. That makes people feel valued, which is important. Celebrate and thank people. It doesn't take much to do that, and it means the world to do that. I'll give you this quick example. There were some individuals that are doing this workshop. They wanted to have the workshop at the college, but the college was closed for staff development day. So the girl called, she had her box full of stuff, she was outside the college, and she couldn't get in. It was about 6:30 in the morning. I said, 'Where are all the people staying at?' She said, 'The Radisson'. I said, 'Okay, let me call the Radisson'. So, I called the hotel and got the front desk and I said, 'I need a meeting room. I need AV, I need this and that'. She says, 'The sales department doesn't open until eight'. And I said, 'Well, that's when my workshop starts'. Anyway, long story short, the lady who was at the front desk, she empowered herself and said, 'I'll take care of it', blah, blah, blah. Later in the day I got the opportunity to get over to the hotel and introduce myself and thank her. Then I sent a letter to the management at the Radisson to say how this person went above and beyond and took what was a disastrous situation for a workshop and turned it into you know.... Many times we'll call and complain, but we don't really take the time sometime to call and compliment. She wasn't part of my team, but she did something that I</p>

	<p>thought was fantastic, and wanted, not just her to know, but I wanted her superiors to know. We need to do that internally, too. Sometimes, when everything goes smooth, we're like 'Great, everything's smooth', but lots of stuff goes on to make it go smooth. Showing appreciation is important. We all like attaboys and attagirls.</p>
H	<p>The key word, at X, but also for what we do, is respect. We affirm differences, and we show affection, respect, and recognition for differences between nationalities, between languages, and between the gender differences in each nationality. Ultimately, we believe the glue that holds difference of all types together is mutual respect.</p>
J	<p>That is one of the hardest things there is because of people. I think when a leader treats people fairly, at every turn, every time there's an opportunity. You have to ask yourself, 'Did I do that as good as I could?'. Evaluate what you did. 'Was I as fair as I could have been? Did I see that squarely?'. I think it's important before you make a move firing, or getting a new job, or changing things, you need to think about what it's going to do to everybody else. It's like your own life. It's not your own life. It's everybody else's around you. But you have to think about what's going to happen. 'If I do this, what will that mean for the rest around me?'. I think the leader has to think that way. But if you can do things with fairness, and if you love every single one of them, then you will get it. You usually will get it fair. If you failed to get it fair, if you fail to do it right, then you need to correct that. That's okay for a leader to make a mistake, as long as they see. You need to evaluate what you did. At the end of every evaluation, you need to evaluate what you did in that evaluation. 'Is that fair? Did I give the correct scores? Did I say the right things? Could I have done better?'. So you constantly have to work on your own leadership. But if you're focused on your customer and you're doing this thing for your customer, even when it's a hard miss on somebody in your staff, they're going to understand that, 'Hey, that's what we have to do to take care of the customer. This is what we'll do next time'. Then you've got to constantly be thinking about those that are having trouble, even more than those are excelling. You need to be noticing people's struggles, are they really having trouble keeping up? Are they really having trouble getting that right? What is the problem? I had the worst time for the longest time, tried to get people to date food. I mean, it's just constant confusion over this. And, it just went on and on, dated wrong, wrong dates over and over. I'm going, 'I gotta fix this'. So I made a calendar and had on there, today is the first. Now today, all food left over today will be dated the fourth, so that everybody knew this is what it's decided. We're not having any of this quibbling anymore. Sometimes you just need to have a better, tighter system to stop some of that dribbling around. For a while we had a problem fighting over carts, didn't have enough carts. People were hunting for carts. People were hiding carts and putting their names on carts. If a leader doesn't notice that that's going on, then they won't buy any more carts. Let them pick out the cart. If they need a certain kind of cart, let them pick it out. And that works like a charm, the more that they have ownership of it, the better it is. I just think that if you love 'em all and you want take care of them all and you want to grow every one of them, somehow, even though it sounds impossible, you will see those details, and you will figure out how to make sure. When you love somebody, you'll help them. You'll help them. When you help somebody, guess what happens to your attitude? That makes you happy to help.</p>
K	<p>I would argue that I don't treat everybody the same, and not in a bad way. For example, I have a soldier who recently had a baby and she needs extra PT, extra physical exercise. She needs extra nutritional help, and I'm going to give that to her because that's what you do. I'm not going to equally give that to someone else who doesn't need it. So, I would argue that I don't treat them equally. I would argue that I give them what they need equally. So while I would give her that extra help, another soldier that is maybe struggling with studying, I would give them extra time to work on their homework on the side. I guess that is equal, just in different ways. I guess as long as you know your soldiers, you can treat them equally. Just get to know them as a person and then that makes it easier.</p>

