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## Going for the Goal: Identifying Relationships among SDSU Student Leaders' Goals and Successes

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**Going for the Goal:  
Identifying Relationships among SDSU Student Leaders' Goals and Successes**

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PSYC: 491: Independent Study

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### **Abstract**

Because today's collegiate student leaders will be the leaders of the future, it is important to measure and ensure they have the tools needed to accomplish set goals. This study examines the relationship between South Dakota State University student leaders' traits, time management abilities, ability to say "no," and their impact on goal attainment. Surveys were distributed to students in the LeadState program, a co-curricular leadership development program, and a control group. Quantitative analyses, including independent samples t-tests and bivariate correlations, were conducted. Analyses revealed weak, positive relationships between leadership traits (i.e., integrity, self-confidence, synergy, and morality), time management abilities, the frequency of saying "no" and the likelihood of pursuing an originally set goal. The results of this study can provide tangible feedback to the LeadState program for future curriculum development, but it also identifies important areas to consider for collegiate student development.

## Introduction

College students serve in leadership roles and need to capitalize on their abilities to attain set goals. Evaluation efforts to examine whether college students have the traits and abilities needed to attain goals and grow their leadership capabilities can guide co-curricular programs on college campuses. With the knowledge that today's student leaders will be the local leaders of all industries tomorrow, it is vital to understand what tools are needed to spur their development. Thus, this research aims to identify factors that are most likely to contribute to goal attainment among collegiate student leaders at South Dakota State University (SDSU). It is also hoped that this study will provide leadership development programs with tangible findings and conclusions to be used for further curricular development and increased support of collegiate student leaders.

The LeadState program at South Dakota State University is a leadership development program designed for college sophomores. Through a variety of intensive leadership development experiences, student participants build upon their leadership strengths, connect with emerging campus and community leaders, and partake in meaningful service. One of the main components of this program includes developing and pursuing leadership goals on an individual, group, and societal level. Guidance from professional staff and faculty members at SDSU, who serve in the role of coaches, aid students in attainment of such goals. As an innovative program intended to challenge and further develop student leaders in preparation for future personal and professional success, revision of the curriculum and implementation of education and methods meant to enrich student experience and goal attainment are welcomed. This study will provide tangible feedback that can be used to elevate the level of this program and the far-reaching impacts its' students and alumni make in the world around them.

## Leadership Traits

Individual leadership portfolios are not defined by a specific formula or a certain set of rules. Rather, successful leaders possess a variety of traits and skills known to increase the likelihood of effective goal completion. This literature review examines the most common and effective traits, which are known to positively impact areas related to goal attainment. For this study, research gathered will serve as the foundation for which leadership portfolios of successful collegiate student leaders at South Dakota State University are conceptualized. It is important to note, however, that not all literature and research presented has been conducted using college-aged subjects. Thus, it should be implied that research and findings related to adult leaders encompass the college student population, unless otherwise specified.

For the purposes of this paper, the following definition of *leadership*, from Winston and Patterson (2006) is used:

Select[ing], equip[ing], train[ing], and influenc[ing] one or more follower(s) who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills...caus[ing] the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically extend spiritual, emotional, and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives. [Successful leadership is exemplified through the presentation of] prophetic vision[s] in contrast to the present status of the organization, ...commit[ment] of...personal resources towards [goal] achievement..., and capitaliz[ation] on individual, yet unique traits and skills (p. 7).

Research has determined that among the millions of leadership profiles worldwide, key, characteristics such as integrity, self-confidence, synergy, and morality are shared among leaders with high goal attainment. Ahmed and Bach (2014) studied the role of integrity in effective

leadership and found individuals who execute actions with integrity and share comments rooted in morality when making decisions are more effective at completing personal, group, or societal goals compared to individuals who do not value integrity (Ahmed & Bach). This mainly stems from the continual strengthening of one's ethical behavior, allowing such individuals to hold themselves to a higher standard and practice self-regulation (Ahmed & Bach).

