INTRODUCTION

OUR VIEW OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Ellen Van Velsor
Cynthia D. McCauley

As in any discipline, the field of leadership development advances its understanding and practice by examining and reexamining fundamental questions. In leadership development, these central questions include the following:

- What does it take to be an effective leader?
- What aspects of a leader's talents are hard-wired, and what aspects are developable?
- How do people learn important leadership skills and perspectives?
- Do some people learn more than others from their leadership experiences?
- What are the necessary ingredients for stimulating development in leaders?
- What are the best strategies for enhancing leadership development?

Exploring these types of questions with our clients and colleagues has been the basis of the Center for Creative Leadership's efforts to advance the understanding, practice, and development of leadership. In the 1970s, CCL began experimenting with feedback-intensive leadership development programs—programs that provide participants with a heavy dose of feedback in a supportive environment. Over the years, we have refined these programs and added new components, developed more sophisticated feedback tools and methods, and studied the impact of our programs on the participants. We have also tried to understand how managers learn,

grow, and change throughout their careers—not just from formal programs but also from the challenges in their working and nonworking lives, the relationships they cultivate, and the hardships they encounter.

We continue to invest energy and resources in efforts to understand and improve the leadership development process. For most of CCL's history, the essential question that has provided direction for both our research and educational activities has been, How can people develop the skills and perspectives necessary to be effective in leadership roles? Much of what we have learned from examining this question is contained in this handbook. More recently, we have broadened our research and practice beyond developing individuals to developing organizational capacity for leadership. What we are learning from this broader perspective on leadership development is also shared in the handbook.

In this introductory chapter, we present a framework for understanding what is to follow. We distill what we have learned into a model of leader development, and this model serves as scaffolding on which to place the concepts that are discussed in detail in the chapters that follow. We also discuss how and why our understanding of leadership development is expanding to include issues in addition to the development of the individual leader.

Assumptions and Model of Leader Development

We define *leader development* as the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes. Leadership roles and processes are those that facilitate setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment in groups of people who share common work.

You should note three things about this definition. First, it is a definition of *leader development,* not of the more commonly used phrase *leadership development.* Most of our research and educational programs are directed toward developing the individual, so developing *leaders* is where we begin in describing our model. We will return to the broader concept of *leadership* development later in the chapter.

Second, we try to look at what makes any person effective in a variety of leadership roles and processes (rather than looking at the traits or characteristics of formal leaders). The assumption here is that in the course of their lives, most people must take on leadership roles and participate in leadership processes in order to carry out their commitments to larger social entities—the organizations in which they work, the social or volunteer groups of which they are a part, the neighborhoods in which they live, and the professional groups with which they identify. These leadership roles may be formal positions infused with authority to take action and make decisions (for example, a manager, an elected official, or a group's
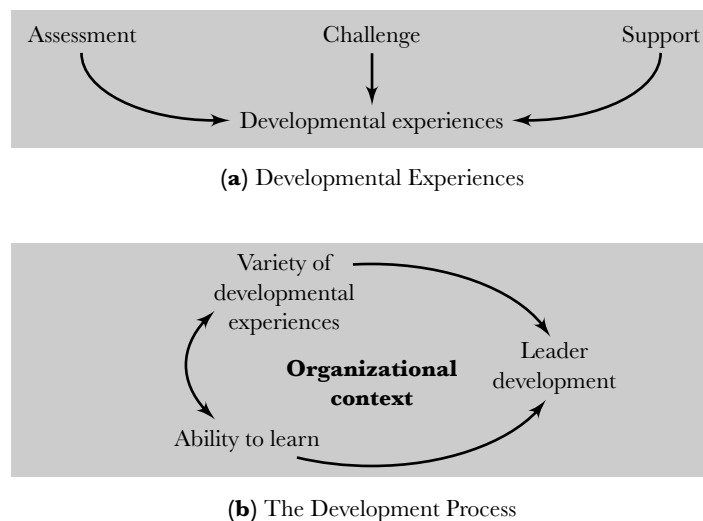
representative at a meeting), or they may be informal roles with little official authority (the team member who helps the group develop a better sense of its capabilities, the person who organizes the neighborhood to fight rezoning efforts, the whistle-blower who reveals things gone wrong). Leaders may actively participate in recognized processes for creating change (such as serving on task forces or project teams, identifying and focusing attention on problems or issues, or getting resources to implement changes) or more subtle processes for shaping culture (telling stories that define organizational values, celebrating accomplishments). Rather than classifying people as "leaders" or "nonleaders" and focusing our work on developing "leaders," we believe that all people can learn and grow in ways that make them more effective in the various leadership roles and processes they take on. This process of personal development that improves leader effectiveness is what we understand leader development to be about.

Finally, although it may go without saying, we should note that we do believe that individuals can expand their leadership capacities and that this effort to develop is worthwhile. A key underlying assumption in all of our work is that people can learn, grow, and change and that this learning and personal growth does enhance individual effectiveness. We do not debate the extent to which effective leaders are born or are developed. No doubt, leadership capacity has its roots partly in genetics, partly in early childhood development, and partly in adult experience. What we focus on here is what our experience has amply demonstrated: adults can develop the important capacities that facilitate their effectiveness in leadership roles and processes. People can use their existing strengths and talents to grow in their weaker areas and can significantly enhance their overall effectiveness through leader development work.