L	<p>Well, we'll just take the color issue. Martin Luther King, when he spoke to the quarter of a million people in the mall, back when I was just a young kid and I watched it on TV, he stressed to not measure a person by the color of their skin, but on the content of their character. Those were his words. And I don't think anyone alive could improve on that phrase. That's how I approach people. If someone says, 'Oh, you have to be colorblind'. Well, no, you don't. If I see a black person, I'm going to know that's a black person. But it's also more than being a black person. It is a person. If I'm to say I didn't notice their color, I'm lying. I noticed that that were Hispanic. I noticed that it's a woman. I noticed that it's a black person, but yet I really don't. In a sense I do care, but I don't give a rip in comparison to the content of their character. That goes back to Martin Luther King statement. It doesn't matter what color you are. If you have character beyond reproach, if you do what's right in every sense of the word, it doesn't matter what color you are. You can be the lowest, you can be a zero to the bone person, or you can be the highest of character, but you can be any color, any shape, any background, it doesn't really matter. That's how I approach it. I really don't care what color the person has, I don't care if they're tall, short, it doesn't matter to me. I'm looking at who they are and how they treat people and that's how I operate. You could Webster's for all the words you can search for, but I don't think you can improve on this phrase.</p>
M	<p>We have an annual review process, they have to submit their 25 page narrative, summing up their three legs of the stool: their surface, their teaching, and their research. Everybody has a strength in one place or the other. Finding balance to help them equalize and learn to be good at all three so that they can get tenure is a constant challenge. To get better, it's the things they're not good at and that's sometimes frustrating to them. It's very hard conversations at the end of the year when I have to do their evaluation and they didn't meet expectations. I give it to them in written form and then I have to meet with them face to face. That's very hard because these are my colleagues. I had lunch with them the day before and I have to say, you're probably not going to get a very high merit this year. You didn't do what you were supposed to do. So that can be very challenging. Luckily they've all taken ownership, and that helps. And I do it very quantitatively. I'm not a qualitative person. I'm very quantitative and it's a numbers game to me. I put it on a spreadsheet, there's no subjectivity to it. I can come in and say, 'You did X and that gives you a score of this. You did Y. That gave you a score of this. This is where you evened out with your colleagues, and so this is where you are on merit'. So it's not, 'I think I feel', it's 'This is what you submitted as documentation and this is what the numbers say'. It used to be very subjective and we took it over as department chairs. It was very subjective, but one person did the entire college of education's evaluations. So you can be subjective when you're the only person scoring. What I'm scoring, and the other three department chairs are scoring, we had to have balance, so we had to move from a subjective model to a very, quantitative objective model that we say you have to have X number of publications in these categories to do this. We're constantly tweaking it because there's constant vagueness. 'Well, why didn't I get points for this, but they got points for that. Well, this is the way we look at it now: Does everyone in the college of education have an opportunity to do this? Yes. Okay, then let's count that one. Nope. Throw it out. Does everybody in college of education have an opportunity to do this? Yes. Keep it. No. Throw it out.'. We're really refining our policies and procedures down to our criteria so that it is equitable. Whether you're a junior faculty and mid-level faculty or senior faculty, everybody has a chance for those opportunities.</p>

### **What Does This All Mean?**

The derivation of themes provides key theoretical insight for individual leaders of diverse teams in organizations. This insight is used for practical application. Throughout the interview process, I focused on eliciting specific examples relating to any general response. These examples often involved strategies specific to each interview and his or her experience. However, the specifics included elements that fall under the umbrellas of the induced themes.

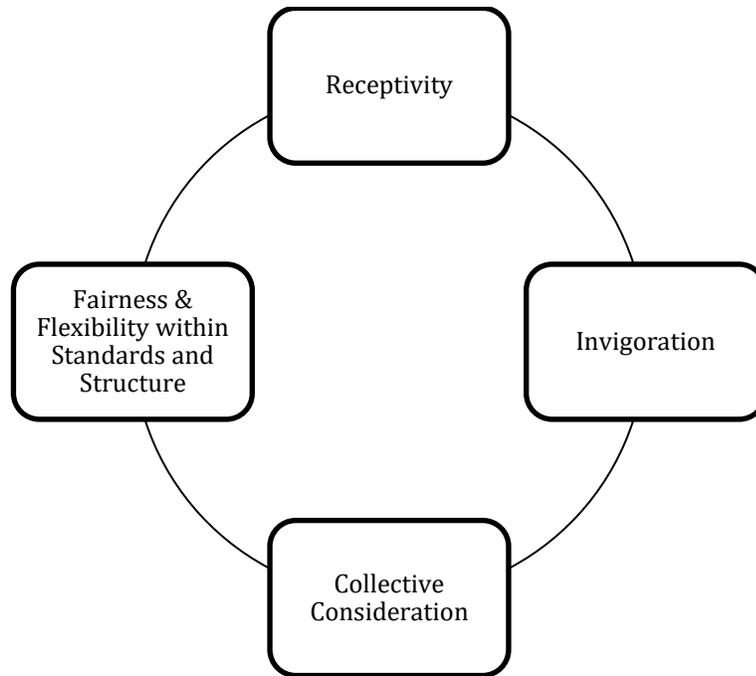
Following a thorough content analysis of each question posed within the interview process, the resulting themes provide insight into individual leadership style and its interaction with diversity in groups. Each question targeted an aspect of leadership either in the form of specific examples and situations or general inquiry. The responses and the respective themes discerned within them provide components for both practical and theoretical application.

