CHAPTER 3

# Theory and Research on Leadership in Organizations

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*This chapter reviews and evaluates major leadership theories and summarizes findings from empirical research on the topic over the last half century. The review considers the traits, skills, activities, and behavior of leaders, as well as power and influence, situational approaches, and charismatic and transformational leadership. We examine methodological issues, competing paradigms, and conceptual problems and discuss directions for future research and theory.*

## Introduction

THE STUDY OF leadership has been an important and central part of the social science literature for nearly a century (Mumford, 1906–1907; Van Fleet & Yukl, 1986a). Books, articles, and papers on leadership number in the several thousands, and the publication of

new manuscripts continues at a rapid rate. Publications on leadership can be found in a variety of professional and practitioner journals in several disciplines, including management, psychology, sociology, political science, public administration, and educational administration (Van Fleet, 1975). As the number of publications on leadership continues to grow, social scientists have struggled to comprehend and integrate the diverse theories and often inconsistent findings (e.g., Bass, 1990; Fiedler & House, 1988; Hollander & Offermann,

1990; Van Fleet & Yukl, 1986a; Yukl, 1989a, 1989b).

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the literature on organizational leadership, with an emphasis on recent trends and developments likely to dominate the field through the turn of the century. The volume and scope of the literature precludes detailed descriptions of individual studies or an exhaustive bibliographic listing of leadership references. Instead, major theories are described briefly, general findings in descriptive and hypothesis-testing research are summarized, and important issues and controversies are identified. We begin by examining the continuing controversy over how to define leadership.

## Definitions of Leadership

After a comprehensive review of the leadership literature, Stogdill (1974) concluded that "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (p. 259). Leadership has been defined in terms of individual traits, leader behavior, interaction patterns, role relationships, follower perceptions, influence over followers, influence on task goals, and influence on organizational culture. Most definitions involve an influence process but appear to have little else in common. Definitions of leadership differ in many respects, including important differences in who exerts influence, the purpose of influence attempts, and the manner in which influence is exerted. The differences reflect deep disagreement about identification of leaders and the nature of leadership processes. Differences between researchers in their conception of leadership affect the choice of phenomena to investigate and interpretation of the results.

One major controversy involves the locus of leadership in organizations. Some theorists believe that leadership is inherent in the social influence processes occurring among members of a group or organization, and leadership is a collective process shared among the members.

The opposing view is that all groups have role specialization, including a specialized leadership role wherein one person has more influence than other members and carries out some leadership functions that cannot be shared without jeopardizing the success of the group's mission. Which assumption is made about the nature of leadership determines whether research will be focused on the attributes and actions of a single, formal leader, or on reciprocal influence processes and the leadership functions performed by a variety of people in the organization, including informal leaders. Both approaches appear to provide unique insights, and both may contribute to a better understanding of leadership in large organizations.

Some theorists would limit the definition of leadership to an exercise of influence resulting in enthusiastic commitment by followers, as opposed to indifferent compliance or reluctant obedience. This definition limits leadership to specified types of influence processes with specified outcomes. Proponents of this view argue that a person who uses authority and control over rewards, punishments, and information to manipulate or coerce followers is not really "leading" them. On the other hand, a narrow, restrictive definition discourages examination of some types of influence processes that may be important for understanding why a manager or administrator is effective or ineffective in a given situation. Many famous political leaders and business leaders throughout recorded history resorted occasionally to the use of coercion or manipulation to accomplish their objectives.

A similar controversy continues over the differences between leadership and management. It is obvious that a person can be a leader without being a manager, and a person can be a manager without leading. Indeed, some managers do not even have subordinates, say, for instance, a "manager" of financial accounts. Nobody has proposed that managing and leading are equivalent, but the degree of overlap is a point of sharp disagreement. Some writers

contend that the two are qualitatively different, even mutually exclusive. For example, Bennis and Nanus (1985) proposed that "managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing" (p. 21). Zaleznik (1977) proposed that managers are concerned about how things get done, and leaders are concerned with what things mean to people. The essential distinction appears to be that leaders influence commitment, whereas managers merely carry out position responsibilities and exercise authority. A contrary view is taken by writers who see considerable overlap between leadership and management and find no good purpose served by assuming it is impossible to be both a manager and leader at the same time.

Definitions are somewhat arbitrary, and controversies about the best way to define leadership usually cause confusion and animosity rather than providing new insights into the nature of the process. At this point in the development of the field, it is not necessary to resolve the controversy over the appropriate definition of leadership. For the time being, it is better to use the various conceptions of leadership as a source of different perspectives on a complex, multifaceted phenomenon. A definition of leadership should not predetermine the answer to the research question of what makes a leader effective or ineffective. Whenever feasible, leadership research should be designed to provide information relevant to the entire range of definitions, so that over time it will be possible to compare the utility of different conceptualizations and arrive at some consensus on the matter (Yukl, 1989a).

Thus, we define leadership broadly in this chapter. Leadership is viewed as a process that includes influencing the task objectives and strategies of a group or organization, influencing people in the organization to implement the strategies and achieve the objectives, influencing group maintenance and identification, and influencing the culture of the organization.

The terms *manager* and *leader* will be used interchangeably, without any assumption that a particular manager necessarily exhibits the qualities associated with effective leadership. We believe that research should focus on leadership as a process, not on leaders as stereotyped individuals. Attempts to classify people into mutually exclusive stereotypes such as leader versus manager, autocratic versus democratic leader, and transformational versus transactional leader, impede progress in understanding leadership rather than facilitate it.

## Overview of Leadership Research and Theory

The field of leadership is presently in a state of ferment and confusion. Most of the theories are beset with conceptual weaknesses and lack strong empirical support. Empirical studies have been conducted on leadership effectiveness, but many of the results are contradictory or inconclusive. The confused state of the field can be attributed in large part to the disparity of approaches, the narrow focus of most researchers, and the absence of broad theories to integrate findings from the different approaches. Most researchers deal only with a narrow aspect of leadership and ignore the other aspects. Likewise, most leadership theories deal only with a limited set of the variables relevant to leadership (Yukl, 1989a).

Leadership has been studied in different ways, depending on the researcher's conception of leadership and methodological preferences. Most of the studies divide naturally into distinct lines of research and can be classified according to whether the primary focus is on leader traits, behavior, power and influence, or situational factors. Transformational and charismatic leadership, a subject that became popular in the 1980s, can be viewed as a hybrid approach that involves elements from each of the other approaches. Major findings from each line of research are reviewed next in separate

sections of this chapter. Methodological issues and controversies that involve more than one line of research are discussed later.

## The Trait Approach

The trait approach emphasizes the personal attributes of leaders. Early leadership theories attributed success to possession of extraordinary abilities such as tireless energy, penetrating intuition, uncanny foresight, and irresistable persuasive powers. Hundreds of trait studies were conducted during the 1930s and 1940s to discover these elusive qualities. Reviews of this research found the results disappointing (Gibb, 1954; Mann, 1959; Stogdill, 1948). Differences were found between leaders and nonleaders on some traits, but these findings only tell us something about the type of people most likely to occupy leadership positions, not what type of people will be successful as leaders. Results for the relationship between traits and leader success were usually weak and inconsistent. Thus, the early studies failed to support the basic premise of the trait approach that a leader must possess a particular set of universally relevant traits—the "right stuff"—to be successful.

Although attention shifted in the 1950s from leader traits to leader behavior, some trait research continued and progress has been made in discovering how leader traits relate to leadership effectiveness and advancement. Advances in trait research have been due in part to a change of focus from abstract personality traits and general intelligence to specific skills and traits that can be related directly to behaviors required for effective leadership in a particular situation. Progress has been due also to the use of more effective research methods to supplement the traditional approaches. Most early trait studies compared leaders to nonleaders with respect to scores on personality and ability tests, or they examined correlations between test scores and effectiveness criteria. Since the 1950s, trait researchers have relied more on other methods. For example, researchers at AT&T (Bray, Campbell, & Grant, 1974; Howard & Bray, 1988) examined how career advancement of AT&T managers was predicted by a variety of trait measures taken in assessment centers. Boyatzis (1982) used *behavior event interviews*, a variation of the critical incident method, to infer traits and skills from incidents reported by managers. McCall and Lombardo (1983) used interviews to compare individuals who had successful management careers to individuals who advanced into middle or top management but subsequently "derailed."

The continuing search for traits related to effective leadership has revealed a moderately consistent pattern of results, and many of the results are stronger and less ambiguous than those found in the early trait research. The cumulative findings from more than half a century of research indicate that some traits increase the likelihood of success as a leader, even though none of the traits guarantee success (Bass, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Lord, DeVader, & Alliger, 1986; Yukl, 1989a). Consistent with a situational view, the relative importance of different traits for leader effectiveness appears to depend in part on the leadership situation. Findings for personality traits will be examined separately from findings for skills.

### Traits Related to Leader Effectiveness

Individual traits that appear to be related to managerial effectiveness and advancement include high energy level, stress tolerance, integrity, emotional maturity, and self-confidence (see reviews by Bass, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Yukl, 1989a). High energy level and stress tolerance help people cope with the hectic pace and unrelenting demands of most managerial jobs, the frequent role conflicts, and the pressure to make important decisions without adequate information. Leaders with

high emotional maturity and integrity are more likely to maintain cooperative relationships with subordinates, peers, and superiors. *Emotional maturity* means that a leader is less self-centered (has concern for other people), has more self-control (less impulsive, able to delay gratification and resist hedonistic temptations), has more stable emotions (not prone to extreme mood swings or outbursts of anger), and is less defensive (more receptive to criticism, more willing to learn from mistakes). *Integrity* means that a person's behavior is consistent with espoused values and that the person is honest and trustworthy. *Self-confidence* makes a leader more persistent in pursuit of difficult objectives, despite initial problems and setbacks. Without strong self-confidence, a person is less likely to make influence attempts, and any influence attempts made are less likely to be successful.

Motivation is another aspect of personality related to managerial effectiveness and advancement. In a program of research conducted by McClelland and his colleagues, leader motives were measured with a projective test (McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982; McClelland & Burnham, 1976). The three motives investigated were need for power, need for achievement, and need for affiliation. Someone with a high need for power enjoys influencing people and events and is more likely to seek positions of authority. Someone with a high need for achievement enjoys attaining a challenging goal or accomplishing a difficult task, prefers moderate risks, and is more ambitious in terms of career success. Someone with a high need for affiliation enjoys social activities and seeks close, supportive relationships with other people. The research found that effective leaders in large, hierarchical organizations tend to have a *socialized power orientation* (i.e., a strong need for power combined with high emotional maturity), a moderately strong need for achievement, and a relatively weak need for affiliation. Although only a few trait studies have included behavior

measures, the optimal motive pattern can be understood better by examining the implications for leadership behavior and use of power.