Successful leaders also generally exhibit higher levels of self-confidence. Marques and Dhiman (2018) presented the argument that individuals with high levels of self-confidence influence their followers. A leader's self-confidence and associated habits strengthen their collaborators' self-confidence and improves both individual and group performance. Self-confident leaders also have positive expectations for themselves which embolden them to challenge the status quo for their personal and their teams' collective pursuits (Axelrod, 2016). A by-product of these components of self-confidence within leaders is ultimately goal accomplishment, which stems from one's willingness to trust in their own competence, accept personal responsibility, navigate and execute challenging decisions, and respond with decisive action in a variety of situations (Marque & Dhiman). Once self-confidence among a leader has been established, this trait continues to radiate into other areas of one's influence.

Another way self-confidence among leaders has a positive influence is by creating synergistic environments. Whether working to accomplish a personal or group goal, Notar and colleagues' (2008) qualitative review of nine leadership tenets determines that synergistic leaders are those who motivate groups to achieve common goals. The importance of synergistic qualities are evidenced when examining their absence, such that without the talents or personalities of individuals strong in this competency, desired goals are often unattainable due to detached and separate, individual efforts of so-called "teams" (Notar et al., 2018). Leaders who inspire those

around them to move beyond the ‘how’ of achieving a desired result and into the ‘why’ behind the work they are doing resurrect greater group buy-in and a heightened sense of personal responsibility among group members, elevating the quality of the final product (Notar et al., 2018).

Leaders known to create synergy also meet the needs of their followers by writing appreciation letters, optimistic notes, and simple expressions of thanks (Notar et al., 2018). Positive reinforcement used in this way can produce results above and beyond what was first imagined because followers are empowered to take greater responsibility for their participation in the common pursuit. Synergistic leaders and their respected influence are thus positively associated with productivity and goal accomplishment.

Rounding out the common traits of effective leaders is the distinct moral character of such individuals. Livingstone’s (2009) detailed review of qualitative interviews with eight top business executives around the world emphasized the importance of morality among successful leaders. During an interview with William George, former chairman and CEO of Medtronic, Livingstone determined that George and other highly established individuals who are likely to accomplish goals set before them and their teams are steadfast in their beliefs, even under pressure, and execute their values every day. When such individuals build long-term and connected relationships with those around them, lead with compassion and empathy, and make ethical decisions in the best interest of all parties, increased goal attainment is almost assured. The execution of such actions is inspired by the knowledge that failing to reach a goal not only inhibits the efforts of the individuals working toward goal completion but prevents the goal’s hoped-for outcomes from benefitting those on the receiving end.

Sendjaya (1970) echoes this belief in his qualitative review and argument of transformational and moral leadership. In fact, success and failure were linked to ethical and unethical leadership respectively. When individuals in leadership positions make decisions on a moral and ethical basis, rather than decisions that may be the easiest to make, leaders and followers are likely to experience increased levels of morality. A leader's actions help create a belief system for the entire group; followers strive to replicate the actions of those they look up to. Beyond these four traits (i.e., integrity, self-confidence, synergy and morality), there are other skills known to differentiate effective leaders from ineffective leaders.

### **Leadership Skills**

Narrowing in on prosperous student leaders on college campuses, it is important to understand the most common skills indicative of probable goal attainment. Individuals who most frequently achieve goals understand how to say "no" to additional opportunities, use strong interpersonal skills in interactions and communications, engage in time management, and embody strong relationship building abilities among diverse groups.

**Saying "No".** Saying "no" is a challenging concept for many student leaders to employ, but if this technique can be mastered, likelihood of greater goal achievement becomes a reality. Schragger and Sadowski's (2016) qualitative analysis and findings regarding strategies to increase scholarly productivity can be applied to collegiate student leaders, who are often the most involved on college campuses. Individuals who excel in controlling their workload activities have greater time to devote to important tasks each day. Thus, although saying no is a difficult boundary to set, claiming this technique and standing firm in one's decision will allow work in areas of applied interest and leadership to be prioritized. Refraining from saying "yes" or "no" on



the spot takes practice, but such an action is also likely to lead to greater personal, academic, and professional time management.