A few overall elements were distinguished to encapsulate individual leadership style with diverse groups in a general sense. These elements are used to provide a comprehensive model of individual leadership style for application.

## Chapter 5: Integration & Discussion

### Model and Integration of Themes

Following the theme creation, I've created an overall model to integrate them for practical and theoretical applications in diverse organizations. This model aims to show how the themes work together for effective individual leadership of a diverse group, This differs from diversity management programs in that the model functions as guidelines within which leaders take action.



The research results contribute to proposed themes for the intersection of individual leadership style and diversity. These themes include “Receptivity”, “Invigoration”, “Collective Consideration”, and “Fairness & Flexibility within Standards & Structure”. Each theme embodies a particular orientation leaders can integrate into their skill set to improve management

of diverse groups. This research provides new insight into specific operating strategies that are targeted at the individual level of leadership.

Another takeaway from the interview process and results is the personal viewpoint on individual leadership. This is a piece that I perceived upon review of the individual responses. Interviewee B described this phenomenon, “In the end... that’s what I mean by personal leadership standards. They’re personal. They probably don’t relate to other people. It’s just this concept and everyone’s story is going to be different and unique and there’s no right one or wrong one to me - it just comes down to leadership... No formula and you have to develop how you’re going to hold yourself accountable” (Table 5, Interviewee B). I feel that this quote encompasses the essence of individuality in leadership. There are themes we can understand for successful leaders of diverse groups, but the way each leader implements these themes in his or her actions will be different. However, these differences in practical application reflect the differences in people - their personalities, experiences, and opinions.

### **Limitations**

Throughout the academic research and within the interview process, a few pieces were found to create inefficiencies in the results. I recognize the limitations below, express the potential impact on my findings, and provide solutions for improvement.

One limitation of the study included the diversity of the respondents. For example, the majority of the interviewees are caucasian and older than 50 (Table 1). The ethnic composition limits the findings of the research as this group may have similar experiences within organizations and in their leadership experiences. Also, this limitation may have provided a narrow perspective with which to derive broad themes for individual leadership style. However, the thesis considers the composition of many executive-level leaders of large organizations in the

United States, which are caucasian. Therefore, the ethnic composition of the sampling pool does reflect the real-world compositions of leaders in organizations. In this regard, the formation of themes could apply to the appropriate group as reflected in the status quo of leadership composition in the United States (BLS, 2018). As demographics continue to shift and minorities assume more leadership positions, the ethnic composition must be revisited to find valid results more universally applicable. The current composition of the sampling pool in this research limits the inclusion of some groups that may have different experiences that contribute to individual leadership styles.

Another limitation included the sourcing of interviewees. These subjects were chosen from personal contacts, which included an abundance of those of the same race/ethnicity. The limitations of the composition have been acknowledged above. To mitigate some of this bias, the interview sampling pool continued to be adjusted to reflect a more comprehensive and diverse group of leaders.

Another limitation included the situational and behavioral analysis of some of the questions asked. For example, some interviewees found difficulty in targeting the intersection of diversity and leadership style in their responses. This may have caused some of the interviewees to lack explicit responses in regard to the source of the skills they use in their leadership style. As a result, a structured procedure for analyzing themes was produced. The use of qualitative content analysis recognizes these challenges, and remedies are available (Weber, 1990). Another way to overcome this limitation is to find a way to conduct interviews in which quantitative data can be derived. This would remove potential personal bias and allow for more objective results.

Content analysis was conducted to extract themes from the interview responses, and I would like to make some acknowledgments regarding the limitations of this research. First, the

main issue of content analysis is the data-reduction process by which many words of text are classified into much fewer content categories (Weber, 1990). In this context, the primary issue of data-reduction is that it is conducted by one person. I made decisions in terms of response editing and theme extraction. The exclusivity of my perceptions might limit the analysis. As content analysis can be a subjective process, multiple reviewers could extract different keywords and themes. To remedy this limitation, a collective effort could be used to source the population, conduct interviews, and organize analysis.