The core question, of course, is how to go about it. How do people acquire or improve their capacity for leadership? How do organizations help them in this process? A two-part model, illustrated in Figure I.1, reflects our attempt to summarize what we have learned thus far about the ingredients that go into leader development.

The three factors in part (a) of the model—assessment, challenge, and support—are the elements that combine to make developmental experiences more powerful. That is, whatever the experience, it has more impact if it contains these three elements.

We know that although leaders learn primarily through their experiences, not all experiences are equally developmental. For example, the first year in a new job is usually more developmental than the fifth or sixth year. Working with a boss who gives constructive feedback is usually more developmental than working with one who does not. A training program that encourages lots of practice and helps participants examine mistakes is usually more developmental than one that provides information but no practice. Situations that stretch an individual and provide

FIGURE I.1. LEADER DEVELOPMENT MODEL.

Assessment   Challenge   Support

Developmental experiences

(**a**) Developmental Experiences

Variety of
developmental
experiences

**Organizational
context**

Leader
development

Ability to learn

(**b**) The Development Process

both feedback and a sense of support are more likely to stimulate leader development than situations that leave out any of these elements. You can make any experience—a training program, an assignment, a relationship—richer and more developmental by making sure that the elements of assessment, challenge, and support are present.

Part (b) of the model shows that leader development is a process that requires both a variety of developmental experiences and the ability to learn from experience. The latter is an element that the individual brings to the development process. In the course of much of our work, we have noticed that people learn from similar experiences to differing degrees and in different ways. Although such variation is explained in part by the level of challenge that different people perceive in any experience, another factor is the individual's ability to learn from an experience. The ability to learn is a complex combination of motivational factors, personality factors, and learning tactics.

Part (b) of the model also shows that developmental experiences and the ability to learn have a direct impact on each other. Being engaged in a developmental experience can enhance a person's ability to learn, and being more readily able to learn can lead one to draw more development from any set of experiences. Thus although we conceptually separate the developmental experience and the learner in our model (the better to discuss them), they are in actuality closely interconnected: developmental experiences can enhance a person's ability to learn, and

individuals with high ability to learn seek out and may benefit more from a vari-ety of developmental experiences. This dynamic is examined in much greater de-tail in Chapter Seven.

Finally, part (b) indicates that any leader development process is embedded in a particular organizational context: the organization's business strategy, its culture, and the various systems and processes within the organization. This context shapes the leader development process—how it is focused, how well-integrated and sys-temic it is, and who is responsible for it.

Elements of an Effective Developmental Experience

Through CCL's research and educational programs, we have begun to gain a bet-ter understanding of the elements that are key drivers of leader development (as-sessment, challenge, and support). When we look at any type of developmental experience, from training programs to job assignments, we find that they are most effective when all three elements are present.

These elements serve dual purposes in the development process. First, they motivate people to focus their attention and efforts on learning, growth, and change. Second, they provide the raw material for learning: the information, ob-servations, and reactions that lead to a more complex and sometimes quite dif-ferent understanding of the world. To enhance the development of leaders, we need to help them find, create, and shape a wide range of learning experiences, each of which provides assessment, challenge, and support. Table I.1 summarizes the motivational role played by each element, as well as the kind of learning re-source each provides. In the next three sections of this chapter, we look at each of these elements in more depth.

TABLE I.1. ELEMENTS OF A DEVELOPMENTAL EXPERIENCE.

Element	Role in Motivation	Role as a Resource
Assessment	Desire to close gap between current self and ideal self	Clarity about needed changes; clues about how gap can be closed
Challenge	Need to master the challenge	Opportunity for experimentation and practice; exposure to different perspectives
Support	Confidence in ability to learn and grow; positive value placed on change	Confirmation and clarification of lessons learned

Assessment

The best developmental experiences are rich in assessment data. Assessment data can come from oneself or from other people. The sources are almost limitless: peers in the workplace, bosses, employees, spouses, children, parents, friends, customers, counselors, and organizational consultants. The processes for collecting and interpreting the data can be either formal or informal, with many shades of variation in between.

Formal assessment from others includes such processes as performance appraisals, customer evaluations, 360-degree feedback, organizational surveys that measure employee satisfaction with managers, and evaluations and recommendations from consultants. Informal assessment data from others are available more regularly through less structured processes: asking a colleague for feedback, observing others' reactions to one's ideas or actions, being repeatedly sought out to help with certain kinds of problems, or receiving unsolicited feedback from a boss. Self-assessment can also occur through formal and structured means, as with psychological inventories or journaling, or through informal and often in-the-moment processes, such as monitoring of internal states, reflecting on decision processes, or analyzing mistakes.

Assessment is important because it gives people an understanding of where they are now: their current strengths, the level of their current performance or leader effectiveness, and what are seen as their primary development needs. So one important function of assessment data is that they provide a benchmark for future development. Another is that they stimulate people to evaluate themselves: What am I doing well? Where do I need to improve? How do others see me? In what ways do my behaviors affect others? How am I doing relative to my goals? What's important to me? Still another is that assessment data provide information that helps people answer these questions. In the context of their everyday work, people may not be aware of the degree to which their usual behaviors or actions are effective. In the face of a new challenge, they may not know what to continue doing and what to change. Even if they realize that what they are doing is ineffective, people may believe that the answer is merely to work harder; it may not occur to them to try a new strategy. But when an experience provides feedback on how one is doing and how one might improve or provides other means for critical self-reflection, the result can be an unfreezing of one's current understanding of oneself to facilitate movement toward a broader and more complex understanding.