The research by McClelland and his colleagues found that leaders with a socialized power orientation use their influence to build subordinate commitment to organizational goals, and they seek to empower and develop subordinates by using more consultation, delegation, and coaching. In contrast, managers with a personalized power orientation (i.e., strong need for power combined with low emotional maturity) are interested primarily in personal aggrandizement and domination of others. These managers are likely to do things that jeopardize task objectives and interpersonal relations, such as trying to manipulate and coerce people, trying to undermine potential rivals, taking credit for successful activities without acknowledging contributions by others, covering up mistakes and problems, and finding scapegoats to blame when failure occurs. Managers with moderately high achievement motivation seek opportunities involving challenging objectives, and they take the initiative to identify problems and assume responsibility for solving them. However, achievement motivation contributes to leadership effectiveness only if a manager's efforts are directed toward building a successful team rather than toward the manager's own individual achievement. If a manager's achievement motivation is too strong relative to power motivation, the manager will be reluctant to delegate, and subordinates are unlikely to develop a strong sense of shared responsibility and task commitment (McClelland & Burnham, 1976).

Similar results were found in another program of research on managerial motivation conducted by Miner and his colleagues (Berman & Miner, 1985; Miner, 1978). More than 33 studies were conducted over a period of 25 years using a projective test called the *Miner Sentence Completion Scale* to predict managerial advancement. The most relevant components of managerial motivation for advancement

in large bureaucratic organizations were desire for power, desire to compete with peers (similar to achievement motivation), and a positive attitude toward authority figures. A positive attitude toward authority figures is important because a manager who resents authority figures is unlikely to maintain effective relations with superiors and develop the upward influence necessary to carry out position responsibilities.

## Skills Related to Leader Effectiveness

Skills relevant for carrying out a leader's duties and responsibilities are another predictor of leader effectiveness. It is not enough to have the appropriate personality traits; a person also needs considerable skill to be effective as a leader. Unfortunately, the conceptualization of leadership skills has not received much attention, and little effort has been made to refine and validate the early skill taxonomies proposed by Katz (1955) and Mann (1965). Nevertheless, these relatively simple taxonomies provide a useful scheme for integrating the extensive research on leadership skills. Three basic categories of skills are technical skills, conceptual skills, and interpersonal skills. *Technical skills* include knowledge of products and services, knowledge of work operations, procedures, and equipment, and knowledge of markets, clients, and competitors. *Conceptual skills* include ability to analyze complex events and perceive trends, recognize changes, and identify problems and opportunities; ability to develop creative, practical solutions to problems; and ability to conceptualize complex ideas and use models, theories, and analogies. *Interpersonal skills* include understanding of interpersonal and group processes, ability to understand the motives, feelings, and attitudes of people from what they say and do (empathy, social sensitivity), ability to maintain cooperative relationships with people (tact, diplomacy, conflict resolution skills), and oral communication and persuasive ability. A fourth category—*administrative skills*—refers to the ability to perform relevent managerial functions such as planning, delegating, and supervising. This is an ambiguous skill category because it appears to involve a combination of specific technical, cognitive, and interpersonal skills.

Most trait research has looked for skills that are universally relevant for leadership effectiveness. In general, the research supports the conclusion that technical skills, conceptual skills, interpersonal skills, and administrative skills are necessary in most managerial positions (Bass, 1990; Boyatzis, 1982; Hosking & Morley, 1988; Mann, 1965). Some specific skills within these broad skill categories are probably useful for all leaders, including analytical ability, persuasiveness, speaking ability, memory for details, empathy, and tact. However, the relative importance of most specific skills probably varies greatly depending on the situation. Unfortunately, only a limited amount of research has examined how situational differences moderate the relationship between skills and leader effectiveness.

One aspect of the situation that appears to influence skill requirements is a manager's level of authority (Boyatzis, 1982; Jacobs & Jaques, 1987; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Mann, 1965). For example, executives usually need more conceptual skill than supervisors. Skill requirements are also influenced by the type of organization. The technical expertise needed by a manager varies greatly from one type of organization to another (Boyatzis, 1982; Kotter, 1982; Shetty & Peery, 1976). Even for the same type of organization, the optimal pattern of skills may vary depending on the prevailing business strategy (Gupta & Govindarajan, 1984; Szilagyi & Schweiger, 1984). More theory-based research is needed to link skills to the unique skill requirements of different types of leadership positions and to the social and political context (Hosking & Morely, 1988).

## Trait Patterns and Balance

There has been an increasing trend in the trait research to take a more holistic view and examine patterns of leader traits and skills, rather than continuing the earlier approach of focusing on each trait as a separate predictor of leadership effectiveness or advancement. One example of this approach is the research on managerial motivation described earlier. By itself, a trait such as need for power or need for achievement is not strongly correlated with leader effectiveness, and it is difficult to interpret any correlation that is found. However, the overall pattern of managerial motivation is more predictive of managerial effectiveness, and the results are consistent with our knowledge about the types of behavior required for effective leadership. Another example is research showing that leadership emergence depends jointly on the ability to recognize what followers want in different situations and the flexibility to respond appropriately to follower expectations in different situations (Zaccarro, Foti, & Kenny, 1991).

Another key concept coming out of the trait approach is the idea of balance. In some cases, balance means that the optimal amount of some trait is a moderate amount rather than either a very low or very high amount of the trait. For example, leaders need self-confidence to be effective in influencing others to believe in them and their proposals, but excessive self-confidence makes a leader unresponsive to negative information and insensitive to dissenting views. Unfortunately, most trait studies are not guided by theory explaining how traits are related to effectiveness, and they test only for simple, linear relationships. There is a need for more theory-based studies that include analyses to test whether a curvilinear relationship is supported by the data.

Sometimes balance means tempering one trait with another, such as tempering a high need for power with the emotional maturity required to ensure that subordinates are empowered rather than dominated. Leaders often find themselves in situations involving trade-offs between competing values (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983). Concern for the task must be balanced against concern for people (Blake & Mouton, 1982). Concern for a leader's own needs must be balanced against concern for organizational needs. Concern for the needs of subordinates must be balanced against concern for the needs of superiors, lateral peers, and clients. Desire for change and innovation must be balanced against need for continuity and predictability. More research is needed on the way in which effective leaders balance competing values.

The concept of balance can be extended to shared leadership. In some cases, balance involves different leaders in a management team who have complementary attributes that compensate for each other's weaknesses and enhance each other's strengths (Bradford & Cohen, 1984). A better understanding of leadership in an organization may be gained by examining the pattern of traits for the executive team rather than focusing on the traits of a single leader such as the CEO. To date there has been little research on the trait patterns in executive teams.

The trait approach was dominant in the early days of leadership research, then fell out of favor for a long period, and only recently has regained some credibility with leadership theorists. Traits offer the potential to explain why people seek leadership positions and why they act the way they do when they occupy these positions. Much progress has been made in trait research, and it is now evident that some traits and skills increase the likelihood of leadership success, even though they do not guarantee success and their relative importance depends on the situation. Despite this progress, the utility of the trait approach for understanding leadership effectiveness is

limited by the abstract nature of traits. The causal chain from traits to effectiveness criteria such as group performance is long and tenuous. Traits interact with situational demands and constraints to influence a leader's behavior, and this behavior interacts with other situational variables to influence group process variables, which in turn affect group performance. The potential contribution of the trait approach continues to be limited by the lack of attention to variables mediating the relationship between leader traits and effectiveness criteria. It is difficult to understand how leader traits can affect subordinate motivation or group performance unless we examine how traits are expressed in the actual behavior of leaders. We turn next to a review of research on leadership behavior.

## The Behavioral Approach

The behavioral approach emphasizes what leaders and managers actually do on the job and the relationship of this behavior to leader effectiveness. Major lines of behavior research include description of typical patterns of managerial activities, classification of leadership behaviors into taxonomies of behavior categories, and identification of behaviors related to criteria of leadership effectiveness.

### Managerial Activities

Most research on the nature of managerial work has involved descriptive methods such as direct observation, diaries, and anecdotes obtained from interviews. One line of research since the early work by Carlson (1951) seeks to discover what activities are typical of managerial work. Reviews of this research have been published by McCall and Segrist (1980) and Hales (1986). The typical pattern of managerial activity reflects the dilemmas faced by most managers (Kotter, 1982). Relevant information

exists only in the heads of people who are widely scattered within and outside of the organization. Managers need to make decisions based on information that is both incomplete and overwhelming, and they require cooperation from many people over whom they have no formal authority. The descriptive research shows that managerial work is inherently hectic, varied, fragmented, reactive, and disorderly (Kanter, 1983; Kaplan, 1986; Mintzberg, 1973). Many activities involve brief oral interactions that provide an opportunity to obtain relevant, up-to-date information, discover problems, and influence people to implement plans. Many interactions involve people besides subordinates, such as lateral peers, superiors, and outsiders.

Descriptive research on managerial decision making and problem solving provides additional insights into the nature of managerial work (Cohen & March, 1986; Gabarro, 1985; McCall & Kaplan, 1985; Mintzberg & McHugh, 1985; Schweiger, Anderson, & Locke, 1985; Simon, 1987). Decision processes are highly political, and most planning is informal and adaptive to changing conditions. Effective managers develop a mental agenda of short- and long-term objectives and strategies (Kotter, 1982). The network of relationships inside and outside of the manager's unit is used to implement plans and strategies. For plans involving significant innovations or affecting the distribution of power and resources, it is necessary for the manager to forge a coalition of supporters and sponsors, which may involve expanding the network of contacts and allies (Kanter, 1983; Kaplan, 1984). Effective managers are able to recognize relationships among the streams of problems, issues, and opportunities they encounter. By relating problems to each other and to informal objectives, a manager can find opportunities to solve more than one problem at the same time (Isenberg, 1984; McCall & Kaplan, 1985).

We have made considerable progress in understanding managerial work, but there is much yet to be learned (Hales, 1986). More research is needed to integrate description of activity patterns with description of the purpose of the activities, description of the functional behaviors used to accomplish the purpose, and description of the skills needed to do it effectively.

**Taxonomies of Behaviors**

A major question in behavior research is how to classify leadership behavior in a way that facilitates research and theory on leadership effectiveness. Early research conducted during the 1950s at Ohio State University sought to identify relevant aspects of leadership behavior and measure these behaviors with a questionnaire filled out by subordinates of leaders. Factor analysis of preliminary questionnaires (Fleishman, 1953; Halpin & Winer, 1957) revealed that subordinates perceived the behavior of their leader primarily in terms of two independent categories, one dealing with task-oriented behaviors (*initiating structure*) and the other dealing with people-oriented behaviors (*consideration*). The resulting questionnaires, called the *Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire* (LBDQ) and the *Supervisory Behavior Description* (SBD or SBDQ) dominated survey research on leadership behavior for the next two decades. Even efforts by Stogdill, one of the Ohio State University leadership researchers, to develop a more sophisticated taxonomy of leader behavior was not successful in breaking the fixation of researchers and theorists on the simple, two-factor conceptualization. Stogdill (1963) developed a revised leadership questionnaire (LBDQ XII) with twelve categories of behavior, but most researchers continued to use only the consideration and initiating structure scales from the LBDQ-XII or from one of the earlier Ohio State leadership questionnaires. Even

now after the shortcomings of the two-factor model are widely acknowledged, a few researchers are still using the old questionnaires.