These limitations grant a more critical perspective of the results in this thesis. This perspective is key to acknowledge the potential for greater variation in responses and the liberties taken in analysis. I believe the results contribute to the field of individual leadership style and diversity management, but greater progress can be made with more robust populations, procedures, and analysis. Future research proposals consider these limitations and make comprehensive recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and reliability of the results.

### **What's Missing?**

In considering what may be missing from the current research, I see the potential to create more intersectionality in the questions to elicit specific examples. Further qualitative data provides more rich descriptions, explanations of processes, and identifiable context (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Moreover, I believe specificity of scenarios provides practical application of the themes and principles discovered in the analysis.

Also, some perspectives are missing in this research. For example, a few ethnic groups were not represented in the sampling group including American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders. I considered the collective of ethnicity groups

from the National Institutes of Health, which lists six ethnic groups according to revisions to OMB Directive 15 which is used for diversity programs and other reporting purposes (National Institutes of Health). The unintended exclusion of these groups limits the perspective and distinct experiences of these groups. Moreover, I noted some of the experiences of ethnic minority leaders in this research, the addition of other minority group leaders may contribute greater understanding into their experiences. These experiences could contribute emerging themes for minority leaders of diverse groups, another interesting perspective for future research.

### **Future Research**

An interesting finding from the content analysis was that within each individual interview, some motifs emerged. These motifs are considered to be part of each individual's style. The motifs, when recognized, provided great insight into the intention of the interviewee's response. Moreover, the pattern reinforces research regarding individual leadership style and its mold for each person as formed by his or her experiences and personality. The connection between these factors and individual leadership styles may pose questions for further research into individual leadership style and management psychology.

To extend the research into this subject, I believe some adjustments could be made to the sampling pool, interview protocol, and analysis procedure. In the sampling pool, I see two strategies for expanding this research. First, increasing the size of the sampling pool within the same procedures would provide greater diversity in response. This adds examples and richness of context. However, an expansion of the sampling pool would significantly add more time to the content analysis. To remedy this issue, with a larger sampling pool, an adjustment could be made to the protocol. An adjustment to protocol may involve questions presented in a written survey format instead of interviews. This procedure, however, may remove the potential for more

candid responses and anecdotes. On the other hand, a written survey may elicit greater consideration in responses from the subjects. In regards to analytical procedures, some changes could be made to compensate for both changes in population and procedure. For example, the research in this thesis includes qualitative data analysis. With a more robust sampling pool, the procedure may be altered to obtain quantitative data. Quantitative data analysis may yield more accurate results in regards to computer or program usage.

Also, included in my analysis were a few anecdotes from minority leaders. These distinct responses piqued my interest for future research. The diversity composition of the sampling pool may have represented the status quo of the diversity compositions of leaders in the United States today, the experiences of minority leaders is key to understanding their disparate challenges in leading diverse groups. This research may contribute to proposed initiatives for their integration and success in leadership positions in the United States.

## **Conclusion**

The dual approach of this thesis aimed to uncover emerging themes of individual leadership style and its intersection with diversity. The literature review provided an overview of the status quo of diversity management, including changing demographics in the workplace and its impact on organizations and leaders. Moreover, diversity management programs targeted for organization implementation have had success in creating diversity targets and maintaining standards for fairness in procedure and process. However, the research includes a gap in the intersection of individual leadership and diversity management.

To contribute new information to individual leadership styles, I conducted a series of interviews with a sampling pool of varying industry, career background, age, gender, and ethnicity to understand their leadership experiences. From the interview process, I managed a

content analysis of the interview transcriptions to discover emerging themes. Following the analysis, I created theme names and introduced definitions for each. Within the explanations I provided textual evidence from the interviews to support my interpretations and results. I extended the concluding themes to illustrate their practical applications for issues leaders of diverse groups face. These issues include subgroup formation and miscommunication in terms of team orientation and motivation. The practical application serves to convey the utility of each theme, and most themes are integrated with each other, supporting the idea of a set of leadership standards.

With the results from the interview protocol and content analysis, I realized some limitations of my research including sampling diversity, interviewee sourcing, and individual content analysis. I explained the potential issues with these limitations and included propositions to improve the research in the future. Moreover, I incorporated some thoughts for future research which includes greater consideration of minority leadership and extended exploration of intersectionality. This thesis aimed to gain a greater perspective in individual leadership and diversity management, and the discovered themes contribute to the field of diversity management. “Receptivity”, “Invigoration”, “Collective Consideration”, and “Fairness & Flexibility within Standards & Structure” have great potential for theoretical and practical usage. The themes have the capacity to improve the effectiveness of decision-making, communication, and conflict-resolution for individual leaders of diverse groups.