Assessment information also points out the gaps between a person's current capacities and performance and some desired or ideal state. The desired level might be based on what the job requires, what someone's career goals demand,

what other people expect, or what people expect of themselves. This gap is one of the keys to why developmental experiences motivate learning, growth, and change. If the area is something that is important to them and if they believe in the accuracy of the assessment data, people work to close the gap by improving their current capacities. If the assessment data indicate that there is no gap—that in fact someone is quite effective in a particular area—then the outcome of the assessment can be increased self-confidence. As a result, the person may seek out more opportunities to use and refine the strength.

Good assessment data also help people clarify what they need to learn, improve, or change. Having data not only motivates a person to close the gaps but also provides clues as to how those gaps might be closed. For example, if a leader learns that part of the reason for low morale in his work group is his pattern of not delegating important work to others (which, he comes to understand, is grounded in perfectionism), then improving morale involves learning how to let go of work, including how to be more in touch with his perfectionist tendencies so that they can be better managed. If a person's frustration at work is diagnosed as being partially caused by low tolerance for ambiguity, she can focus on ways to increase her tolerance or to shape situations so that they are less ambiguous.

Assessment enhances the power of leader development because assessment processes, whether formal or informal, help people fully understand their situation and become motivated to capitalize on the learning opportunities available to them.

Challenge

Developmentally, the experiences that can be most potent are the ones that stretch or challenge people. People tend to go about their work using comfortable and habitual ways of thinking and acting. As long as conditions do not change, people usually feel no need to move beyond their comfort zone to develop new ways of thinking and acting. In a comfortable assignment, people base their actions on well-worn assumptions and existing strengths, but they may not learn much from these opportunities. The same is true for a comfortable relationship, feedback that confirms, or training in skills that have already been mastered. In all such cases, comfort is the enemy of growth and continued effectiveness.

Challenging experiences force people out of their comfort zone. They create disequilibrium, causing people to question the adequacy of their skills, frameworks, and approaches. These experiences require that people develop new capacities or evolve their ways of understanding if they are going to be successful. For example, a task force assignment can be developmental when the task is critical to the business, success or failure will be known, and task force members must

present a recommendation for action to the senior executives of the organization, because challenge is embedded in the assignment. However, it is particularly developmental for people who have not faced such challenges before.

People feel challenged when they encounter situations that demand skills and abilities beyond their current capabilities or when the situation is very confusing or ambiguous and current ways of making sense of the world no longer seem to work. For some people, challenge might mean being caught in the middle of a conflict where others are making demands that seem to call for resolution in opposite ways. For others, challenge might mean struggling to empower subordinates who do not take initiative and seem to resist taking a personal stake in their work. And for others, challenge might come in the form of work in a corporate environment, where it becomes less clear what "results" mean or how to achieve them.

So what are the elements of situations that can stretch people and motivate development? In other words, what are the sources of challenge? One common source is novelty. Experiences that require new skills and new ways of understanding oneself in relation to others can be the most challenging. These situations are often quite ambiguous, requiring much discovery and sense making by the newcomer. The power of new experiences is illustrated in Linda Hill's in-depth study (1992) of men and women during their first managerial assignment. Hill found that becoming a manager required more than learning new skills and building relationships. Rather, it was a profound transformation, one that caused them to think and feel in new ways—to actually develop a new identity.

Difficult goals, whether set by oneself or by others, are another source of challenge. People often respond to difficult goals by working harder. But they may also discover that extra effort is not enough, that they have to work differently in order to reach the goal. Executives report that some of the toughest assignments in their careers are starting-from-scratch assignments in which they have the difficult goal of building something from nothing—and usually have to do it quickly, with little structure in place and little experience (McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison, 1988). To succeed, they have to let go of normal operating procedures and learn as they go, using whoever and whatever is available to solve problems. Leaders who go through formal leadership development programs are often faced with the difficult goal of changing their own behavior or risking endangerment of their groups' performance or their own career goals. Again, this difficult goal is a source of challenge and thus is a potential stimulus for learning and growth.

Situations characterized by conflict, either with someone else or within oneself, can also be a source of challenge. Effectively dealing with conflict with a person or group requires people to develop an understanding of other perspectives, to become better able to differentiate others' points of view from their own, and perhaps to reshape their own points of view. People face similar challenges when

they experience incompatible demands that cause conflict within themselves—for example, meeting work and family responsibilities, working satisfactorily for both the boss and subordinates, or meeting customer needs in ways that do not over-stress the organization. Ron Heifetz (1994), director of the Leadership Education Project at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, sees the sur-facing and orchestration of conflict as one of the hardest but most valuable tasks of leadership. In his view, conflict is the stimulus for mobilizing people to learn new ways. He gives the example of an industrial plant that was a major source of jobs for a community but was creating levels of pollution unacceptable to fed-eral agencies. As community leaders were forced to deal with the conflict between jobs and health, they developed new ways of understanding the problem (namely, as an issue of diversifying the local economy), which implied new courses of ac-tion for them to take.