While the idea of saying “no” may sound idealistic, arguably the most effective leaders in the United States have found the benefits associated with setting boundaries. Captain Lee Jamison of the United States Army and Lieutenant Colonel Brian Neubauer of the United States Air Force explain the advantages of saying “no” through various case studies, inspired by years of field experience (2019). Against his better judgment, Jamison implemented three different pilot programs as a Medical Director in the United States Army. Unfortunately, the pilot programs were not successful. Rather than improving patient safety and optimal care for the most ill patients, the pilot programs required a great amount of time and effort, resulting in overextension and burnout of various staff and leadership team members. As a result, the hospital became accustomed to providing mediocre medical services. In order to rebound, Jamison found that saying “no” and working toward already established system goals results in greater success than taking on new initiatives when one is not ready to do so (Jamison & Brian, 2019). Setting realistic boundaries, which often require interpersonal and communication skills, allows leaders of any age the needed time to devote to already set goals. Such actions increase the likelihood of steadfastly pursuing one goal from start to finish without change.

**Interpersonal Communications.** Strong interpersonal interactions and communication skills of individuals in leadership positions are known to impact the likelihood of goal attainment. Using specific skills including flexibility, active listening, problem solving, and decision making have been associated with completion of impactful initiatives. When frequent communication exists between a leader and others who are jointly working together on a goal, higher job performance results. This stems from elevated leader-follower exchanges that benefit

from instances of active listening (Ahmed & Bach, 2014). The use of such one-on-one communication methods not only fosters an environment of cooperation among individuals pursuing the same outcome, but also allows those in leadership positions to clearly present to the follower, in an understood and decisive manner, duties that need to occur for all parties to continue contributing to attainment of organizational objectives (Ahmed & Bach). In many cases, the leaders who possess these strong interpersonal skills are the same people who have excelled in the areas of setting boundaries, which leads to effective time management habits.

**Time Management.** Execution of time management is mutually related to goal fulfillment. Grissom and colleagues' (2015) quantitative research identified three key components of time management. People who excel in time management set goals and priorities and create both short-term (24-hour outlook) and long-term (three-week outlook) to-do lists. Personal scheduling, as opposed to having another party in charge of one's scheduling, and time blocking are commonly associated with rigid time management. Finally, individuals who prefer an organized schedule, as opposed to haphazard knowledge of things occurring, are more likely to find greater success when managing their time.

Mozhgan and colleagues' (2011) study further expanded on the benefits of time management. Using qualitative methods, researchers conducted individual and focus group interviews, documentation review, and informal discussions with college student participants. Results of the study determined that involvement in academics and extracurriculars were beneficial under certain instances. When a student leader's skill set during participation included effective time management, not only were student leaders able to improve personal learning related to goals, but they were able to better teach those they were serving with or instructing. In all, the link between time management and goal attainment is clear.

**Diverse Networks.** As one's social networks have a significant influence on attitudes and behaviors, it is vital that leaders form relationships with a diverse group of people. Goal-achieving students traditionally have a varied group of mentors. Chanland and Murphy (2017) determined that individuals who surround themselves with a diverse array of mentors gain immense support in areas such as career performance and psychosocial support. In this sense, one's social network should provide challenging growth opportunities for the mentee, particularly in areas related to capitalizing on and developing a balance between saying no, strengthening interpersonal communication skills, and implementing effective time management practices. Student leaders with diverse networks thus have access to information, resources, perspective, and sponsorship needed for performance at the highest level of an organization (Chanland & Murphy, 2017).