## Appendices

**Table 7**

Interviewee	What is the best part about your job?
A	For me, it was the people I work with. I enjoy having a very dynamic team that thought out of the box, that is very progressive and problem solving. I was always looking for people who could give me unique solutions and commitment. Just great problem-solvers.
B	I'll take it back to the same thing as what my job criteria are. That is, you want to have a job where you feel like you have impact and make a difference. And work with good people. I'd say the best thing I like about my job now is that I'm in a high impact area. Unlike like the last 14 years in my career where it was a very wide job. So I was on a plane all the time and you're just, you're touching everything. So I'd say you're stretched horizontally. This job is a massive switch where I am in a very focused area and I can go very, very deep in an impact area for the company and it's a change of pace of job and I kind of like that.
C	I think the best thing about my job is it's something completely different every day. And my particular role they say, 'Hey, we want you to build your own brand and kind of sell your own consultancy services.' So we certainly have projects that we're dedicated to and that we're working on, but they encourage us to be kind of our own business development managers where we go out and find work. We've gone and find deals or you can gravitate towards projects that you're interested in by networking and getting to know potential clients in that field. I love that piece that there's something new and different every day. And I love that I've been involved in multiple projects that are at different phases of the design and construction schedule. So there's always a variety. There's layers upon layers of consultants and layers upon layers of different niches that you could get into. It's insane.
D	The best part of it was managing people. The biggest thing to me that I always found extremely gratifying was helping people advance and pursue development in their career, professional development. So that was very rewarding to help people figure out where their spot was in and then help get there.
E	Well, I think the best thing about the job is encouraging people to do more, and to learn. Let me speak to that role I previously held before this role. In that role with a lot of people that were you know, this is the first job outside of high school or moms who worked part time, or people who had come to the U.S. It was a quite a lot of single mothers and those types of things. And I myself has always been a single mom, and being able to in my eyesight be a mentor and to encourage and to try and promote within and to try and show people that sometimes the world thinks being a single parent is a death sentence and it's not, and showing people how to balance, but also showing the path to do better and to achieve more. And then I will say this, and not in a bragging manner, pretty much every position that I've held or company that I've been with, I've taken friends with me and people with me, and I don't mean physically take them with me. They are still part of my life. It's good like "You were the best boss I ever had. You were the first person that gave me my opportunity. I appreciate there, you were the reason for this." And you know, I'm just seeing the value in everybody in trying to treat them with respect and kindness and encouragement. I think that's one of the things that I pride myself on and in the court. Because at that time, I didn't have another auditor. I had a really good relationship with [the interns], working relationship, to teach things, to have patience, to respect that this wasn't [their] end all be all. I liked being able to have that ability and I still try to carry that forward with the current. Well now they don't call them interns anymore, they call them accounting associates. And so in my role now, because it's not even an official role, that's part of an issue I'm having right now that we're trying to work through as an official role. But the current and the previous auditors are coming along and this court environment has been very difficult. It's been very difficult because the institutional knowledge, it's not respected or maybe not understood or respected or, the way that I do think it's not necessarily respected.
F	Something different every day. It's not the kind of job where you come in and you know exactly what you're going to do and you're going to keep doing that for like every day for the week or every day for the month or whatever. Since it's litigation focused, so much can change, you've got opposing counsel who is trying to make your life difficult. So surprises will pop up, you have to be a little bit reactive in that sense. But what that means I guess is stuff doesn't get old. You do something for a little while that gets done and then you move on to the next phase. Or you deal with the next thing that comes up or the next email that comes in. So it's always something new and I think it keeps things fresh, which is nice.
G	I think that the diversity of what I get to do, and I will tell you, I did apply for the chancellor job. So there's one job above me here, and that's chancellor. I applied for that job six years ago and I didn't get it. And when I sat down with who got the job, the first time we had a meeting, I asked him, "Do you want me to leave?" Because a lot of times you come in and you bring in your own team. And he said, "Well, do you want to leave?" and I'm like, "I asked you first". And he said, "Well, I'm the chancellor". So I'm like, okay, there you go. I said there's three things that I need to continue to stay employed and want to work here. And I said the first one is I have to continue to learn. I have to feel that I'm continuing to learn every day. Number two, I have to feel that I'm making a difference. And number three, I never want to be bored. And I said, if I can continue to do those, I'm happy to continue to work here. And I said if for any reason I don't feel that's happening or if you aren't happy with what I'm doing, then we need to revisit the conversation. And I believe he took me a very, very seriously and I have never been bored. In fact, he puts more and