Dealing with losses, failures, and disappointments can also stretch people. Job loss, business mistakes, damaging relationships, and similar events can cause a great deal of confusion, often stimulating a search for new meaning and under-standing. In CCL's work, we have found that these kinds of experiences, which we call *hardships,* startle people into facing themselves and coming to terms with their own fallibilities. Hardships also teach people how to persevere and cope with difficult situations. This is sometimes referred to as the "inoculation effect": un-dergoing stressful experiences may render similar experiences in the future less distressing, primarily because the person has developed better coping strategies.

The element of challenge serves the dual purpose of motivating development and providing the opportunity to develop. Challenging situations motivate by caus-ing disequilibrium and then capitalizing on people's need for mastery. When the outcomes of the situation matter to people, they are motivated to work toward meeting the challenge. This means becoming competent in new areas, achieving difficult goals, managing conflicts, and easing the pain of loss and failure. Mas-tering challenges requires putting energy into developing skills and abilities, un-derstanding complex situations, and reshaping how one thinks.

Challenging experiences also provide opportunities to learn. People do not learn how to negotiate without having places to practice negotiation, test out different strategies, and see how people react. They do not gain broader perspec-tives without coming face-to-face with people who have different perspectives or with situations that do not fit neatly into how they think about the world. People do not learn to cope with stress without feeling stress and figuring out how to de-crease it. By engaging the challenge, people interact with the environment in a way that produces the information, observations, and reactions needed to learn.

Simply stated, people do not develop the capacity for leadership without being in the throes of the challenge of leadership work. Participating in leadership roles

and processes is often the very source of the challenge needed for leadership development. Leadership roles and processes are full of novelty, difficulty, conflict, and disappointments. In other words, leadership itself is a developmental challenge. Leading is, in and of itself, learning by doing.

Finally, we also want to emphasize the importance of variety of challenge for developing the wide range of capacities that leaders need. We emphasize this because we have found that people learn different lessons from different kinds of experiences. From a "fix-it" job, leaders can learn toughness, the ability to stand on their own two feet, and decisiveness. From leaving a line job for a staff position, leaders have the opportunity to learn how to influence individuals over whom they have no direct control. From a formal leadership program, participants learn how to step back from the day-to-day routine and develop a deeper understanding of their preferences, strengths, and blind spots. From an effective boss, leaders learn important values such as fairness and sensitivity to the concerns of others. From a hardship situation, people can recognize their limits and learn how to deal with stress. All are important leadership lessons; each is learned from a different type of experience. Thus a variety of challenging experiences throughout their careers is an important ingredient for developing versatile leaders.

Support

Although developmental experiences stretch people and point out their strengths and weaknesses, such experiences are most powerful when they include an element of support. Whereas the element of challenge provides the disequilibrium needed to motivate people to change, the support elements of an experience send the message that people will find safety and a new equilibrium on the other side of change. Support helps people handle the struggle and pain of developing. It helps them bear the weight of the experience and maintain a positive view of themselves as capable, worthy, valuable people who can learn and grow.

Support means different things to different people. For some, seeing that others place a positive value on their efforts to change and grow is a key factor in staying on course with development goals. For others, having the resources and freedom to move forward on self-initiated goals is the needed support.

Perhaps the largest source of support is other people: bosses, coworkers, family, friends, professional colleagues, coaches, and mentors—people who can listen to stories of struggle, identify with challenges, suggest strategies for coping, provide needed resources, reassure in times of doubt, inspire renewed effort, celebrate even the smallest accomplishments, and cheer from the sidelines.

Different people may provide different kinds of support. For example, the new managers in the Hill study cited earlier relied heavily on peers to release their pent-

up frustrations and find emotional support. Those who had developed close relationships with former bosses often turned to those individuals when struggling with difficult questions. We have also found that the support of one's current boss is particularly important when trying to change behaviors or learn new skills. Bosses can be a strong source of reinforcement for the desirability of the targeted development, and they can provide the needed resources for successful learning and change.

Support can also come from organizational cultures and systems, taking the form of norms and procedures. Organizations that are more supportive of development have a closely held belief that continuous learning and development of the staff are key factors in maintaining organizational success, and they tend to have systems in place that support and reinforce learning. They have systems for helping people identify development needs and work out plans for addressing them. They use a variety of development strategies, make resources available for learning, and recognize and reward efforts to learn and grow. Feedback, cross-group sharing of knowledge and information, and learning from mistakes are part of their organizational culture.

Support is a key factor in maintaining leaders' motivation to learn and grow. It helps engender a sense of self-efficacy about learning, a belief that one can learn, grow, and change. The higher their self-efficacy, the more effort people exert to master challenges, and the more they persevere in difficult situations (Bandura, 1986). Support also serves as a social cue that puts a positive valence on where people are currently and on the direction in which they are moving. They sense, "If other people support me in doing this, it must be something valuable to do."

Support mechanisms also provide learning resources. By talking to others about current struggles, openly examining mistakes, and seeing to it that the organization reacts positively to the changes they make, people have the opportunity to confirm and clarify the lessons they are learning. They get the sense that they are on the right track, that the feedback they are receiving is legitimate, and that the new ways in which they are making sense of their situations are shared by others or will work toward making them more effective.