The simple two-factor taxonomy of task-oriented behavior and people-oriented behavior provided a good starting point for conceptualization of leadership behavior, but these broadly defined behaviors are too abstract to provide a basis for understanding how leaders handle the specific role requirements confronting them. Further progress in the behavior research requires a shift in focus to more specific aspects of behavior (Yukl, 1981). Since the effort by Stogdill (1963) to develop a better way to classify leadership behavior, several other researchers and theorists have proposed taxonomies with more specific categories of leadership or managerial behavior. These taxonomies have been based on a variety of different research methods, including use of experts to develop categories to classify observations of managers (Luthans & Lockwood,1984; Mintzberg,1973), factor analysis of leader behavior description questionnaires (Morse & Wagner, 1978; Yukl & Nemeroff, 1979), and factor analysis of managers' ratings of the importance of different job responsibilities (Page & Tornow,1987). Despite differences in the purpose and level of abstraction for the various taxonomies, some commonalities are evident among the behavior categories (Yukl, 1989a).

Yukl proposed an integrating taxonomy with 14 generic categories of behavior applicable to any leader or manager (see Table 1). All of the behavior categories are relevant for leadership effectiveness, but their relative importance varies across situations, and they can be enacted in different ways in different situations. The behaviors are measured with a questionnaire called the *Managerial Practices Survey* (Yukl, Wall, & Lepsinger, 1990), but the categories can be used also to code descriptions of leader behavior from observation, diaries, and critical incidents.

## TABLE 1

### Definition of Managerial Practices

*Planning and organizing:* Determining long-term objectives and strategies, allocating resources according to priorities, determining how to use personnel and resources efficiently to accomplish a task or project, and determining how to improve coordination, productivity, and effectiveness

*Problem solving:* Identifying work-related problems, analyzing problems in a systematic but timely manner to determine causes and find solutions, and acting decisively to implement solutions and resolve crises

*Clarifying:* Assigning work, providing direction in how to do the work, and communicating a clear understanding of job responsibilities, task objectives, priorities, deadlines, and performance expectations

*Informing:* Disseminating relevant information about decisions, plans, and activities to people who need the information to do their work

*Monitoring:* Gathering information about work activities and external conditions affecting the work, checking on the progress and quality of the work, and evaluating the performance of individuals and the effectiveness of the organizational unit

*Motivating:* Using influence techniques that appeal to logic or emotion to generate enthusiasm for the work, commitment to task objectives, and compliance with requests for cooperation, resources, or assistance; also setting an example of proper behavior

*Consulting:* Checking with people before making changes that affect them, encouraging participation in decision making, and allowing others to influence decisions

*Recognizing:* Providing praise and recognition for effective performance, significant achievements, and special contributions

*Supporting:* Acting friendly and considerate, being patient and helpful, and showing sympathy and support when someone is upset or anxious

*Managing conflict and team building:* Facilitating the constructive resolution of conflict and encouraging cooperation, teamwork, and identification with the organizational unit

*Networking:* Socializing informally, developing contacts with people outside of the immediate work unit who are a source of information and support, and maintaining contacts through periodic visits, telephone calls, correspondence, and attendance at meetings and social events

*Delegating:* Allowing subordinates to have substantial responsibility and discretion in carrying out work activities and giving them authority to make important decisions

*Developing and mentoring:* Providing coaching and career counseling and doing things to facilitate a subordinate's skill acquisition and career advancement

*Rewarding:* Providing tangible rewards such as a pay increase or promotion for effective performance and demonstrated competence by a subordinate

## The Two-factor Taxonomy and Leader Effectiveness

A primary objective of behavior research has been to identify the consequences of different types of leadership behavior. The typical approach in this research is to examine differences in behavior patterns between effective and ineffective leaders, or to assess the correlation between measures of leader behavior and criteria of leadership effectiveness.

Most of the behavior studies in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s relied on the Ohio State leadership scales. Hundreds of studies examined the correlation of leader initiating structure and consideration with subordinate satisfaction and performance. In addition, a few laboratory and field experiments were conducted to determine the effects of leader task and relationship behavior on subordinate satisfaction and performance. Except for the finding that leader consideration is usually correlated positively with subordinate satisfaction, the results from this behavior research have been contradictory and inconclusive in the United States (Yukl, 1989a).

In Japan, 30 years of research on performance-oriented (task) and maintenance-oriented (people) behavior by leaders found more consistent evidence that both types of behavior are necessary for leadership effectiveness (Misumi, 1985; Misumi & Peterson, 1985). The stronger pattern of results in Japan may be due in part to selection of behaviors relevant for the type of work performed by the sample used in each study. Cultural differences may also account for the divergent results found in Japan. Comparative research provides evidence that different types of leader behavior are considered appropriate in different cultures (Smith, Misumi, Tayeb, Peterson, & Bond, 1989).

Overall, the research based on a two-factor conceptualization of leadership behavior has added little to our knowledge about effective leadership. This massive research effort was unsuccessful for a variety of reasons. An underlying assumption in much of the research was that leader behaviors can be classified into separate, mutually exclusive sets of task-oriented and people-oriented behaviors, and extensive use of both sets of behaviors is necessary for a leader to be effective (Larson, Hunt, & Osborn, 1976; Nystrom, 1978). This assumption has been criticized by theorists who view task and people orientation as values rather than as distinct types of leader behaviors (Blake & Mouton, 1982). Any type of leadership behavior has implications both for achieving the task and for maintaining effective relationships with people, and any particular behavior incident can be located in a two-dimensional space in relation to the two underlying value dimensions. For example, when a manager walks around the work facility and talks to subordinates to observe how the work is going, this monitoring behavior may be done in a way that reflects concern for interpersonal relationships as well as concern for the task. In general, effective leaders show substantial concern in their behavior both for task objectives and for the people who must carry out the task (Blake & Mouton, 1982; Sashkin & Fulmer, 1988). However, effective leaders act in ways that are qualitatively different from leaders with high concern only for the task, high concern only for people, or low concern about both the task and people. The types of behavior items that embody both concerns simultaneously are seldom included in the leader behavior questionnaires used to test the proposition that a high-high pattern of leadership behavior is optimal.

A second reason for failure of the two-factor approach was lack of attention to the situational relevance of leader behaviors. Some task-oriented and people-oriented behavior is necessary for any leader, but the relative importance of specific forms of this behavior varies from situation to situation (Yukl, 1989a). It is not enough for a leader to show high concern both for task objectives and relationships with subordinates; the specific behaviors selected by

the leader to express these concerns must be relevant for the task, the organizational context, and the subordinates who will perform the task. Effective leaders select behaviors that are appropriate for their situation (Blake & Mouton, 1982; House & Mitchell, 1974; Yukl, 1981). For example, some clarifying of subordinate work roles is necessary by all leaders, but the appropriate amount, form, and timing of the behavior depends on the complexity and uniqueness of the task and the competence and experience of the leader's subordinates. Ineffective leaders may be unable to determine what behaviors are appropriate for the situation, or they may recognize what behavior is appropriate but lack the skills or motivation needed to carry it out. Later in this chapter we will examine situational theories that attempt to explain why some behaviors are more relevant in particular situations.

## Participative Leadership and Leader Effectiveness

The decades from 1950 to 1980 also witnessed considerable research in another, more narrowly defined aspect of leadership behavior, namely participative leadership (e.g., consulting with subordinates individually or making joint decisions with them as a group). This aspect of behavior involves power sharing and can be viewed as part of the power-influence approach as well as part of the behavior approach. Since the pioneering studies by Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) and Coch and French (1948), social scientists have been interested in studying the consequences of participative leadership. The research has employed a variety of methods, including laboratory experiments, field experiments, correlational field studies, and qualitative case studies involving interviews with effective leaders and their subordinates.

Several recent reviews have attempted to summarize the empirical, quantitative research (Cotton, Vollrath, Froggatt, Lengnick-Hall, & Jennings, 1988; Miller & Monge, 1986; Schweiger & Leana, 1985; Wagner & Gooding, 1987), but the various reviewers did not agree in their interpretation of the findings (e.g., see Cotton, Vollrath, Lengnick-Hall, & Froggatt, 1990; Leana, Locke, & Schweiger, 1990). Overall, the research evidence from the quantitative studies is not sufficiently strong and consistent to draw any firm conclusions. In contrast, the findings from descriptive case studies of effective managers have been more consistently supportive of the benefits of participative leadership (Bradford & Cohen, 1984; Kanter, 1983; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Peters & Austin, 1985; Peters & Waterman, 1982). This research found that effective managers used a substantial amount of consultation and delegation to empower subordinates and give them a sense of ownership for activities and decisions. The effectiveness of power sharing and delegation tends to be supported also by research on self-managed groups (Manz & Sims, 1987, 1989).

In summary, after 40 years of research, we are left with no definitive conclusion about the general consequences of participative leadership except that it sometimes results in higher satisfaction and performance, and other times does not. Lack of progress in this research may be due to the fact that most studies focus on the general question of whether participative leadership is better than autocratic leadership, rather than identifying the conditions necessary for participative procedures to be effective (Yukl, 1981). A contingency approach emphasizing limiting conditions for participative leadership is incorporated in the Vroom and Yetton (1973) theory discussed later in the chapter.

## Specific Leader Behaviors and Effectiveness

In the past decade, an increasing amount of research has examined how specific types of leadership behavior are related to leader

effectiveness. This empirical research suggests that managerial effectiveness is predicted better by specific behaviors (e.g., positive reward behavior, clarifying, monitoring, problem solving) relevant to the leadership situation than by broad measures such as initiating structure and consideration.

A number of studies examined positive reward behavior by the leaders. Podsakoff, Todor, Grover, and Huber (1984) reviewed this literature and found that praise and contingent rewards usually increase subordinate satisfaction and performance. The importance of recognition and appropriate rewards has been noted also in descriptive studies of leadership in effective organizations (Peters & Austin, 1985; Peters & Waterman, 1982).

Clarifying is the primary component of initiating structure, and a number of studies have been conducted on the use of clarifying behavior by leaders (e.g., explaining responsibilities, assigning work, giving instructions, setting priorities, setting deadlines, setting standards). For example, in questionnaire research reported by Yukl, Wall, and Lepsinger (1990), clarifying was related to managerial effectiveness in four out of six samples of leaders. Setting specific, challenging, but realistic goals is an important component of clarifying behavior, and in the motivation literature there is ample evidence from field experiments that goal setting by a manager results in better subordinate performance than no goals or "do your best" instructions (e.g., Locke & Latham, 1990).

Evidence for the importance of other leadership and managerial behaviors is provided by descriptive research and by some questionnaire studies with an independent criterion of managerial effectiveness. Several studies found relationships between planning and managerial effectiveness, although effective planning was usually informal and flexible rather than formal and rigid (Carroll & Gillen, 1987; Kotter, 1982; Yukl, Wall, & Lepsinger,1990).