	<p>more and more on my plate, which I'm happy to do because if I get bored, I would probably get in trouble. So it works really well. I have to make a difference. I have to learn and I can't be bored. I know you asked for just one thing, but they all kind of three go together.</p>
H	<p>I really love to work with multi-cultural people. Educated people. I love to see them grow in the language, my motto is "learn another language and gain another soul." It is so true.</p>
J	<p>I just think that they're just some of the most wonderful people I've ever known. And I can honestly say I loved every one of them. I loved them all.</p>
K	<p>Flying, for sure. Flying is so much fun. And honestly, I love talking to soldiers because I've never been a part of an organization where you have people from literally all walks. One of my soldiers grew up literally on a farm, didn't interact with anybody his own age growing up and then decided join the army and move across the nation. And then we have other people that grew up in a major city and were like, 'yeah, I'm going to join the army'. So that's fun. And then I guess travel, like I've gotten, I've got to live in different places, go to different countries, so that's good too.</p>
L	<p>Well, right now the best part of my job is making sure that I help cell therapy labs and biotech companies in their treatment of cancer patients because the products that we supply help them store and freeze it right up to when the infusion team infuses their products into the patient. So it's making sure that cell therapy labs receive their products on time. We help develop special products for different labs. For instance, several years ago there was a product that was definitely needed on the market and it was a way to place plasma and STEM cells into a container and have it gravity drip into another bag that separated out white cells, red cells, and plasma. And the reason that was important is you take the STEM cells and you spin them down and this eliminated the plasma and the red cells and allowed you to get to the white cells. Long story short, there wasn't a conical shape bag, they would have to take rectangular bags and clip them. So I had to fly out to Cincinnati to meet with a doctor, and we sat around a cafe table in the cafeteria and drew out exactly what was needed: the width and breadth and the slope of the bag. That helped me help them develop a bag that is used today around the world. It was fun to create something that helps patients. So, the best part of my job is the team I work with in the home office and the production capabilities to create products that help the labs help patients. And right now it's mainly to cure Hodgkin's lymphoma. Certain melanomas, multiple myelomas, that type of thing. It's really patient care that I take the most pride in. To me, the best leaders in the teams that they work under are best motivated when they see the end result of their work. Sometimes in isolation, like if you're working in a clean room, you're putting bags together, you're slapping tubes on, and you don't really know what it is you're doing that helps the end result. But if that team, a leader, a CEO, or a somebody in that team that has some authority, if they're able to make all the components all the way down the line see that what they're doing helps in the end run. I think that's what motivates people. If they know that what they're doing is helping people. So I think of motivation all the way down the line and it all flows from the top and if the leadership is not sound at the top, it's not going to flow down on the bottom. That's a truism if ever there was one.</p>
M	<p>The students. The teaching aspect. Being a department chair, I've had to back off of my teaching commitments cause they buy me out part of my time. And I also had some grants that bought out my time. So I'm only teaching one class a year. So I've been feeling really disconnected from teaching. I like the coaching. I like the mentoring aspect. I spend most of my days sitting in the conference room with one colleague or the other working on whatever their projects are that they need to accomplish to get promoted. Faculty or junior faculty except one. So I'm trying to get everybody promoted. So I spent all day today working with the junior faculty trying to tweak one of her articles so she can get it out for publication. So I think I like that best. I like things that are shiny. I like special projects. I liked the collaboration. I love building the team. I love grant writing because I can look at a grant and say, 'Oh, we could do X, Y, and Z. Let me go get a team together', and then I'll run around the university and get teams across all four colleges and build a development team. Yeah. I love it. If I could just do that, just build the teams. Our president called me about a month ago now. So I went in and X said 'I really liked those robots you're using in your summer camp'. I said, 'Oh, thanks'. She said, 'Can you use them to teach literacy?', I said 'Maybe, maybe I could'. And she said, 'What would it look like?', I said, 'I don't know. Can you give me a couple of days? I need to put a team together'. So, I got on the phone and called our robotics expert, guide and user interface. I called a computer software engineering person. I called our literacy program. We got together, put a proposal together. Two weeks later, presented it to the president. She has presented it to X, and we are going to be presenting to the provost on Wednesday. But that was the fun part. That was building that team and being innovative and saying, 'Can we do this?' 'Yes. Let's do it'. When you have that think tank.</p>