Student leaders should also surround themselves with peer groups who value diversity of intellect and culture. For example, individual and team performance increased when the social networks of collegiate student athletes had diverse personalities, intellect, and culture (Holmes, McNeil, Adorna, & Procaccino, 2008). Additionally, it was determined that diversity of thought, specifically, among different genders of collegiate athletes helped teams to achieve goals. When there is vocal female leadership off the field, personal reflection and on-field worth ethic among male athletes increased. Although there are limitations to this survey regarding cultural differences, surrounding one's self with individuals who have different perspectives and expertise is likely to propel student leaders to enriched success and goal attainment.

## **Goal Attainment**

Ultimately, evaluating effective leadership among college students will consider a combination of traits and skills known to be impactful. That is, one's leadership traits, learned skills, strength in interpersonal communication abilities, and network diversity. The tenets of leadership discussed above serve as the foundation for research conducted among student leaders at South Dakota State University.

Not long from now, South Dakota State University's students presently enrolled will travel to all corners of the world and develop transformative products and technologies, serve as integral team members, and lead innovative companies with the greatest of minds. With this knowledge in mind, ensuring that SDSU's students are prepared with the skills necessary to achieve their goals is vital. Thus, surveying students about their leadership traits, time management skills, and abilities to say "no" will enable campus programs to construct curriculum that will best contribute to the development of successful leaders.

## **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Leadership is regularly associated with traits, skills, abilities and the resulting likelihood of goal attainment. To determine existing connections that impact leadership among collegiate students, I narrowed the scope to the following research questions (RQ) and hypotheses (H):

**RQ1:** How does self-reported agreement with established leadership traits compare among LeadState participants and a control group?

**H1:** LeadState participants will report greater agreement with established leadership traits compared to the control group.

**RQ2:** How does a LeadState participant's agreement with established leadership traits impact changing or altering goals?

**H2:** LeadState participants who are in greater agreement with established leadership traits are less likely to change or alter their goals.

**RQ3:** How does time management impact the frequency of LeadState participants altering or changing goals?

**H3:** LeadState participants who effectively manage their time are less likely to alter a set goal.

**RQ4:** How does the ability to say “no” impact the frequency of LeadState participants altering or changing goals?

**H4:** LeadState participants who say “no” more easily are less likely to alter a set goal.

## Method

Online surveys (Appendix; Figure 1) were created in QuestionPro and distributed to participants eighteen years of age or older via email. A thirty-six item survey was distributed to *LeadState* participants ( $N = 89$ ) individuals, all sophomore participants in the 2020-2021 *LeadState* program at South Dakota State University. 40 individuals responded for a 45% response rate (see Table 1). A similar survey was distributed to a *Control Group* ( $N = 150$ ), all students enrolled in a Spring 2021 Psychology 101 course at South Dakota State University. 103 individuals responded for a 69% response rate.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics of Some Variables used in Analyses.*

	Control Group		LeadState Group	
	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>
Gender				
Male	.320	33	.175	7
Female	.660	69	.825	33
Other	.009	1	.000	0
College				
NURS	.281	29	.125	5
EHS	.214	22	.100	4
AHSS	.184	19	.225	9
NS	.126	13	.075	3
ENG	.058	6	.150	6
AFES	.019	2	.150	6
PAHP	.019	2	.175	7
Undecided	.097	10	.000	0

*Note.*  $N=143$  ( $n = 103$  for Control group,  $n = 40$  for LeadState group).

## Operational Definitions

Participants responded to questions measuring their leadership characteristics (i.e., integrity, self-confidence, synergy, and morality) using a 1 (low) to 5 (high) Likert Scale. For Time Management, respondents indicated if they had ever felt stretched too thin with respect to time during college (yes or no). For respondents who had felt time was stretched, they were asked the frequency in which they had experienced the following on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (always): being overcommitted in any area of their life, lacking the ability to do a good job on a product, lacking time to complete academic work, missing out on a great opportunity due to busyness, and not being asked to partake in opportunities due to an inability to finish a task or the development of a poor final product.