Problem solving behavior was also related to managerial effectiveness in some of these same studies. In observational research, Komaki (1986) found that monitoring was related to the effectiveness of supervisors, and a similar result was found in some research using questionnaires (Yukl, Wall, & Lepsinger,1990). Motivating behaviors (e.g., emphasizing the importance of the work, inspiring task commitment, role modeling) were related to leadership effectiveness in research using questionnaires (Yukl, Wall, & Lepsinger,1990), in research involving content analysis of biographies for famous military leaders (Van Fleet & Yukl, 1986b), in research with critical incidents about air force officers (Yukl & Van Fleet,1982), and in research on charismatic and transformational leaders (see a later section in this chapter). Evidence that networking behavior is related to advancement comes from an observation study of managers (Luthans, Rosencrantz, & Hennessey, 1985), and networking behavior was found to be important for managerial effectiveness in research involving interviews with managers (Kaplan, 1986; Kotter, 1982). Finally, descriptive research involving effective managers suggests that behaviors such as coaching, mentoring, and team building are important for developing subordinate skills and confidence and strengthening their identification with the organization and its mission (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Bradford & Cohen, 1984; Peters & Austin, 1985; Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

### Evaluation of the Behavioral Approach

The long fixation on consideration and initiating structure appears to have come to an end, and most researchers now realize that it is necessary to examine more specific types of behaviors to understand leadership effectiveness. However, in comparison to the hundreds of studies on task-oriented and people-oriented behavior, the number of studies on specific

behaviors (other than participative leadership) is still quite small. More research on specific aspects of behavior is needed to identify the situations where each type of behavior is relevant. Whenever possible, this research should include a careful analysis of the situation to identify in advance the behaviors likely to be the most relevant for the type of leaders in the sample. When analyzing relationships between a large set of behavior variables and criterion variables, it is desirable to make specific hypotheses about expected relationships, rather than conducting a "fishing expedition" that exploits chance results. If possible, intervening variables mediating the effects of leader behavior should be included in the research to allow analysis of causal linkages.

As we found in the trait research, the behavior research suffers from a tendency to look for simple answers to complex questions. Most research on leadership effectiveness has focused on behaviors individually rather than examining how effective leaders use patterns of specific behaviors to accomplish their agendas. It is likely that specific behaviors interact in complex ways and that leadership effectiveness cannot be understood unless these interactions are studied. For example, monitoring is useful for discovering problems, but unless something is done to solve problems when they are discovered it will not contibute to the effectiveness of the leader. Planning is likely to be ineffective unless it is based on timely, accurate information gathered from monitoring, consulting, and networking, and there is little point in developing plans unless the leader also influences people to support and implement them. Delegating is unlikely to be effective unless the leader clarifies the subordinate's new responsibilities, ensures that the subordinate accepts them, monitors progress in an appropriate way, and provides necessary support, resources, and assistance.

Descriptive studies of managerial work suggest that complementary behaviors are woven together into a complex tapestry such that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts (Kaplan, 1986). A leader's skill in selecting and enacting appropriate behaviors is related to the success of the outcome, but different patterns of behavior may be used to accomplish the same outcome—such as in the idea of equifinality. In future research it is essential to pay more attention to the overall pattern of leadership behavior rather than becoming too preoccupied with any particular component of it.

Behavior taxonomies are descriptive aids that may help us analyze complex events and provide better understanding about them. However, it is important to remember that all behavior taxonomies are arbitrary and that they have no validity in any absolute sense. Unfortunately, there has been too much preoccupation with finding and using the correct set of behavior categories. In many of the field studies on managerial behavior, only a few "correct" behaviors were measured, resulting in numerous missed opportunities to collect rich, descriptive information about the behavior of leaders in organizations. In both questionnaire and observational research, it is essential to be flexible about the behavior constructs used in analyzing patterns of leadership behavior, rather than assuming that we already know in advance what constructs will be most useful.

## Power and Influence Approach

The power possessed by a leader is important not only for influencing subordinates, but also for influencing peers, superiors, and people outside the organization, such as clients and suppliers. Major questions in research on power include identification of different types of power, an understanding of how leaders gain or lose power, an understanding of how different amounts and types of leader power are related to leadership effectiveness, and an understanding of how influence behavior is related to effective leadership.

## Types of Power

Efforts to understand power usually involve distinctions among various forms of power. The power taxonomy proposed by French and Raven (1959) differentiates five types of power: legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, and referent. This taxonomy has dominated the conceptualization of power sources and research on leader power for three decades. However, the French and Raven taxonomy does not include all of the different types of power now recognized by researchers. For example, Yukl and Falbe (1991) found evidence for two additional power sources, namely agent persuasiveness and control over information.

Another conceptualization of power that continues to be widely accepted is the dichotomy between *personal power* stemming from attributes of the person, and *position power* stemming from attributes of the situation (Bass, 1960). Empirical support for this two-factor conceptualization was found in the study by Yukl and Falbe (1991). The research indicated that the two types of power are relatively independent, and each type of power has several distinct but partially overlapping components. Position power includes legitimate authority, reward and coercive power, and control over information. Personal power includes expert power, referent power, and persuasiveness. However, even between position and personal power there are some interconnections. For example, control over information is a source of position power, and expertise is a source of personal power, but control over information may enhance a person's relative expertise in comparison to others who lack this information.

McCall (1978) proposed that power depends on being in the right place at the right time with the right resources. It is not enough for a person to have expertise or information, there must also be the opportunity to use expertise to solve problems for others dependent on the person, or to use exclusive information to influence decisions. An interaction model (i.e., person ×

position) may be more useful than an additive model (i.e., person + position) for explaining why some people have more power than others. More research is needed to identify how position and personal power jointly determine a leader's influence over subordinates, peers, and superiors.

## How Leaders Acquire and Lose Power

One major question addressed by power research is the way leaders acquire or lose power during their interaction with subordinates and others in their organization. The study of reciprocal influence processes between leader and followers has been an important line of research for learning about emergent leadership and the acquisition of power by leaders. *Social exchange theory* (Hollander, 1978) describes the process by which greater status and expert power are accorded someone who demonstrates loyalty to the group and competence in solving problems and making decisions. Innovative proposals are a source of increased expert power when successful, but leaders lose power if failure occurs and it is attributed to poor judgment, irresponsibility, or pursuit of self-interest at the expense of the group. Research testing exchange theory is very limited, but generally supportive. Research on charismatic leadership provides additional evidence that leaders gain influence after proposing innovative strategies that prove to be successful (Conger, 1989; Conger & Kanungo, 1990).

The manner in which characteristics of the person and position combine to determine relative power is described by *strategic contingencies theory* (Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck, & Pennings, 1971; House, 1988b; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977a). How much power is gained by demonstrating competence in solving problems depends on the importance of the problems for the operations of other organizational units and for the overall performance of the organization. The acquisition and maintenance of power also depends on the extent to which

the person has unique skills and resources that are difficult to replace. Once power is obtained, leaders often use it in ways designed to protect their dominant position in an organization (Pfeffer, 1981). Strategic contingencies theory explains acquisition of power by organizational subunits and coalitions as well as by individual leaders. Evidence for the theory is limited but mostly supportive (e.g., Brass, 1984, 1985).

## Reciprocal Influence in Leader-Subordinate Dyads

One variation of exchange theory, called *leader-member exchange theory* (LMX), describes how leaders develop different exchange relationships over time with different subordinates (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975; Graen & Cashman, 1975). LMX theory was formerly called *vertical dyad linkage theory* because of its focus on dyads rather than leader-to-group relationships. The theory examines both downward and upward dyadic links formed by a leader, and it considers the implications for leader effectiveness and advancement in the organization.

According to LMX theory, leaders typically establish a special relationship with a small number of subordinates (the in-group) who function as assistants, advisors, and lieutenants. These subordinates are given greater influence, autonomy, and tangible benefits in return for greater loyalty, commitment, and assistance in performing administrative duties. The exchange relationship with the remaining subordinates (the out-group) is substantially different. The leader's influence is based primarily on position power, and there is less mutual influence. To satisfy the terms of the exchange relationship and receive the standard benefits (compensation and continued membership in the organization), out-group subordinates need only comply with formal role requirements and legitimate directions from the leader.

The theory has been extended to include a manager's upward dyadic relationships. A leader who has a favorable exchange relationship with his or her own boss has more potential for establishing a special exchange relationship with subordinates (Cashman, Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1976). Moreover, longitudinal research in Japan found that a favorable upward exchange relationship is predictive of a person's advancement rate in the organization (Wakabayashi & Graen, 1984).

In another recent revision of the LMX theory, the development of relationships in a leader-subordinate dyad was described in terms of a *life cycle model* with three possible stages (Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, in press). The relationship begins with an initial testing phase in which the leader and subordinate evaluate each other's motives, attitudes, and potential resources to be exchanged; changes in the role of the subordinate are negotiated through a series of mutually reinforcing behavior cycles. If the relationship proceeds to the second stage, the exchange arrangement is refined, and mutual trust, loyalty, and respect are developed. Some exchange relationships advance to a third (mature) stage, wherein exchange based on self-interest is transformed into mutual commitment to the mission and objectives of the work unit. According to Graen and Uhl-Bien, this final stage corresponds to Burn's (1978) conception of transformational leadership, and the initial stage corresponds to transactional leadership.

At the present time, LMX theory is more descriptive than prescriptive. It describes a typical process of role making by leaders, but it doesn't specify what pattern of downward exchange relationships with different subordinates is optimal for leadership effectiveness. Some of the more recent studies have found that a special downward exchange relationship with a subordinate results in greater loyalty and performance by the subordinate (Graen, Novak, & Summerkamp, 1982; Graen, Scandura & Graen, 1986; Scandura & Graen, 1984; Vecchio

& Gobdel, 1984). However, the theory has never been clear about the desirability of having sharply differentiated in-groups and out-groups. A sharply differentiated in-group is likely to create feelings of resentment and undermine team identification among subordinates who are excluded from the in-group (McClane 1991; Yukl, 1989a). It is likely that effective leaders establish a special exchange relationship with all subordinates, not just with a few favorites. A leader can use some aspects of a special exchange relationship, such as greater delegation of responsibility and sharing of administrative functions with a few subordinates, while also developing a relationship of mutual trust, supportiveness, respect, and loyalty with the other subordinates. It is not necessary to treat all subordinates exactly the same, but each should perceive that he or she is an important and respected member of the team rather than a "second-class citizen."

Even as a descriptive theory, LMX theory has a number of conceptual weaknesses. Some important issues, such as the process of role making, did not receive enough attention in the initial versions of the theory (Dienesh & Liden, 1986; Vecchio, 1983; Vecchio & Gobdel, 1984), although the recent revisions attempt to remedy this deficiency. Actual research on the process of role making is still very limited (Duchon, Green, & Taber, 1986; Kim & Organ, 1982). The measures of LMX need further refinement, and it is important to make a clearer separation between measures of the quality of relationship (e.g., perceptions of mutual trust, loyalty, and respect), measures of specific types of leader behavior (e.g., delegating, consulting, and mentoring), and measures of outcomes (e.g., effort, commitment, and performance).

### Power and Leader Effectiveness

Much of the research coming under the power-influence approach attempts to explain leadership effectiveness in terms of the amount and type of power possessed by a leader and the way power is exercised. Most research on the consequences of power for leader effectiveness has relied on questionnaires measuring the target person's perceptions of the agent's power. The questionnaires used in most of the early research on leader power had several deficiencies (see Podsakoff & Schriesheim, 1985), including reliance on single-item scales (prone to low content validity and weak measurement), use of rankings rather than ratings of power (ipsative scoring distorts correlations with criterion variables), and measurement of power in terms of importance as a reason for compliance rather than as potential influence derived from position and person characteristics (importance scores may be more biased). Recent research has made progress in developing better power measures (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1989; Rahim, 1988; Yukl & Falbe, 1991).