**Table 8**

Interviewee	What are the biggest challenges of your job?
A	Any job to be quite honest with you. Just the politics and the bullshit. You're dealing with a lot of people competing for the same jobs. You've got a lot of politics that goes in, up above you. Those were really my biggest issues. The politics and the personalities and the competing interests. Cause a lot of times it's just not making money. You will be surprised with them with a competing interest that you will run into that you're trying to balance all the time. And that balancing that is very difficult, but it's also, you know, rewarding.
B	I'd say the biggest challenge that I think, this is with any large company, is really change management. When you are trying to change elements of your business model and, for Caterpillar, Caterpillar has historically been a manufacturing and product-based company. And when you are trying to accelerate and shift to a greater dynamic of a services and a solutions based company, the biggest challenge is always that you're dealing with an entity that has what I'd call muscle memory of doing something a certain way, for let's say a hundred years, and driving that change. So I would put it, the biggest thing is when you try to drive significant change in a large corporation, overcoming the subconscious muscle memory of the organization. And some people, you don't even realize that it's subconscious because you have people that are not trying to go against the change, but they just don't realize that everything they do has been geared to doing something else and subconsciously they're doing it and it's tough for them to change.
C	I think a lot of times it's communication and overall alignment of stakeholders. A lot of times we're trying to get a decision on something and you have multiple parties that you're trying to keep happy or multiple people from your client team have different opinions or you have an architect that has one opinion, you have a client that's another opinion. A lot of times there's budget constraints that kind of limit the ability to achieve some of the goals that your client wants. A lot of times there's people that make mistakes on a deal and you come in at the end or you come in and they hire you. You have to point out those mistakes and help them fix it. Some of them I enjoy cause you feel like you're making an impact. But it's also a challenge cause you kind of have to politically make sure you're not throwing anybody under the bus. Cause a lot of times it's your clients that have made mistakes. You know, you can't make them look bad either.
D	Well, there's several. One is definitely when there's a disconnect between what somebody thinks they want to do and where their strengths lie. That does always involve uncomfortable conversations. On the flip side as a manager when you realize that you have a great talent but the best place for them might not be within your organization. By that I mean either your department or your company, still having the integrity to do the right thing and think about the individual first. It's tough. And then the third scenario is when employees want to advance and advancement involves them no longer be extremely valued contributors to your organization. Being willing to do the right thing and let go in that situation, help them get to where they want to go.
E	In these roles, the more people that you're responsible for or responsible to, the more hats you have to wear. And you know, flexible, but everyone doesn't respond to the same style of management. So what may work for you may not work for the next accounting associates. And so it's being able to learn the people that you're working with and what's their style to motivate them, what's their style when approaching them with problems. So different people have different ideas about things. One of 'em you know, honestly, I'm sure as you know, absolutely you want me to be honest. I think being a black female has been extremely difficult in all of these positions, because, you know, I do have a degree. But you know, there are others that have, they're attorneys or they have their law degree or they have a math degree and sometimes, unfortunately more importance is put on a title more than the actual knowledge. And that's been very difficult. If I'm being honest, I feel, as an African American woman, I have to work 10 times harder than everyone else just to prove sometimes my worth or to be paid or to be valued for what I've already proven. And so sometimes it is the difficulty in running against or up against or with people of different race or nationality and the lack of respect, but also sometimes the preconceived notion. I've had a lot of disrespectful moments at the court. A tremendous amount of disrespectful moments at the court where I feel that if I have ever done any of those things, the outcome would have been extremely different for me. It's difficult, I don't think that's ever going to change. In my heart of hearts, I would love for it to, but in my mind, helps me understand that it's never going to change. So I just continued to do what I do. So those who see the value, thank you. Those who don't, I don't know what to tell you.
F	Challenges is litigation can be very quick turnaround times. It is almost the other side of the coin of what I was saying about not doing the same thing all the time, is that you don't always have a ton of control over your schedule. Stuff comes up and if you have plans, you might have to cancel them because there's deadlines that have to be met, the court wants something, the other side's done something unexpected, that sort of thing. So I think that is the roughest part of the job. The way I've always framed it is, the nice thing about the job is if you don't have any sort of deadline or court appearance or whatever, you would basically work whenever you want, wherever you want. As long as you're getting your hours in it doesn't matter when you're doing them essentially. But, if there is a deadline or something coming up, there's no flexibility. You have to hit them. So I think when it gets into that, kind of rigid, this has to get done, when it comes up as a surprise or something like that, that's probably the worst part of the job.