If people do not receive support for development—that is, if their environments, coworkers, bosses, friends, and family do not allow and encourage them to change—the challenge inherent in a developmental experience may overwhelm them rather than foster learning. For a sales manager on a key cross-functional task force, beginning to understand and value the dilemmas of the manufacturing engineer on the task force may be the initial step in developing a broader perspective—but what if she is thwarted by a boss who constantly reminds her not to give in to "the unrealistic demands of those bozos in engineering"? Or, as another example, an organization that wants to develop more effective teamwork is unlikely to make progress if it continues primarily to reward individual contributions.

In summary, the key elements that make any experience more developmental are assessment, challenge, and support. Whether you are designing a training program, providing 360-degree feedback, putting someone in a developmental job assignment, or matching an individual with a mentor, you need to ensure that all three elements are part of the experience.

What Develops in Leader Development

Over the years, we have asked effective managers to identify what they have learned that has made a difference or a lasting change in how they manage. We asked them to think about experiences on the job, outside of work, and in formal leadership development programs and to isolate the critical lessons. The results are clear: development comes from many kinds of experiences. These managers learned from challenging assignments, from significant people, from hardships, from training and coursework, and from a miscellany of other events (Douglas, 2003; McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison, 1988; Morrison, White, and Van Velsor, 1987, 1992). The lessons they learned involved new skills, values, abilities, and knowledge. Over time, people who failed to learn became stuck—whether in their personal lives or in their jobs.

We also know, however, that some traits such as IQ and certain personality characteristics are more or less innate and appear to remain stable over time. Development work with adults cannot significantly improve IQ or provide a personality transplant, despite what some people hope and others fear.

Over time, we have begun to identify some of the individual capabilities that enable leadership and can be developed. We believe that when these capabilities are enhanced, individuals are better able to carry out the leadership tasks of setting direction, gaining commitment, and creating alignment. Some capabilities reflect how individuals manage their own thoughts, feelings, and actions. Other capabilities reflect how individuals work with others in a social system. A final set reflects how individuals facilitate the accomplishment of organizational work.

Self-Management Capabilities

People develop more effective ways to manage themselves—their thoughts, emotions, attitudes, and actions—over time. The capacity for self-management enables leaders to develop positive and trusting relationships and to take initiative—important aspects of roles that help people work together in productive and meaningful ways. Self-management capabilities include self-awareness, the ability to balance conflicting demands, the ability to learn, and leadership values.

Self-Awareness. A key aspect of understanding oneself is having awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses: what one does well and not so well, what one is comfortable with and uncomfortable with, which situations bring out one's personal best and which are difficult to handle, when one has a wealth of expertise to draw on and when one had better look for expertise elsewhere. But self-awareness also means that people must understand *why* they are the way they are: what traits, learned preferences, experiences, or situational factors have shaped their profile of strengths and weaknesses. Self-awareness means understanding the impact their strengths and weaknesses have on others, on their effectiveness in various life roles, and on reaching their goals.

Ability to Balance Conflicting Demands. In organizational life, people encounter conflicting demands. For example, boss and subordinates may have different priorities, internal systems may not match external client needs, and the joint demands of personal and work life may cause stress. People must learn to not let the conflicts paralyze or overwhelm them, to understand the natural roots of the conflicts, and to develop strategies for balancing or integrating them.

Ability to Learn. When we say someone has the ability to learn, we mean that the person recognizes when new behaviors, skills, or attitudes are called for, accepts responsibility for his or her own development, understands and acknowledges current personal strengths and weaknesses, engages in activities that provide the opportunity to learn or test new skills and behaviors, reflects on his or her own learning process, and works to develop a variety of learning tactics in order to acquire needed skills or behaviors. A person with the ability to learn does not deny or ignore the need for new approaches, does not get stuck using habitual behaviors or outmoded skills, and is not seduced by past success into believing that no change or development is necessary.

Leadership Values. We have found that people who project certain personal values are particularly effective in leadership roles. Foremost among these values are honesty and integrity, which engender trust and credibility in others. Strong personal initiative and drive are needed to persevere in the face of difficult organizational goals. A positive, optimistic attitude supports both individual and group efficacy.

Social Capabilities

People develop many interpersonal and social skills over the course of their lives. Because leadership roles and processes are by their very nature social (meaning that they require making meaningful connections to others), the ability to work effectively

with others in social systems is a fundamental capacity of leaders. Social capabilities include the ability to build and maintain relationships, the ability to build effective work groups, communication skills, and the ability to develop others.

Ability to Build and Maintain Relationships. At the heart of social capabilities is the ability to develop cooperative relationships. In leadership roles, the ability to develop positive relationships with many different types of people is particularly important. The foundation of this ability is the capacity to respect people from varying backgrounds and to understand the perspectives that they bring.

Ability to Build Effective Work Groups. People in leadership roles need not only to develop their own relationships with others but also to facilitate the development of positive relationships among others who work together. Effective leaders help create synergy, motivation, and a sense of empowerment in work groups.

Communication Skills. Communication skills operate in two directions. In addition to being able to communicate information, thoughts, and ideas clearly in different media, individuals with effective communication skills are able to listen carefully and understand what others are saying, thinking, and feeling.

Ability to Develop Others. Leadership roles often call for the ability to develop others in ways that allow people to work together in increasingly productive and meaningful ways. This includes the ability to help others diagnose their development needs, to provide appropriate feedback and other learning opportunities, to coach and encourage changes in their behavior, and to recognize and reward improvements.