In general, the research with power questionnaires indicates that effective leaders rely primarily on personal power to motivate subordinate commitment to task objectives and leader strategies. However, the results from research with power questionnaires may be biased by attributions and social desirability. For example, subordinates may attribute more personal power to leaders known to be effective than to leaders known to be ineffective. There is evidence from other types of research that position power is relevant for leader effectiveness. Research on legitimate power indicates that it is a major source of daily influence on routine matters for managers in formal organizations (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Thambain & Gemmill, 1974; Yukl & Falbe, 1991). Research on positive reward behavior, which is based on reward power, finds that it has beneficial effects on subordinate satisfaction and performance when rewards are made contingent on subordinate performance and are perceived to be legitimate and equitable (Podsakoff, Todor, & Skov, 1982; Sims & Szilagyi, 1975). Even punishment, which is based on coercive power, can be used to influence behavior by

subordinates in some situations (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1980; Podsakoff, Todor, & Skov, 1982). For example, coercive power is essential for dealing with rebels or criminals who jeopardize the mission of the organization or threaten to undermine the leader's legitimate authority. Thus, although position power may be less important than personal power, it is not irrelevant. A more tenable proposition is that effective leaders rely on a combination of power sources (Kotter, 1985; Yukl, 1989a; Yukl & Taber, 1983). Referent and expert power are needed to supplement position power, and they are used to make nonroutine requests and motivate commitment to tasks that require high effort, initiative, and persistence.

Empirical research on how much power is needed for leadership effectiveness is still very limited. The amount of position power needed by a leader probably depends on the nature of the organization, task, and subordinates. In general, a moderate amount of position power is probably optimal. Leaders who lack sufficient position power to make necessary changes, facilitate the work of subordinates, reward competent subordinates, and punish or expel chronic troublemakers will find it difficult to develop a high performing organization. On the other hand, too much position power entails the risk that the leader will be tempted to rely on it exclusively and neglect alternative forms of influence, such as rational persuasion, consultation, and inspirational appeals. It is a common theme in literature that great power can corrupt a leader to misuse it, leading to resentment and possible rebellion (McClelland, 1975; Zaleznik, 1970). Some evidence on this question is provided in laboratory research by Kipnis (1972), who found that leaders with greater reward power used it more to influence subordinates, devalued the worth of subordinates, maintained more social distance from subordinates, and attributed subordinate effort to leader use of power rather than to subordinate motivation. In situations where leaders have substantial position power, it appears to be desirable to have some organizational constraints on the use of this power. Examples of constraints include regulations prohibiting particular forms of power abuse by managers, appeals procedures and independent review boards to protect subordinates, and formal decision procedures to ensure that power is not centralized too strongly in a few individuals (Yukl, 1981).

Some theorists have proposed that the manner in which power is exercised largely determines whether it results in enthusiastic commitment, passive compliance, or stubborn resistance (McCall, 1978; Sayles, 1979; Yukl, 1981; Yukl & Taber, 1983). Effective leaders exert both position power and personal power in a subtle, easy fashion that minimizes status differentials and avoids threats to the self-esteem of subordinates. In contrast, leaders who exercise power in an arrogant, manipulative, domineering manner are likely to engender resistance. As yet, evidence on the way power is exercised is very limited, and more research on this topic is clearly needed. The exercise of power involves the influence behavior of leaders, and research on influence tactics is discussed next.

## Influence Tactics

A new bridge between the power and behavior approaches is research on influence tactics. Research with critical incidents and questionnaires has found that a variety of different tactics are used by managers in influence attempts with subordinates, peers, and superiors (Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980; Mowday, 1978; Schilit & Locke, 1982; Schriesheim & Hinkin, 1990; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl, Falbe, Youn, & Tracey, 1991). The most common tactics are listed and defined in Table 2.

The choice of tactics for a particular influence attempt depends somewhat on the status of the target person and the objective of the influence attempt (Erez & Rim, 1982; Erez, Rim, & Keider, 1986; Kipnis, Schmidt, &

## TABLE 2

### Definition of Influence Tactics

*Legitimating tactics:* The person seeks to establish the legitimacy of a request by claiming the authority or right to make it, or by verifying that it is consistent with organizational policies, rules, practices, or traditions.

*Rational persuasion:* The person uses logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade you that a proposal or request is practical and likely to result in the attainment of task objectives.

*Inspirational appeals:* The person makes a request or proposal that arouses enthusiasm by appealing to your values, ideas, and aspirations, or by increasing your confidence that you can do it.

*Consultation:* The person seeks your participation in planning a strategy, activity, or change for which your support is desired or is willing to modify a proposal to deal with your concerns and suggestions.

*Exchange:* The person offers an exchange of favors, indicates willingness to reciprocate at a later time, or promises you a share of the benefits if you help accomplish a task.

*Pressure:* The person uses demands, threats, frequent checking, or persistent reminders to influence you to do what he or she wants.

*Ingratiation:* The person seeks to get you in a good mood or to think favorably of him or her asking you to do something.

*Personal appeals:* The person appeals to your feelings of loyalty and friendship toward him or her when asking you to do something.

*Coalition tactics:* The person seeks the aid of others to persuade you to do something or uses the support of others as a reason for you to agree.

*Upwards appeals:* The person gets assistance from higher management to influence you to do something.

Wilkinson, 1980; Yukl & Falbe, 1990). For example, pressure is used more in downward influence attempts than in lateral or upward influence attempts, consistent with the greater amount of position power leaders have over subordinates than over peers or superiors. Some tactics such as ingratiation, rational persuasion, and personal appeals tend to be used more in initial influence attempts, whereas other tactics such as pressure, exchange, coalitions, and upward appeals (a special form of coalition) tend to be used more often in follow-up influence attempts after the agent has met initial resistance by the target (Yukl, Falbe, Youn, & Tracey, 1991).

Some tactics are more effective than others in gaining commitment, although the outcome of any influence attempt will likely depend in part on the specific situation, including the direction of influence, the relationship between agent and target, the agent's power over the target, and the perceived legitimacy and

relevance of the agent's request. Early research on the consequences of using different influence tactics found only weak and inconsistent results (Mowday, 1978; Schilit & Locke, 1982). Subsequent research by Yukl et al. (1991) with questionnaires and critical incidents found strong, convergent results across research methods. The most effective tactics for obtaining target commitment were rational persuasion, consultation, and inspirational appeals; the least effective tactics were pressure, coalition tactics (including upward appeals), and legitimating tactics. Ingratiation, exchange, and personal appeals were intermediate in effectiveness. However, influence tactics that rarely resulted in target commitment (e.g., pressure, legitimating tactics) were sometimes effective for obtaining compliance.

Influence attempts often involve the use of multiple tactics at the same time. Preliminary research with critical incidents suggests that rational persuasion is the tactic used most often in combination with another tactic (Yukl et al., 1991). The research with critical incidents found that use of tactic combinations sometimes increased the success of the influence attempt. For example, rational persuasion was more effective when combined with consultation, inspirational appeals, or exchange than when used alone as a single tactic.

In addition to overt influence attempts, leaders may use political tactics such as gaining control over organizational processes for making key decisions and using power to fill key executive positions with coalition members (Pfeffer, 1981; Porter, Allen, & Angle, 1981). As yet there has not been enough research to reach any firm conclusions about the consequences of using influence tactics and political tactics, and more research is clearly desirable. However, the initial results appear consistent with the proposition that effective leaders use a variety of tactics and select tactics that are appropriate for the situation (Howell & Higgins, 1990; Kotter, 1985; Yukl, 1989a).

## Evaluation of the Power and Influence Approach

Influence is a fundamental concept in leadership, and the power-influence approach appears to provide unique insights about leadership emergence and effective leadership. Nevertheless, this line of research has suffered from a lack of attention. The amount of research on power and influence has been meager in comparison to research on traits and behavior. Theory development has been slow, and not enough effort has been made to refine and test the few promising theories that have been proposed.

However, a recent surge of studies on power and influence over the past few years may signal a growing interest in this important topic. There is much to be done. Conceptualization of power remains fuzzy, and there are many conceptual problems to be resolved. There is much confusion about the best way to define and measure leader power (Yukl, 1989a). Power may be defined as potential influence or as enacted influence. Power may be viewed as influence over the attitudes and behavior of people or as influence over events. Power may be measured in terms of target perceptions or in terms of objective characteristics of an agent and the agent's position. There may be important differences in the meaning of power at dyadic, group, and organizational levels of analysis.

In addition to the research questions mentioned earlier in this section, a number of other issues need more attention. We need to learn more about the way power changes over time as a result of the leader's use, misuse, and disuse of it. We need more longitudinal research on reciprocal influence processes within dyads and groups. We need to develop a better understanding of the relationship between leader power and influence behavior. Finally, more effort is needed to integrate the diverse but related literatures on power, influence tactics, organizational politics,

conflict resolution, participation, charisma, and empowerment.

## The Situational Approach

The situational approach emphasizes the importance of contextual factors such as the leader's authority and discretion, the nature of the work performed by the leader's unit, the attributes of subordinates, and the nature of the external environment. Situational research and theory falls into two major subcategories. One line of research treats leader behavior as a dependent variable; researchers seek to discover how the situation influences behavior and how much variation occurs in managerial behavior across different types of managerial positions. The other line of research (*contingency theories*) seeks to discover how situational variables moderate the relationship between leader attributes (e.g., traits, behavior) and measures of leader effectiveness. There has been much more research on the latter approach than on the former, perhaps because it is compatible with the common bias to perceive leaders as causal agents who shape events rather than being shaped by them.

### Situational Determinants of Leader Behavior

Leaders adapt their behavior to the role requirements, constraints, and demands of the leadership situation. One theory for describing how the situation influences managerial behavior is *role theory* (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, & Snoelk, 1964 ). The role expectations from superiors, peers, subordinates, and outsiders are a major influence on a leader's behavior. Other theories have identified key aspects of the situation that create demands and constraints on a manager.

Stewart (1976, 1982) conducted extensive research using observation, interviews, and diaries to describe managerial jobs and improve our understanding of managerial behavior. Based on this research, she formulated *demands-constraints-choices theory*. According to the theory, a manager's pattern of interactions and the amount of time spent with subordinates, peers, superiors, and outsiders depends on the nature of the work and whether it is self-generating or reactive, repetitive or variable, uncertain or predictable, fragmented or sustained, hurried or unhurried. Stewart concluded that the core demands of managerial jobs have important implications for selection and promotion decisions, since different job situations require somewhat different patterns of traits and skills.

The *multiple influence model* (Hunt & Osborn, 1982; Osborn & Hunt, 1975) emphasizes the influence of macro-level situational determinants on a manager's behavior. These situational variables include level of authority in the organization, size of work unit, function of work unit, technology, centralization of authority, lateral interdependence, and forces in the external environment. A leader's behavior is also influenced by micro-level situational variables such as task complexity, task interdependence among subordinates, subordinate goal orientation, and group cohesiveness.

Most research investigating how leaders are influenced by the situation uses a comparative approach to examine similarities and differences in leader behavior across situations. This research is still very limited, and results are difficult to interpret due to confounding among different aspects of the situation. Nevertheless, it is evident that the behavior of a leader is influenced by the situation. Comparative research on situational determinants of leader activities and behavior is reviewed by Bass (1990) and Yukl (1989a).