G	<p>Well in our field resources is always an issue. But one of the biggest challenges I think is working for someone you don't really respect or someone that you think you could do better. A lot of times you learn from people what it is you do want to do, but many times you learn more what you don't want to do. And both of them are incredibly valuable. I continue to stay here because I am very loyal to this institution. It's given me many opportunities. I will do what I need to do because my boss says so, but that does not mean I respect him at this point. And that's hard if you can't trust and respect, it should be time for me to move on, but since I've invested so much, I'm going to just try to outstay him. He's like 70 years old, he needs to go. So that's hard, and so what you try to do is you try to protect other people within the organization. He is afraid of me, which I use to my advantage because he knows that the longevity and the relationships that I have in the district. So I try to utilize that to make things more fair and equitable here. It is a really interesting dynamic. I had a previous chancellor who let me go on a one year sabbatical. I was an ACE fellow which is the American council on education. They pick 35 of them a year and you get to spend a year learning how to be a president by being mentored by a president. And since I'm a rule breaker, I didn't decide to do one president. I decided to do two presidents since I'm in a community college environment, and I was very familiar with a lot of community college presidents. I decided to go into the different educational sectors. I spent six months at Iowa State, a large public university with a male president. I focused on leadership and I focused on advancement and board relations and then I spent six months at a small private college with a female president and focused on those same three things. It was something I needed to do because I had been so much in the community college environment, it was really refreshing and renewing and I learned a tremendous amount that allowed me to come back here. That was, I think nine years ago, with renewed vigor and really learn the different sectors of the educational field.</p>
H	<p>As the company grows, the biggest challenge will be ensuring that my "style" of handling these issues is mirrored and replicated by whomever I choose to manage employees.</p>
J	<p>In that type of food service you have a lot of turnover because of salary restrictions in hospitals. A lot of other places offer more money and then of course they'll leave. And if the hospital doesn't keep up with what's happening out in the community, then you go through periods when you can't get help. So lots of turnover. I have hired and fired and dismissed and accepted resignations to an awful lot of people.</p>
K	<p>Oh there isn't really like training guides, like for example, if you were going to go work for Microsoft, they have an internship program and they have an Excel book that you have to read. They have like an actual system set up for integrating you, and because each unit is so different, they don't have that handy. There's no way they could have that here. I mean, you kind of get thrown to the wolves a little bit, which is fun. And then another challenge, I don't know, I'm a nice person and I can deal with anyone and talk to anyone, but a lot of times the people that joined the military aren't that way. So I guess your peers can be a little difficult sometimes.</p>
L	<p>I think it's like any job. I think the biggest challenge is to maintain your enthusiasm and a positive attitude when things are not going well. And believe me, things aren't going well a lot of the time. I don't care what you're doing. If you somehow can always keep your eye on the big picture and know that people are gonna screw up, deadlines are not going to be met. The best laid intentions always or sometimes seem to fall by the wayside. But if you let that get to you, if it digs into your cross so much that you lose sight of having a smile, having to laugh and to joke and to always be positive... I have seen negativity kill projects and have seen negativity kill companies, but the people in the hierarchy that allow themselves the space to be positive and to have fun and even in the face of all kinds of adversity, I think they're the ones that do well and they're the ones that impart to their subordinates. Just what it means literally to be alive. And I remember a boss at J&amp;J, he was an old defensive back from the University of Georgia and he had just the greatest homespun philosophy. And he just said 'I wake up every day and I'm happy to be breathing and happy to be alive'. He always said at the end of the day, he was never going to let the negative parts of his day surpass the positive. So we all always ended up the day with the glass half full, more than half full. Just on a positive note, and I know that sounds corny, but you can look up any platitudes you want, but anything that stresses what's positive over what's negative is going to be your best choice. There's an old saying, too, if you understand in a pond there are tall reeds, they bend, and they bend, and they bend in high winds, but they never break. I think that's probably true in anything. If you stand tall and you believe in what you believe in, but you've gotta be able to bend a little bit too, because there's more strength in that. Just like high buildings, they have to be built to withstand hurricane force winds, but they're not rigid against the winds, the higher buildings bend a little bit, and they are the ones that won't fall. So, I think you stand your ground, but you're also able to bend and understand the other side. That's another component that's absolutely critical.</p>
M	<p>I think the hardest thing in this leadership position in higher ed was moving from a collegial coaching, mentoring role of leadership into an evaluative role. I have to read people's annual reviews and give them their annual report back. I'm determining how much merit they should get. So I'm sitting in a judgment role now where before we had that level, when we were just program coordinators or our division chairs, we were more in a coaching and mentoring role. So that trying to balance that type of leadership, can you still be a mentor and a coach and evaluate somebody. But I try to find a balance there. I spend a lot of time writing with my colleagues. I help out where I can to not help me get promoted anymore but to help them move forward.</p>

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Nicole Bluth was born in Houston, Texas on January 16, 1997. She moved to Austin to attend The University of Texas. Nicole pursued a dual degree in the Plan II Honors Program through the College of Liberal Arts and General Finance through the McCombs School of Business. During her time at UT, Nicole was an active member of Delta Sigma Pi, a professional business fraternity. She spent a semester in Barcelona, Spain, at Pompeu Fabra University, enrolled in the Hispanic and European Studies Program. The summer before graduation, she lived in Koh Tao, Thailand, completing her PADI Divemaster certification. Nicole plans to move to Richmond, Virginia, in the summer where she will begin a two-year Management Rotation Program.