Respondents were also asked to rate their perceived ability to time manage on a scale from 1 (no time management ability) to 5 (very strong time management ability). Respondents were also asked to select all products they use to aid their time management, including planners, paper and electronic calendars, time management apps, alarms, accountability partners, or other products. To-do list goal preferences of survey participants were also recorded and responses were coded as (1) creation of short term goals (completed within 48 hours), (2) creation of long term goals (completed in upwards of 3 days to 3 weeks), or (3) both.

To measure ability to say “no”, survey participants were asked to evaluate the frequencies at which they were able to say “no” easily and whether or not their ability to say “no” had impacted their goal attainment from 1 (never) to 5 (always).

For goal attainment, participants were asked whether they had changed or altered a goal set for themselves during the Fall 2020 semester and responses were coded as (1) goal was not changed nor considered for change, (2) goal was not altered, but consideration of change

occurred, or (3) yes, a goal was changed. For individuals who had changed a goal, they indicated the extent to which time management was a factor from 1 (no affect) to 5 (major affect).

Additionally, respondents were asked to rate their agreement regarding whether or not one's ability or inability to say "no" had enhanced goal attainment from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (completely agree).

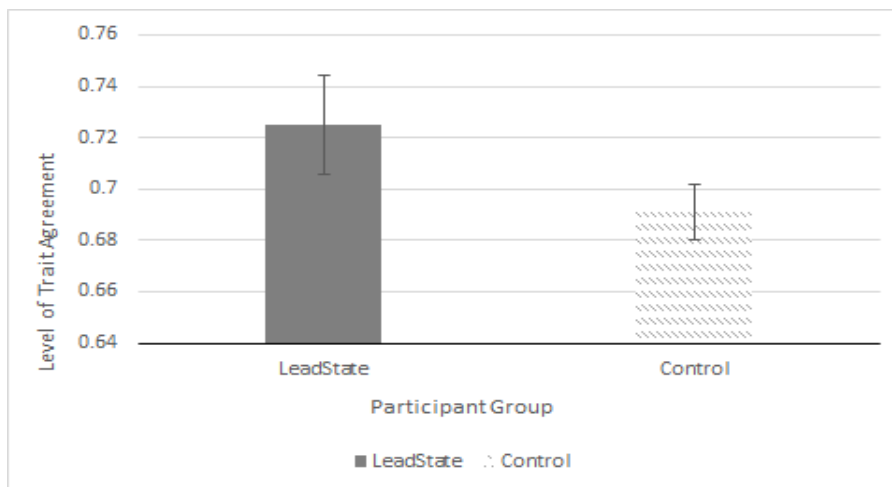
## Results

*Research Question 1.* Results about research questions and hypotheses will be included in order below. For Research Question and Hypothesis 1, I aimed to identify differences in agreement with established leadership traits among LeadState participants and a control group. I hypothesized that LeadState participants will report greater agreement with the established leadership traits (i.e., integrity, self-confidence, synergy, and morality) when compared to the control group. I combined responses on each of the four traits to form a composite leadership trait. Values are from 0 (very low values of the 4 leadership traits) to 1 (very high values of the 4 leadership traits). Independent samples t-tests revealed control group participants' leadership composite ( $M = 0.69$ ) was only slightly lower than LeadState participants' leadership composite ( $M = 0.73$ ) and not statistically significant ( $t(141) = 1.58, p = .415$ , Cohen's  $d = .294$ ; see Figure 1).



**Figure 1**

*Differences in Mean Leadership Trait Agreements between Participant Groups*



*Note.* Scores on the leadership composite range from 0 (very low values of the 4 leadership traits) to 1 (very high values of the 4 leadership traits).