Work Facilitation Capabilities

People develop skills and perspectives that enable them to facilitate the accomplishment of work in organizational systems. Organizations consist of many individuals, groups, and subsystems that need to work interdependently to accomplish collective goals and outcomes. Individuals in leadership roles facilitate the implementation, coordination, and integration of this work. Work facilitation capabilities include management skills, the ability to think and act strategically, the ability to think creatively, and the ability to initiate and implement change.

Management Skills. Management skills encompass a broad range of competencies related to the facilitation and coordination of the day-to-day work in organizations, including setting goals and devising plans for achieving those goals,

monitoring progress, developing systems for accomplishing work, solving problems, and making decisions.

Ability to Think and Act Strategically. Day-to-day work is accomplished in the context of broad organizational objectives that support the long-term vision and mission of the organization. People who can think and act strategically have a clear sense of the desirable collective future. They make decisions, set priorities, and support initiatives that will bring the current reality more in line with the desired future.

Ability to Think Creatively. Creativity involves seeing new possibilities, finding connections between disparate ideas, and reframing the way one thinks about an issue. Creativity yields innovation when novel ideas or perspectives are used to solve difficult problems. Implementing innovations also requires an element of risk taking, of going into uncharted territory and leaving the familiar behind.

Ability to Initiate and Implement Change. Leadership roles often require the ability to make major changes in organizational systems and practices. This includes establishing the need for change (for example, by demonstrating that current ways of working are no longer adequate), influencing others to participate in the change, and institutionalizing the new ways of working.

Although by no means exhaustive, our description of individual capabilities illustrates the breadth of capabilities needed to provide leadership in organizations. To develop any of these capabilities, people first have to realize that their current skills or perspectives are inadequate or are not being fully utilized. This alone can be a major step, sometimes triggered by a mistake or failure, a personal crisis, or a piece of feedback from an assessment experience. Next, people have to identify the skill or perspective that they want to more fully develop and begin to try it on for size. Finally, after an extended period of practice, they can begin to feel comfortable with the new skill or perspective and start to use it effectively. This cycle is repeated many times as people expand their self-management, social, and work facilitation capabilities. This is why we say that leader development takes time.

Enhancing Leader Development

We believe that leader development can be enhanced by intervening in the learning, growth, and change processes of individuals. This is a key assumption underlying our work. If leaders do learn, grow, and change over time, and if we

understand the factors that contribute to that growth process, development can be enhanced by influencing these processes.

The leader development model suggests three main strategies for enhancing this process:

1. Create a variety of rich developmental experiences that provide assessment, challenge, and support.
2. Enhance people's ability to learn from experience.
3. Use an approach that integrates the various developmental experiences.

Creating Rich Developmental Experiences

There are many types of experience that develop a person's leadership abilities. Significant among them are the formally designed developmental experiences of 360-degree feedback, feedback-intensive programs, and coaching relationships, as well as the more naturally occurring experiences of job assignments, developmental relationships, and hardships. (Each is explored at length in its own chapter in Part One of this handbook.) The developmental potency of any one of these experiences depends on whether it contains a good mix of assessment, challenge, and support.

For example, although a feedback-intensive program focuses on assessment, it must also challenge the participants and at the same time support them. The element of challenge comes from exercises and simulations used in these programs, which are deliberately designed to take people out of their comfort zone, and from interactions with other participants, who often challenge participants' points of view. At the same time, these programs take great care to create a supportive environment in which people can be candid and hear negative information about themselves, while the positive information they get shores up their self-confidence.

Job assignments are another example. They can be particularly rich sources of challenge, but if people are to learn from assignments, they must have opportunities to receive ongoing feedback while struggling with the challenge. People in challenging assignments also need others they can turn to for support, as well as a feeling of being supported by the organization in general.

Enhancing the Ability to Learn

To repeat, learning from experience involves recognizing when new behaviors, skills, or attitudes are called for, accepting the responsibility for development, understanding and acknowledging current strengths and weaknesses, engaging in activities that provide the opportunity to learn or test new skills and behaviors, re-

flecting on one's own learning process, and working to develop a variety of learning tactics in order to acquire the needed skills or behaviors. The person does not deny or ignore the need for new approaches, does not get stuck using habitual behaviors or outmoded skills, and is not seduced by past success into believing that no change or development is necessary.

It is usually not easy to recognize when new skills or approaches are needed. Sometimes mistakes or failures serve to get people's attention. But often, even in new situations, people tend to stick with the skills and approaches that have worked for them in the past. The temptation to rely on existing strengths can be especially powerful when new situations demand a quick response or when one has had a long history of success with a particular approach.

Assessment and feedback are crucial if people are to recognize that current skills are insufficient and comfortable approaches are inadequate. Getting reliable information continuously about how they are doing is an important way for people to know that change is necessary; it is therefore an important component of enhancing the ability to learn. Assessment that includes feedback on strengths, as well as development needs, can work to build self-efficacy and help individuals face the difficult challenge of learning new behaviors.

Relying on comfortable approaches in new situations almost always limits effectiveness and learning. Yet it is possible to develop new learning tactics. When people are given a variety of challenging experiences, the novelty they face demands that they develop new learning tactics. Assessment of how they currently learn, understanding of other ways to learn (perhaps through reading or skill-based training), developing the practice of reflecting on their experience, and getting the opportunity to experiment with new behaviors and learning tactics (in the classroom or on the job) can help people develop the flexibility inherent in a strong ability to learn from experience. Chapter Seven looks in depth at what is involved in enhancing this critical ability.