Only a few researchers have considered how a leader interprets information about the situation and selects an appropriate response. Attribution theory has been used to explain how leaders interpret information about the

performance of individual subordinates, especially evidence of substandard performance. Green and Mitchell (1979) described the reaction of a manager to poor performance by a subordinate as a two-stage process, which includes attribution of causality and selection of a response. First, managers try to determine whether poor performance is due to something internal to the subordinate (e.g., lack of effort, lack of ability) or to external problems beyond the subordinate's control (e.g., obstacles and constraints, inadequate resources or support, insufficient information, bad luck). The theory specifies the types of information considered by managers and the way it is interpreted. The type of attribution made by a manager influences the manager's response. When an external attribution is made, the manager will try to change the situation, for example, by providing more resources, providing assistance in removing obstacles, providing better information, or changing the task to reduce inherent difficulties. For an internal attribution of insufficient ability, the manager's likely response is to provide detailed instruction or coaching, monitor the subordinate more closely, set easier goals and deadlines, or switch the subordinate to an easier task. For an internal attribution of insufficient subordinate effort, the manager's likely response is to give directive or nondirective counseling, monitor the subordinate more closely, find new incentives and inducements, or give a warning, reprimand, or punishment. Several studies have provided evidence supporting the major propositions of the model (e.g., Mitchell, Green, & Wood, 1981).

The theory and research on situational demands is concerned primarily with explaining variations in behavior across situations, not with explaining why a particular type of behavior is more effective in a particular situation. Nevertheless, this research provides some insights into the reasons for managerial effectiveness. Despite the situational demands and pressures, managers have choices in what aspects of the job to emphasize, how to allocate time, and with whom to interact (Kotter, 1982; Stewart, 1982). Managerial effectiveness depends in part on how well a manager understands demands and constraints, copes with demands, overcomes constraints, and recognizes opportunities. Effective leaders are able to reconcile the role conflicts caused by incompatible role expectations from different role senders, and they take advantage of role ambiguity as an opportunity for discretionary action. They seek to expand their range of choices, exploit opportunities, and shape the impressions formed by others about their competence and expertise (Kieser, 1984; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1975; Stewart, 1982; Tsui, 1984). Over the long run, effective leaders act to modify the situation to make it more favorable (Yukl, 1981). Making a link back to the section on leader traits, cognitive and technical skills determine how well a leader is able to process information about the situation, and a leader's motives and personality determine how the leader will respond to problems and opportunities.

## Contingency Theories of Leader Effectiveness

Situational theories are based on the assumption that different behavior patterns (or trait patterns) will be effective in different situations, and that the same behavior pattern is not optimal in all situations. A variety of situational theories describe how aspects of the situation moderate the relationship between leader behavior (or traits) and outcomes. In the remainder of this section, we will briefly describe and evaluate eight situational theories of leader effectiveness. Theories concerned with charismatic and transformational leadership also involve situational elements, but these theories will be reviewed later in the chapter.

**Path-Goal Theory.** According to *path-goal theory* (Evans, 1970; House, 1971), leaders

motivate higher performance in subordinates by acting in ways that influence them to believe valued outcomes can be attained by making a serious effort. Aspects of the situation such as the nature of the task, the work environment, and subordinate attributes determine the optimal amount of each type of leader behavior for improving subordinate satisfaction and performance. Initial propositions involved only supportive and instrumental leadership, which are similar respectively to consideration and initiating structure. A later revision of the theory by House and Mitchell (1974) added two other leader behaviors—participative and achievement-oriented leadership. Reviews of research on path-goal theory (Evans, 1986; Indvik, 1986) found that some studies support some aspects of the theory. However, methodological limitations of the validation research, such as overreliance on questionnaire data from the same respondents and difficulties in measuring intervening motivational processes, suggest that the theory has yet to be adequately tested.

Path-goal theory has a number of conceptual limitations (Schriesheim & Kerr, 1977; Yukl, 1989a). The theory focuses on subordinate motivation as the explanatory process for the effects of leadership, and it ignores other explanatory processes, such as a leader's influence on organization of the work, resource levels, and skill levels. Some of the propositions are based on questionable assumptions, such as the assumption that role ambiguity is always unpleasant, and the assumption that expectancies will be increased by leader clarification of role requirements (Stinson & Johnson, 1975). Finally, like most leader behavior theories developed during the 1970s, the propositions of path-goal theory (House, 1971) were formulated initially in terms of broad behavioral categories. It is likely that stronger support would be found for the theory if some key propositions were restated in terms of more narrowly defined behaviors such as clarifying work roles and giving contingent rewards (Yukl, 1981).

**Situational Leadership Theory.** Hersey and Blanchard's *situational leadership theory* (1969, 1988) proposes that the optimal amount of task-oriented and relations-oriented behavior by a leader depends on subordinate maturity. The theory prescribes different amounts of the two behaviors depending on a subordinate's confidence and skill in relation to the task. The theory has been popular at management development workshops but not with leadership scholars. Only a few studies have tested the theory (Blank, Weitzel, & Green, 1990; Hambleton & Gumpert, 1982; Vecchio, 1987), and they find only partial, weak support for it. A number of writers have pointed out conceptual weaknesses in the theory, including ambiguous constructs, oversimplification, and lack of intervening explanatory processes (e.g., Blake & Mouton, 1982; Graeff, 1983; Yukl, 1989a). For example, the conceptualization of maturity is ambiguous, many relevant situational variables are ignored, and the theory fails to provide a coherent, explicit rationale for the hypothesized relationship between leader behavior and effectiveness in different situations.

**Leadership Substitutes Theory.** *Leadership substitutes theory* (Howell, Bowen, Dorfman, Kerr, & Podsakoff, 1990; Kerr & Jermier, 1978) describes aspects of the situation—called *substitutes* and *neutralizers*—that reduce the importance of formal leaders in organizations. According to the theory, supportive and instrumental behavior by a formal leader is redundant or irrelevant in some situations. Various characteristics of the subordinates, task, and organization serve as substitutes for these leadership behaviors. For example, extensive prior experience by subordinates in doing a task serves as a substitute for instrumental leadership behavior (the leader does not need to provide much instruction in how to do the work). Neutralizers are aspects of the situation that prevent a leader from acting in a particular way or negate the effects of a particular type of

leader behavior. For example, lack of leader authority over rewards constrains or neutralizes attempts to motivate subordinates by promising to reward them for effective performance. Only a few studies have been conducted to test propositions about specific substitutes and neutralizers (Freeston, 1987; Howell & Dorfman, 1981, 1986; Jermier & Berkes, 1979; Kerr & Jermier, 1978; Podsakoff et al., 1984). This research was reviewed by McIntosh (1988). Some support was found for some hypotheses, but it is still too early to assess the validity and utility of the theory.

Yukl (1989a) has pointed out a number of conceptual limitations of the theory. A detailed rationale for each substitute and neutralizer is lacking, and there are no intervening variables to explain underlying causal relationships. A sharper focus on explanatory processes would help to differentiate between substitutes that reduce the importance of a leadership behavior and substitutes that involve the same leadership behavior by persons other than the designated leader. For example, the importance of directing subordinates may be reduced by conditions that make the work simple and repetitive (e.g., automation, formalized standard procedures) or by the existence of alternative sources of necessary guidance (e.g., prior professional training, coaching by experienced co-workers, job aids). Another limitation of the theory is reliance on categories of leader behavior that are defined too broadly to be linked closely to situational conditions. A couple of studies have attempted to address these limitations (Howell & Dorfman, 1986; Jermier & Berkes, 1979), but further refinement of the theory is desirable together with more empirical research.

**Normative Decision Theory.** *Normative decision theory* (Vroom & Yetton, 1973) specifies the decision procedures most likely to result in effective decisions in a particular situation. The model identifies five decision procedures (e.g., autocratic decision by the leader, autocratic decision after seeking additional information, consultation with individuals, consultation with the group, a group decision). Seven situational variables determine how a particular decision procedure will affect decision outcomes. The situational variables, expressed in dichotomous terms, are as follows: (a) whether decision quality is important, (b) whether the decision problem is structured, (c) whether the leader already has sufficient information to make a good decision, (d) whether subordinate acceptance is important for effective implementation, (e) whether subordinate acceptance is likely with an autocratic decision, (f) whether subordinates share the organizational objectives sought by the leader, and (g) whether conflicts exist among subordinates. The model includes several decision rules based on assumptions about the likely effects of using each decision procedure under a particular set of conditions. For example, one rule states that a group decision should be avoided if subordinates do not share the leader's task objectives, because it is unlikely to result in a high-quality decision.

Normative decision theory deals only with a small part of leadership, but positive features of the model include the use of specific aspects of behavior rather than broad behaviors, inclusion of meaningful intervening variables (i.e., decision quality and acceptance), and identification of important situational variables. Vroom and Jago (1988) reviewed research on the model and concluded that the results are mostly supportive, although some decision rules were supported better than others (Crouch & Yetton, 1987; Ettling & Jago, 1988; Field, 1982; Field & House, 1990; Field, Read, & Louviere, 1990; Heilman, Hornstein, Cage, & Herschlag, 1984; Tjosvold, Wedley, & Field, 1986).

Vroom and Jago (1988) proposed a revised version of the model designed to correct some of the weaknesses in the earlier version. The revised model (a) incorporates additional situational variables (amount of subordinate information, time constraints, proximity of

subordinates), (b) includes additional criteria (decision time, subordinate development), (c) allows a manager to determine the relative priority of the various criteria, and (d) reduces the feasible set to a single best procedure based on these priorities. It is too early to evaluate the validity and utility of the revised model. Vroom and Jago (1988) report that it was more effective than the original model in initial tests.

Both the original and revised model share some conceptual weaknesses (Yukl, 1989a). Decision processes are treated as single, discrete episodes, even though many important decisions in organizations involve reciprocal influence processes with multiple parties interacting repeatedly over an extended time period. An implicit assumption is made that managers have the skills to use each decision procedure, which is often not the case (Crouch & Yetton, 1987; Field, 1979). Finally, the model fails to acknowledge the possibility that effective leaders are able to influence the situation and thereby avoid constraints on the range of feasible decision procedures.

**LPC Contingency Theory.** Fiedler's (1967, 1978) *contingency theory* deals with the moderating influence of three situational variables (position power, task structure, and leader-member relations) on the relationship between a leader trait and leader effectiveness. The leader trait, called the *least preferred co-worker* (LPC) score, is the sum of the leader's ratings (on a set of bipolar adjective scales) of the person with whom the leader could work least well. The interpretation of LPC scores has changed several times over the years, and the meaning is still not clear. Fiedler regards LPC as an indicator of a leader's motive hierarchy, with affiliation needs dominant for high LPC leaders and task achievement needs dominant for low LPC leaders. Rice (1978) proposed that research on LPC favors a value-attitude interpretation such that low LPC leaders value task success whereas high LPC leaders value interpersonal success.

The model specifies that high LPC leaders are more effective in some situations and low LPC leaders are more effective in others. Many studies have been conducted to test the model. Reviews by Strube and Garcia (1981) and Peters, Hartke, and Pohlmann (1985) conclude that the research tends to support the model, although not for every situation and not as strongly in field studies as in laboratory studies. However, several writers have pointed out methodological problems in the validation research such as weak measures, possible confounding of variables, and questionable analyses (see reviews by Vecchio, 1983; Yukl, 1989a). Moreover, the model has serious conceptual deficiencies that limit its utility for explaining leadership effectiveness, such as its narrow focus on a single leader trait, ambiguity about what the LPC scale really measures, and absence of explanatory processes.