*Research Question 2.* For Research Question and Hypothesis 2, I aimed to identify how a LeadState participant's agreement with established leadership traits impacts the likelihood of changing or altering a set goal. I hypothesized that LeadState participants who possessed more established leadership traits would be less likely to change or alter their goals. I used the leadership composite value (from RQ1) and the LeadState participant's report about changing their goal to conduct a point biserial correlation. Participants who did not change their goal were assigned a value of 1, while participants who did change their goal were assigned a value of 0. Results revealed a positive, yet non-significant correlation ( $r(40) = .11, p = .494, r^2 = .01$ ).

*Research Question 3.* For Research Question and Hypothesis 3, I examined LeadState participants' time management ability and its impact changing set goals. I hypothesized that LeadState participants who effectively manage their time are less likely to alter a set goal. The two measured variables that make up participants' overall time management ability include feeling stretched too thin and self-reported strengths in time management. Participants who did

not change a goal set for themselves were assigned a value of 1, while participants who did change goals set for themselves were assigned a value of 0. Results revealed no significant correlation between time management and likelihood of changing a goal ( $r(38) < .01, p = .97$ ).

Additionally, cross-tabulations were used for this research question to identify the relationship between the type of to-do lists created (short-term or long-term) and goal alteration (see Table 2 for description of results). Results here may support future research in the area. Of the LeadState participants who did not change a goal, over half (52.2%) reported they usually create to-do lists consisting of short-term goals, which are to be completed within 48 hours, and only 1 reported creating to-do lists consisting of long-term goals, completed anywhere from 3 days to 3 weeks after being written (Table 2). 10 participants in this category (43.5%) recorded creating to-do lists with both types of goals. Regarding LeadState participants who did alter a set goal, 7 individuals (41.2%) normally create to-do lists with short-term goals, while no individuals in this category claim to create to-do lists with only long-term goals. 10 respondents in this category (58.8%) claim to create to-do lists including both short- and long-term goals.

**Table 2**

*Cross-Tabulations Comparing Type of To-Do List and Goal Alteration*

	To-Do Lists							
	Short-Term		Long-Term		Both		Total	
	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>
Goal Alteration								
Yes	.412	7	-- <sup>a</sup>	-- <sup>a</sup>	.588	10	1.00	17
No	.522	12	.043	1	.435	10	1.00	23
Total	.475	19	.025	1	.500	20	1.00	40

<sup>a</sup> No participants were found for the Goal Alteration: Yes and Long-Term To-Do List group.

*Research Question 4.* For research question and hypothesis 4, I examined the impact of LeadState participants' ability to say "no" on changing or altering set goals. I predicted LeadState participants who say "no" more easily and frequently are less likely to alter a set goal. Values on both variables – ability to say "no" and changing a goal – were recoded to 0 to 1 scale where 1 indicates saying "no" more often and keeping the set goal. The bivariate correlation indicated no significant relationship between these variables ( $r(40) = .03, p = .863, r^2 < .01$ ).

### **Discussion**

Students at South Dakota State University will soon embark on their own journeys of influence and impact the world around them using leadership traits and skills developed and strengthened during their time at SDSU. After researching various pieces of relevant literature, conducting online surveys through which data related to self-perceived levels of leadership traits and skills were collected, and the completion of data analyses, a few key findings became apparent.

The average level of agreement with established leadership traits (i.e., integrity, self-confidence, synergy, and morality) was higher among LeadState participants when compared to the control group, even though the difference was minimal and not statistically significant. With this information in mind, room for curriculum growth within the LeadState program exists. For students selected for program participation, further exploration and self-reflection of traits associated with elevated levels of leadership (i.e., integrity, self-confidence, synergy, and morality) could be implemented. While reassuring to know that SDSU students in the overall student body possess high levels of these innate leadership traits, a testament to the faculty and administration of SDSU, LeadState participants' growth in these areas should then be challenged. Providing LeadState members with tools to implement and act on such traits will

help establish such individuals as true leaders, preparing them to guide and influence others toward the achievement of future organizational missions and objectives (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

Analysis of Research Question 2 provides some minimal support for the idea that individuals who express higher levels of integrity, self-confidence, synergy, and morality continually strengthen their own ethical behavior, resulting in greater reliance on elevated levels of self-regulation and goal accomplishment (Ahmed & Bach, 2014). In the current sample of LeadState participants, more agreement with established leadership traits was positively associated with “sticking to” a set goal. One take-away from these findings is that a large portion of LeadState participants (42.5%) set goals at the beginning of the program but change them sometime later, which may decrease the likelihood of attaining a set goal. Moving forward, it may be beneficial for the LeadState curriculum to help participants understand how to set realistic goals, in order to reduce goal alteration.