Linking Developmental Experiences

Creating rich developmental experiences and equipping people to learn are two strategies for enhancing leader development. A third strategy is to design and implement developmental experiences so that they are more integrated and connected to one another.

For example, a training program can be preceded by open conversations about expectations of learning goals and can be timed so that it helps a leader rise to the challenge of a tough new assignment. The assignment is in turn supplemented by ongoing feedback and coaching, as well as opportunities to reflect—alone and with others facing similar challenges—on what and how the leader is learning.

Our major criticism of the approach of many organizations to leader development is that it is not systemic but rather events-based. How, they ask, should we develop a bright young engineer—clearly gifted, with high potential—who needs improvement in interpersonal skills? Too often the answer is to send the engineer to a training program, and the shorter it is the better. There is no question of determining readiness, no feedback prior to training, no planned support or reinforcement upon return. The hope is that this kind of training "fixes" people. As you will discover, we have found that training is a powerful intervention and an important part of a developmental system—but it is only one part.

The story is the same with multirater (or, as some call it, 360-degree) feedback. Again the frequent tendency is to use the feedback as an isolated event rather than as part of a process. Multirater feedback is an effective assessment activity, an experience that helps unfreeze people and prepares them to learn from other developmental experiences. But if you just give someone feedback from an instrument and stop there, little real development takes place.

## From Leader Development to Leadership Development

In the first edition of this handbook, we focused almost exclusively on leader development. The hint of a broader framework was beginning to emerge, but we could not yet clearly see where we were headed. Five years later, we are much more on the "other side" of this shift in our perspective.

As we said earlier, we have begun to understand leader development as one aspect of a broader concept of leadership development. We define *leadership development* as the expansion of the organization's capacity to enact the basic leadership tasks needed for collective work: setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment. Traditionally, these leadership tasks have been carried out through a management hierarchy, that is, primarily by individuals in positions of authority in organizations. Yet it is getting harder and harder for formal leaders to enact leadership effectively on their own. The challenges that organizations are facing today, both internally and externally, are challenges that often overwhelm existing resources and defy known solutions. These complex challenges require new assumptions and methods yet to be developed. They require organizational and individual learning and change. Perhaps most important, today's challenges are often too complex for individual leaders to fully understand alone. To face these complex challenges, shared meaning must be created in the midst of seeming chaos and uncertainty. Individuals, groups, and organizations must work collaboratively to explore, set and reset direction, create alignment, and maintain commitment.

So to expand leadership capacity, organizations must not only develop individuals but also develop the leadership capacities of collectives (for example, work groups, teams, and communities). They must develop the connections between individuals, between collectives within the organization, and between the organization and key constituents and stakeholders in its environment. Developing connections means enhancing understanding and recognition of the interdependencies that exist between individuals and between groups within an organization, as well as between organizations in a supply chain, an industry group, or any other kind of network. It also means developing the individual and collective capacities to create shared meaning, to effectively engage in interdependent work across boundaries, and to enact the tasks of leadership (setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment) in a way that is more inclusive. For example, organizational leadership capacity is enhanced when the executive team is able to enact leadership effectively as a unit; when interdependent groups can identify an emerging organizational problem and pull together to effectively deal with it; when leaders and group members in various parts of the organization readily connect with each other about interdependent work, shared challenges, or shared expertise; and when individuals and groups engage in dialogue with one another rather than act in isolation.

Figure I.2 illustrates both the relationship between leader development and leadership development and the shifts this movement implies for practice. The figure is made up of two intersecting axes, the horizontal axis representing development that targets individuals, on the left, and development aimed at a collective (group or organization) on the right. The vertical axis differentiates between development that is focused on capabilities seen as existing *within* an entity (individual or group), at the top, and development that is focused on the interdependencies *between* entities (individuals or groups), at the bottom.

Traditional leader development practices, including much of the work done with participants in feedback-intensive programs, 360-degree feedback instruments, and formal coaching, focus on capabilities (skills, perspectives, and preferences) that are seen as within the individual. These leader development practices can be thought of as populating the upper left quadrant of Figure I.2. The work CCL has done on how managers learn, grow, and change from their experience can also be seen as captured here, because for the most part it has focused on how developmental events are understood by individuals and incorporated within a person's developing capability as a leader. This work has been a key influence on CCL research and practice and is discussed in several chapters of this handbook. In fact, the leader development model, discussed earlier, also fits in this upper left quadrant, as we have understood and used it thus far.