**Cognitive Resources Theory.** The *cognitive theory* examines the conditions under which a leader's cognitive resources, such as intelligence, experience, and technical expertise, are related to group performance (Fiedler, 1986; Fiedler & Garcia, 1987). Situational variables such as interpersonal stress, group support, and task complexity determine whether a leader's intelligence and experience enhance group performance. The theory proposes that a leader's cognitive resources affect group performance only when the leader is directive and the task unstructured. According to the theory, leader intelligence is related to group performance only when stress is low, because high stress interferes with the use of intelligence to solve problems and make decisions. Leader experience will be related to group performance under high stress but not under low stress, presumably because experienced leaders rely mostly on experience for solving problems when under high stress, whereas they rely mostly on intelligence under low stress.

Cognitive resource theory is new, and not much research has been conducted yet to evaluate it. The available evidence is reviewed by Fiedler and Garcia (1987). Most of the validation studies to date have methodological deficiencies, including reliance on surrogate measures of experience such as time in job, which may be contaminated by extraneous variables (see Bettin & Kennedy, 1990), and failure to measure important intervening processes such as leader behavior, decision processes, and decision quality. The theory also has some conceptual weaknesses. For example, the intervening processes used to explain moderated relationships are still very sketchy and incomplete, and likely differences between leaders in their reactions to stress are not recognized.

**Multiple Linkage Model.** The *multiple linkage model* (Yukl, 1981, 1989a) was developed to guide research on effective managerial behavior in different situations. The current version of the model begins with the assumption that the performance by a work unit depends primarily on six explanatory variables: subordinate effort, subordinate ability, organization of the work, teamwork and cooperation, availability of essential resources, and external coordination of work unit operations with other parts of the organization. Some situational variables directly influence the intervening variables, and other situational variables determine the relative importance of each intervening variable in a particular situation. Leaders can influence these intervening variables in a number of ways, although the effects of leader behavior depend in part on the situation. In the short term, most leader actions are intended to correct deficiencies in the intervening variables, whereas in the longer term, leaders seek to make the situation more favorable by actions such as influencing subordinates to internalize values and beliefs relevant to the unit's mission, developing subordinate skills through improved selection and training,

implementing programs to improve the unit's equipment and facilities, initiating new products or activities, forming coalitions to gain more control over resources, and modifying the formal structure of the unit.

The multiple linkage model was based on findings in prior research, and as yet, little new research has been conducted to directly test and refine the model. The major conceptual weakness of the model is the lack of specific propositions about which leader behaviors influence which intervening variables in which situations. The model is a general framework that identifies relevant variables and some of the likely causal linkages among them, rather than a formal theory with precise propositions.

**Leader-Environment-Follower-Interaction Theory.** Wofford (1982) proposed a situational leadership theory called *leader-environment-follower-interaction* (LEFI) *theory* that is somewhat similar to the multiple linkage model. According to LEFI Theory, the effects of leader behavior on subordinate performance are mediated by four intervening variables: ability to do the work, task motivation, clear and appropriate role perceptions, and the presence or absence of environmental constraints. A leader can influence subordinate performance by influencing the intervening variables, but leader effectiveness depends on selection of behaviors that are appropriate for the situation. Wofford differentiated between diagnostic behaviors used to assess the intervening variables and corrective behaviors used to deal with any deficiencies that are found. Leader behavior is influenced in turn by leader traits, situational variables, and feedback from the intervening and outcome variables.

The following leadership behaviors may be used when appropriate to achieve optimal levels of subordinate ability: use appropriate selection procedures to identify qualified subordinates, provide necessary training, and redesign the job to match subordinate skills

better. The following behaviors may be used when appropriate to achieve optimal levels of subordinate motivation: select subordinates with a high need for achievement, set specific but challenging goals for them, provide feedback and encouragement, use monetary incentives, and use participation, competition, and job redesign to increase intrinsic motivation. The following behaviors may be used when appropriate to achieve role accuracy and clarity: provide instruction and guidance, set specific goals and provide feedback, increase formalization, or redesign the job. The following behaviors may be used when appropriate to deal with constraints in the work environment: reorganize the work, modify technology, provide resources, and remove physical constraints.

The complexity of Wofford's theory makes it difficult to test. Wofford and Srinivasan (1984) report supportive results for some of the hypotheses from laboratory experiments with students in which leader behavior was manipulated. However, more research is needed to test the theory adequately.

### Evaluation of the Contingency Theories

The contingency theories provide some insights into the nature of effective leadership, but they share a number of weaknesses that limit their utility. Most of the theories are stated in a very general way, and it is difficult to derive specific testable hypotheses for them. Moreover, the key variables are usually defined so broadly that they are difficult to operationalize and measure. As a consequence, most of the empirical research provides only an indirect or partial test of the theories.

Another limitation of the contingency theories is inadequate development of intervening explanatory processes. Four of the theories—namely, situational leadership theory, leadership substitites, LPC contingency theory, and cognitive resource theory—are especially weak with regard to identification of intervening variables. Path-goal theory has intervening variables for motivational processes but not for other processes affected by leaders. The two theories with an extensive set of intervening variables—multiple linkage theory and LEFI theory—do not specify how the variables interact with each other to affect end result variables such as group performance.

All of the contingency theories contain situational moderator variables, but once again, these are often ambiguous and difficult to operationalize. For example, task structure and task complexity have been defined and measured in many different ways. It is common in the research to use surrogates for situational variables (e.g., job type for task structure), and the surrogates are sometimes of doubtful relevance or are confounded with other variables, making it difficult to interpret any positive findings.

Practicing managers are likely to find the contingency theories difficult to apply to their jobs. The complex theories do not translate readily into specific behavioral guidelines for managers. Moreover, most managers are so busy dealing with immediate problems that they do not have time to stop and analyze the situation with a complicated model (McCall, 1977). Managers faced with dynamic and uncertain situations would need exceptional diagnostic skills in order to apply the contingency theories.

## Transformational and Charismatic Leadership

Max Weber theorized about charismatic leadership back in the 1920s, and after his writings were translated into English (Weber, 1947), they stimulated interest in charisma by sociologists and political scientists. However, it was not until the 1980s that researchers in psychology and management showed much interest in charismatic leadership. The transformation and revitalization of organizations

became an especially relevant topic in the 1980s, after many executives in the United States finally acknowledged the need to make major changes in the way things are done in order to survive the increasing economic competition from foreign companies. The distinction between charismatic and transformational leadership remains unclear, and we have only begun to identify the similarities and differences (e.g., Avolio & Bass, 1988; Yukl, 1989a).

Transformational leadership refers to the process of influencing major changes in the attitudes and assumptions of organization members (organization culture) and building commitment for major changes in the organization's objectives and strategies. Transformational leadership involves influence by a leader on subordinates, but the effect of the influence is to empower subordinates who become leaders and change agents also in the process of transforming the organization. Thus, transformational leadership is usually viewed as a shared process, involving the actions of leaders at different levels and in different subunits of an organization, not just those of the chief executive (Burns, 1978). Theoretical analyses of transformational leadership can be found in several books (e.g., Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Schein, 1985; Tichy & Devanna, 1986) and articles (Harrison, 1987; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987; Sashkin, 1988; Trice & Beyer, 1991).

Charismatic leadership is defined more narrowly and refers to follower perception that a leader possesses a divinely inspired gift and is somehow unique and larger than life (Weber, 1947). Followers not only trust and respect the leader, as they would with a transformational leader, but they also idolize or worship the leader as a superhuman hero or spiritual figure (Bass, 1985). According to House (1977), the indicators of charismatic leadership include a follower's trust in the correctness of the leader's beliefs, unquestioning acceptance of the leader, affection for the leader, and willing obedience. Thus, with charismatic leadership the focus is on an individual leader rather than on a leadership process that may be shared among multiple leaders.

Most of the theories on charismatic and transformational leadership consider leader traits, power, behavior, and situational variables, thereby taking a broader perspective than earlier leadership theories. In addition, the newer theories have some unique aspects that set this line of research apart from the rest of the leadership literature. The best known theories of charismatic and transformational leadership and findings in empirical research are reviewed in the remainder of this section.

### House's Theory of Charismatic Leadership

House (1977) proposed a theory that identifies how charismatic leaders behave, how they differ from other people, and the conditions under which they are most likely to flourish. As noted earlier, the theory specifies indicators of charismatic leadership that involve attitudes and perceptions of followers about the leader. The theory also specifies leader traits that increase the likelihood of being perceived as charismatic, including a strong need for power, high self-confidence, and strong convictions. Behaviors typical of charismatic leaders include (a) impression management to maintain follower confidence in the leader, (b) articulation of an appealing vision that defines the task in terms of ideological goals in order to build follower commitment, (c) communication of high expectations for followers to clarify expectations, and (d) expression of confidence in followers' ability to build their self-confidence. In addition, charismatic leaders set an example in their own behavior for followers, called *behavior modeling*, and if necessary they act to arouse follower motives appropriate for the task.

As yet there has not been much empirical research to test the theory. House, Woycke, and Fodor (1988) content analyzed inaugural addresses by U. S. presidents and biographies of cabinet members serving under each

president; supporting evidence was found for most of the propositions about the motive pattern and behavior of charismatic leaders. Howell and Frost (1989) conducted a laboratory experiment in which leader behaviors were manipulated and found that charismatic behaviors resulted in higher subordinate satisfaction and performance. Research on the *pygmalion effect*, wherein followers perform better when a leader shows confidence in them, also supports some aspects of the theory (Eden, 1984, 1990; Sutton & Woodman, 1989).

Bass (1985) noted some conceptual limitations and recommended extending the theory to include additional traits, behaviors, indicators of charisma, and facilitating conditions. For example, he proposed that charismatic leaders are more likely to appear where formal authority has failed to deal with a severe crisis and traditional values and beliefs are questioned.

## Conger and Kanungo's Theory of Charismatic Leadership

The version of charismatic theory proposed by Conger and Kanungo (1987) is based on the assumption that charisma is an attributional phenomenon. Followers attribute charismatic qualities to a leader based on their observations of the leader's behavior and outcomes associated with it. The behaviors are not assumed to be present in every charismatic leader to the same extent, and the relative importance of each behavior for attribution of charisma varies somewhat with the situation. The behaviors include the following: (a) enthusiastically advocating an appealing vision that is highly discrepant from the status quo, yet still within the lattitude of follower acceptance, (b) making self-sacrifices and risking personal loss of status, money, or membership in the organization in the pursuit of the espoused vision, and (c) acting in unconventional ways to achieve the espoused vision. Traits

enhancing attributions of charisma include: (a) self-confidence, (b) impression management skills, (c) the cognitive ability needed to assess the situation and identify opportunities and constraints for implementing strategies, and (d) the social sensitivity and empathy required to understand the needs and values of followers. With respect to power, attributed charisma is more likely for a leader who relies mostly on expert and referent power to influence followers rather than authority or participation. As for situational variables, charismatic leaders are more likely to emerge when there is a crisis requiring major change or followers are otherwise dissatisfied with the status quo. However, even in the absence of a genuine crisis, a leader may be able to create dissatisfaction in order to demonstrate superior expertise in dealing with the problem in unconventional ways.