The analysis above revealed there is little to no correlation between time management ability and sticking to original goals. It is this author’s belief that LeadState participants would still benefit from training on implementing time management tools. For example, the most effective ways to create to-do lists with both short-term and long-term goals which will lead to better time management, goal pursuit, and ultimately goal attainment (Grissom et al., 2015). Time management is a vital component to successfully navigating a career and accomplishing daily job-related goals. Participants are using a variety of time-management tools. Specifically, three-quarters of participants utilize planners to manage their time, while paper or electronic calendars are used by 13 participants (32.5%) and 23 participants (57.5%), respectively. Time management apps are rarely used, as evidenced by the sole participant who recorded use of such a product. At

the same time, over half of participants set alarms to assist in scheduling and time blocking, while nearly one-fifth of participants rely on an accountability partner to help them manage their time and stay on track with set schedules. Future research could explore the relationships among specific time management techniques and goal attainment.

Finally, the idea that one's ability to say "no" affected the likelihood of changing or altering a goal was not supported. LeadState participants struggle to turn down additional tasks, however, does not appear to have affected their goal attainment. As such individuals continuously add things to their plate, prioritizing academic interests or leadership duties cannot be done, increasing threats that may cause numerous relationships to disintegrate (Schrager & Sadowski, 2016). As saying "no" and setting boundaries are often related to one's level of interpersonal communication skill, exploring curriculum additions to the LeadState program in this area may be beneficial. Focusing on role-playing exercises related to boundary setting and implementing accountability partners that will aid in strengthening the ability to say "no" may be ideas for consideration by the LeadState curriculum. With knowledge that saying "no" and setting boundaries are vital in life beyond a college campus and particularly in the workforce to reduce burn out or production of poor-quality work, not only providing, but helping LeadState participants implement stronger interpersonal communications is vital to the success of SDSU student leaders (Schrager & Sadowski, 2016).

## **Conclusion**

While the results of this study have some implications on the future of leadership within the LeadState program at South Dakota State University, it is important to mention limitations that were present, which should be addressed if future research is to be conducted. Due to uneven sample sizes and participants of various educational standings within a five-year range,

reliability of data comparing leadership traits, skills, and abilities among different groups of students may not be the most accurate. Future studies should use participant groups that are more similar in size and educational group. Surveys distributed in the future should also include a significantly more narrowed scope when it comes to collecting information solely related to the impact of time management and one's ability to say "no" on goal alteration. Such a survey should also collect data related to how such leadership traits, skills, and abilities affect one's level of goal attainment.

Leadership and its associated impacts are often multiplied tenfold, either positively or negatively. Thus, it is vital that students at South Dakota State University, especially those who are actively working to strengthen their leadership skills and abilities to accomplish goals set for themselves, have the resources to do so. As the LeadState program excels in preparing student leaders for life both on and off campus, presently and in the future, additions to the curriculum seem to exist in order to further support students. Future implementation of innovative time management abilities and education related to saying "no" may result in increased pursuit of an original goal and greater goal attainment. Now, more than ever, it is important to continue investing in and challenging student leaders at South Dakota State University for their present growth is the foundation of our future world.