FIGURE I.2. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
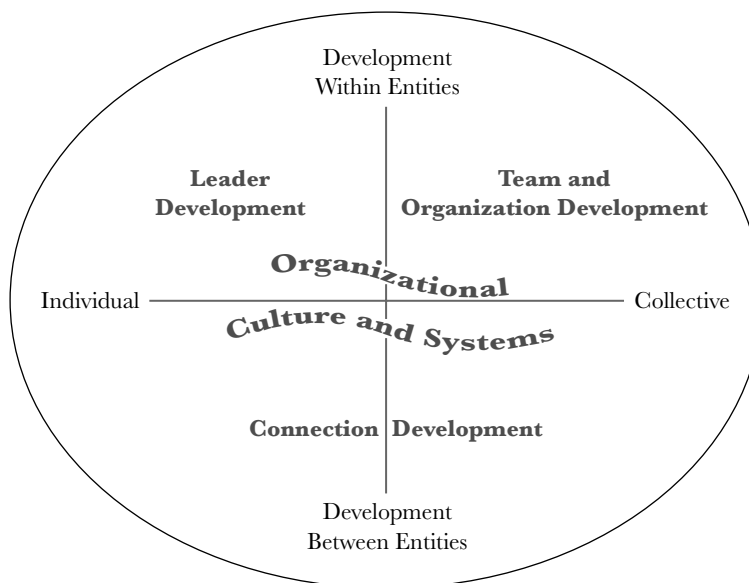
Team development and organization development comprise the upper right quadrant of the figure. While both of these categories of practice move from focus on the individual to focus on the collective, the activities tend to remain focused within the entity, developing capabilities of the team, or focusing on intraorganizational processes, such as culture or systems change.

The lower two quadrants of the figure represent leadership development practices that focus on the interdependencies between individuals (lower left), between groups or teams, and between whole organizations (lower right). The practices we would imagine in these quadrants would be those that worked to develop the connections between individuals, between groups or teams, and between whole organizations so that the shared work of the organization could be carried out in a way that is most effective.

The figure also illustrates that the development of individuals, collectives, and connections is embedded in the organization's culture and systems and therefore shaped by them. Both culture and systems often reflect the assumptions being made by organizational members about interdependence, learning, and shared work, as well as the understood processes for enacting the leadership tasks. Thus

culture and systems can support or be an obstacle to moving beyond the limitations of current ways of enacting leadership in the face of new challenges.

We believe that this kind of comprehensive approach to leadership development—engaging in developmental work that spans all four quadrants—is the surest route to sustainable leadership capacity for organizations. As we go forward with our research and practice, we will continue to use practices developed for work on capabilities within individuals and teams while expanding our work to focus on helping individuals, teams, and organizations develop enhanced connectivity between entities at all levels.

What stimulated this shift in our thinking? As we worked more with the same organizations over time and with multiple leaders in the same unit or organization, we became attuned to the limitations of an exclusive focus on individual development. Individual leaders can no longer accomplish leadership tasks by virtue of their authority or their own leadership capacity. Instead, individuals and groups need to carry out the leadership tasks together in a way that integrates differing perspectives and recognizes areas of interdependence and shared work. For organizations or other collectives to experience sustained leadership over time—to have a sense of direction and alignment, to maintain commitment to the collective work, particularly when dealing with difficult problems that require organizational change—they need more than well-developed individuals. They need well-developed connections between individuals and deeper and more meaningful relationships around shared work. They need to form and deepen relationships within communities and across the boundaries between groups and collectives. They need to develop the capacities of collectives for shared sense making and for learning from shared work and shared experiments in the face of challenge and change. They need to get better at integrating the learnings into a unified sense of purpose and direction, new systems, and coherent shifts in culture—that is, to enact leadership together through the connections between individuals, groups, and organizations. Certainly, individual development is still a vital aspect of leadership development. It is, in fact, a basis for enabling the other aspects of leadership development and will remain a key focus of our work. However, we believe that broadening our knowledge and practice of leadership development provides more avenues for improving leadership in organizations and more potential impact for the work we do.

We have been able to sustain this shift in perspective because we are part of a larger community of leadership scholars and leadership development practitioners who are experiencing and articulating the same shift. For example, David Day (2000) points out that developing social capital (that is, the networked relationships that enhance cooperation and resource exchange among individuals in an organization) is an important aspect of leadership development. Recent approaches to

organizational sustainability have taken a more integrative approach to individual, team, and organizational development (Beer, 2001). And in *Relational Wealth* (2000), Leana and Rousseau focus on the idea that relationships are a key competitive advantage for a firm, rather than simply an outcome of its activities. We see our new work going forward as connected to the work of these others—that is, toward understanding how the unique properties of relationships, networks, and communities of practice can be seen and developed in any organization, public or private.

Conclusion

To sum up, let us return to the leadership development model and the assumptions behind it. First, we define *leader development* as the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes. Second, we believe that developing the individual capacities needed for effective leadership—such as self-management, social skills, and work facilitation capabilities—is synonymous with what is often labeled "personal development." This development unfolds over time. It is maximized by a variety of experiences that challenge people, support them, and provide them with understanding of how they are doing. It also depends on their having an ability and willingness to learn from experience. Leader development processes that integrate various experiences and embed them in the organizational context are the most likely to be effective at developing leaders' abilities. But we realize that leader development and leadership development are not synonymous. We see leadership development as the expansion of the organization's capacity to enact the basic leadership tasks needed for collective work: setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment. And we are just beginning to develop knowledge and expertise in the aspects of leadership development that go beyond individual development.

Finally, if there is one key idea to our view of leadership development—an overarching theme that runs throughout our work—it is that leadership development is an ongoing process. It is grounded in personal development, which is never complete. It is embedded in experience: leaders learn as they expand their experiences over time. It is facilitated by interventions that are woven into those experiences in meaningful ways. And it includes, but goes well beyond, individual leader development. It includes the development of the connections between individuals, the development of the capacities of collectives, the development of the connections between collectives in an organization, and the development of the culture and systems in which individuals and collectives are embedded.