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## Appendix: Survey Questions

### Figure 1. Identifying Relationships among SDSU Student Leaders' Goals and Successes: Control Group Survey Questionnaire

#### Section 1: Demographics

1. Gender
2. What year of your undergraduate study are you in at South Dakota State University?
3. What is your Major?
4. Specific Major

#### Content Questions

##### Section 2: Traits

1. Integrity is actions and comments that demonstrate high moral and ethical standards.  
(Monga, 2016)  
How would you describe your level of integrity?
2. Self-Confidence is one's sense of competence and skill; their perceived capability to deal effectively with various situations.  
How would you describe your level of self-confidence? (Uglanova, 2014)
3. Synergy is the cooperative working together of two or more people, when their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual efforts.  
How would you describe your level of synergy? (Pagel & Says, 2017)
4. Moral Character is an individual's disposition to think, feel, and behave in an ethical versus unethical manner.  
How would you describe your level of moral character? (Cohen & Morse, 2014)

##### Section 3: Skills

##### Ability to Say 'No'

1. \*\*How many campus or community based organizations are you currently involved in?
2. \*\*In how many of these organizations are you currently playing a formal leadership role?
3. Have you at times felt that you were stretched too thin in regard to your time during college?
4. \*If you answered yes, what is the frequency of which you have experienced the following in any instances:
  - a. Become overcommitted?
  - b. Not been able to do a good job on a product?
  - c. Not had enough time to do your own scholarly work?
  - d. Not been able to say "yes" to a great opportunity because you are too busy?
  - e. People stop asking you because you either do a bad job or don't finish the task?
5. Are you able to say 'no' easily?
6. Has your ability to say 'no' impacted your goal attainment?

7. Rate your level of agreement with the following statement: my ability/inability to say “no” has enhanced my level of goal attainment?

#### Section 4: Interpersonal Communications

1. How would you rate the following statements, in regard to your abilities:

Recorded:	Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Able_Snstv	*I am sensitive to the needs of others.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Able_Lstn	I actively listen when others speak to me.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Able_Dvte	*I devote my time to others.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Able_PrblmSlv	If a problem needs to be solved, I am usually the one to do so in a group setting.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Able_Cmmct	*I am content with my communication with others.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Able_Flxbl	I believe I am flexible in my methods.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Able_Ptnt	I regularly exhibit patience.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Able_Empth	I am an empathetic person, especially towards others.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Able_Tmwrk	I understand and value the importance of teamwork.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Able_Achv	*I share an understanding with those around me of how we would like to achieve our goals.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Able_Cmplt	I feel that I can successfully lead others toward the completion of a common goal.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Able_Rspnblty	I take responsibility for my actions in all instances.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Able_Intsly	*When problems arise, I talk to others even more intensively in order to solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Able_Dpndbl	Others see me as a dependable person.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Able_Mtvte	I have the ability to motivate myself and others to accomplish goals.	1	2	3	4	5

\*Modified or taken from: Schneider, F. M., Maier, M., Lovrekovic, S., & Retzbach, A. (2014). The Perceived Leadership Communication Questionnaire (PLCQ): Development and Validation. *The Journal of Psychology*, 149(2), 175-192.  
doi:10.1080/00223980.2013.864251

**Section 5: Time Management**

8. How would you rate your ability to time manage?
9. What products do you use to aid you in time management? Select all that apply:
10. When you create a to-do list, what do you focus on?
11. Have you changed or altered a goal you set for yourself this semester?
12. Since you answered “yes” to the previous question, to what extent did time management factor into your decision to change your goal?

**Section 6: Diverse Social Network**

13. \*\* A diverse network of student leaders includes connections to those with varying experiences backgrounds expertise and positions. To what extent do you then agree with the following statement: I have a strong diverse network with other student leaders on campus: "I have a strong, diverse network with other student leaders on campus." (Chanland & Murphy, 2017)
14. \*\*A diverse network of faculty/administrative leaders on campus includes connections to those with varying experiences backgrounds experience and positions. To what extent do you then agree with the following statement: "I have a strong diverse network with faculty/administrative leaders on campus." (Chanland & Murphy, 2017)