The theory was based in part on results from earlier research on charismatic leaders and in part on research by Conger and Kanungo (1987) comparing charismatic to noncharismatic executives. Follow-up research to evaluate the theory is still very limited. In survey research with new scales measuring charismatic behaviors from their theory, Conger and Kanungo (1990) found that the behaviors were related to attributed charisma. Support was found also in research using interviews and observation to study the behavior of managers identified as charismatic (Conger, 1989).

## Burns' Theory of Transformational Leadership

This early theory of transformational leadership was developed mostly from descriptive research on political leaders. Burns (1978) described leadership as a process of evolving interrelationships in which leaders influence followers, and leaders are influenced in turn to modify their behavior as they meet responsiveness or resistance. Transformational leadership is viewed as both a micro-level influence process between individuals, and as a macro-level

process of mobilizing power to change social systems and reform institutions. According to Burns, transformational leaders seek to raise the consciousness of followers by appealing to higher ideals and moral values such as liberty, justice, equality, peace, and humanitarianism, not to baser emotions such as fear, greed, jealousy, or hatred. Followers are elevated from their "everyday selves" to their "better selves." For Burns, transformational leadership may be exhibited by anyone in the organization in any type of position. It may involve people influencing peers or superiors as well as subordinates. Burns contrasted transformational leadership with transactional leadership, in which followers are motivated by appealing to their self-interest. He also differentiated transformational leadership from influence based on bureaucratic authority, which emphasizes legitimate power and respect for rules and tradition.

## Bass' Theory of Transformational Leadership

Building on the earlier theory by Burns, Bass (1985) proposed a more detailed theory to describe transformational processes in organizations and to differentiate between transformational, charismatic, and transactional leadership. Bass defined transformational leadership in terms of the leader's effect on followers. Leaders transform followers by making them more aware of the importance and value of task outcomes, by activating their higher-order needs, and by inducing them to transcend self-interest for the sake of the organization. As a result of this influence, followers feel trust and respect toward the leader, and they are motivated to do more than they originally expected to do.

Bass views transformational leadership as more than just another term for charisma. Charisma is defined as a process wherein a leader influences followers by arousing strong emotions and identification with the leader. Bass considers some charisma to be a

necessary but not sufficient condition for transformational leadership. Two other components of transformational leadership besides charisma are intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Intellectual stimulation is a process wherein leaders increase follower awareness of problems and influence followers to view problems from a new perspective. Individualized consideration is a subset of behaviors from the broader category of consideration, and it includes providing support, encouragement, and developmental experiences to followers. Charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration interact to influence changes in followers, and the combined effects distinguish between transformational and charismatic leadership. Transformational leaders seek to empower and elevate followers, whereas in charismatic leadership, the opposite sometimes occurs. That is, many charismatic leaders seek to keep followers weak and dependent and to instill personal loyalty rather than commitment to ideals.

Bass defined transactional leadership in broader terms than Burns, and it includes not only the use of incentives to influence effort, but also clarification of the work needed to obtain rewards. Bass views transformational and transactional leadership as distinct but not mutually exclusive processes, and he recognizes that the same leader may use both types of processes at different times in different situations.

Research to test this new theory is still in the early stages. Most of the research to date has involved the *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire* (Bass, 1985). This research usually finds a correlation between transformational leadership and various criteria of leader effectiveness (Bass, Avolio, & Goodheim, 1987; Hater & Bass, 1988; Seltzer & Bass, 1990; Waldman, Bass, & Einstein, 1987; Waldman, Bass, & Yammarino, 1990). However, the limitations of the questionnaire and the likelihood of attributional errors even in studies with an independent

criterion make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions. The early versions of this questionnaire had serious methodological problems. For example, the questionnaire asked respondents if they had greater enthusiasm, effort, and new ways of thinking as a result of something the leader did, but specific, observable behaviors causing these outcomes were not identified. Bass and his colleagues have revised the questionnaire, but it is too early yet to determine whether the deficiencies have been corrected.

## Descriptive Research

Much of the research on charismatic and transformational leadership has been descriptive and qualitative. Several researchers used interviews, sometimes supplemented by observation, to describe the actions of leaders previously identified as transformational (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Conger, 1989; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Peters & Austin, 1985; Tichy & Devanna, 1986). The descriptions of effective transformational leaders were analyzed to identify characteristic behaviors, traits, and influence processes. Another type of descriptive research on charismatic leaders consists of intensive case studies of individual leaders (e.g., Roberts, 1985; Roberts & Bradley, 1988; Trice & Beyer, 1986). Other researchers content analyzed the behavior of famous leaders described in biographical accounts, or content analyzed the leader's speeches and writings (e.g., Burns, 1978; House, Woycke, & Fodor, 1988; Van Fleet & Yukl, 1986a; Westley & Mintzberg, 1988; Willner, 1984). In still another approach, Yukl and Van Fleet (1982) content analyzed critical incidents describing effective behavior by military officers to identify characteristic examples of inspirational behavior.

The descriptive research tends to be too imprecise for reaching firm conclusions about the nature of transformational and charismatic leadership behavior, but it provides some insights into the types of behavior typical of these leaders. The studies find that it is important for the leader to articulate a clear and appealing vision relevant to the needs and values of followers. Communication of this vision is facilitated by the leader's actions, by what the leader attends to, and by the use of emotional appeals, symbols, metaphors, rituals, and dramatic staged events. The intellectual components of the vision appear important for influencing how followers interpret events and for persuading followers that the leader's strategy for attaining the vision is feasible.

Although charismatic and transformational leaders use many of the same behaviors, the descriptive research suggests that there are also some important differences. Transformational leaders appear more likely to take actions to empower followers and change the organization in ways that will institutionalize new values. The leader behaviors involved in this process are many of the same ones found in earlier behavior research to be important for leadership effectiveness. Transformational leaders delegate significant responsibility and authority, eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic constraints, provide coaching and training in skills followers need to take initiative and solve problems, encourage participation in making important decisions, encourage open sharing of ideas, concerns, and relevant information, promote cooperation and teamwork, and encourage constructive problem solving to resolve conflicts. Transformational leaders also modify the organization's structure and management systems (e.g., budgeting and resource allocation procedures, appraisal and reward systems, selection and promotion criteria, training and socialization programs, design of physical facilities) to emphasize and institutionalize key values and objectives.

Some social scientists have highlighted the negative aspects or "dark side" of charisma (Conger, 1989; Hogan, Raskin, & Fazzini, 1990; Yukl, 1989a). Musser (1987) described the differences between positive and negative charismatics in terms of whether they seek to

instill devotion to ideological goals or to themselves. Howell (1988) interpreted the difference in terms of socialized versus personalized power orientation and emphasis on internalization versus identification. Kets de Vries and Miller (1985) described the origins and consequences of charismatic leaders who are extremely narcissistic. The descriptive research suggests the following problems are likely to occur with negative charismatics (Conger, 1989):

- They have difficulty maintaining effective relationships due to their lack of genuine concern for the needs and welfare of other people and their use of persuasive skills to manipulate and exploit people.

- They start grandiose projects to glorify themselves, and the projects are often unrealistic due to the leader's inflated self-assessment and unwillingness to seek and accept advice from others. They tend to ignore or reject evidence that a plan or strategy is encountering serious difficulties, thereby reducing the chance of correcting problems in time to avert a disaster.

- These leaders are willing to spend time in high visibility activities to promote a vision, but are unwilling to spend the time necessary to guide and facilitate the implementation of a vision. They tend to vascillate between extremes of loose delegation when things are going well and overcontrolling behavior when trouble occurs with a project.

- These leaders seek to manage impressions about their unique importance to the organization by taking credit for any successes and failing to acknowledge important contributions made by other people. They are defensive about mistakes, deny responsibility for failure, and seek scapegoats to blame for failures.

- The same type of impulsive, unconventional behavior that helps the leader to be perceived as charismatic by some people is likely to alienate other people, including powerful members of the organization who are needed as supporters rather than enemies.

- They fail to develop competent successors. These leaders try to keep subordinates weak and dependent, and they may seek to undermine or remove people with the leadership qualities of a potential successor. Thus, a leadership crisis is likely to occur when the leader dies or departs.

## Evaluation of Transformational and Charismatic Leadership Theories

The theories discussed in this section are still quite new, and there is insufficient evidence to evaluate each individual theory. Nevertheless, collectively they appear to make an important contribution to our understanding about leadership processes. It is interesting to note that some of the "new" wisdom found in the literature on transformational leadership repeats themes of the 1960s, although the prescriptions are often clothed in different jargon. The need to empower subordinates and develop a sense of ownership for what goes on in the organization echoes the emphasis on power sharing, mutual trust, participative decision making, quality of work life, and supportive relationships by writers such as Argyris (1964), McGregor (1960), and Likert (1967). More unique contributions include the following: (a) recognition of the importance of emotional reactions by followers to leaders, (b) recognition that symbolic processes and management of meaning are as important as management of things, (c) recognition of cognitive processes involved in the attribution of charisma to leaders by followers, and (d) recognition that

leadership processes are embedded within the culture of the organization, shaping it and being shaped by it.

Although charismatic and transformational theories make an important contribution to our understanding of leadership processes, we still have much to learn about these subjects. The similarities and differences between charismatic and transformational leaders need greater clarification. For example, is it possible to be transformational and highly charismatic at the same time? Bass (1985) proposed that charisma is a necessary component of transformational leadership, but the descriptive research on transformational leaders suggests that many of them are not perceived as charismatic by followers. Perhaps the attribution of charisma is weakened when a leader reduces the dependence of followers on the leader by empowering them, building their commitment to new values and organizational objectives, and institutionalizing changes in the organization. Other interesting questions that require additional research include the following:

- What conditions are necessary for the emergence of charismatic leaders?

- How do leaders develop a vision that will appeal to followers?

- How do leaders obtain the commitment of followers to a new vision, especially in a large organization where there are competing visions?

- How do leaders empower followers, and what aspects of the process are most important?

- How do leaders influence and enhance the self-efficacy and self-image of followers?

- How do leaders change the culture and institutionalize new values and strategies in the organization?

- How is charismatic leadership related to the long-term effectiveness of an organization, and what are the tradeoffs between benefits and costs of charismatic leaders?

- How can we identify and ensure the selection of people who will be positive charismatics or transformational leaders rather than negative charismatics?

- How can we develop the positive attributes of charismatic and transformational leadership in managers, while at the same time avoiding the negative aspects?

## Current Issues About Research Methods and Paradigms

Progress in increasing our knowledge about leadership depends on the adequacy and appropriateness of the research methods used to study leadership. There are a number of controversies about research methods used to study leadership (see Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1989a). We will consider the following issues: (a) the choice of relevant criteria of leadership effectiveness, (b) the extent of attributional biases about leadership importance, (c) the choice of appropriate data collection methods, (d) the appropriate level of data analysis, (e) the utility of studying shared leadership processes, and (f) the relevance of training studies for evaluating leadership theories.

### Criteria of Leadership Effectiveness

One important methodological issue is the choice of relevant criteria to evaluate leadership effectiveness. Like definitions of leadership, conceptions of leader effectiveness differ from writer to writer. The choice of an effectiveness criterion can bias the findings of research toward a particular conception of effective lead-

ership. The criteria used to evaluate leadership effectiveness have been very diverse, and difficulty in integrating the results from research using widely divergent criteria is yet another obstacle to the development of a general theory of effective leadership.

One commonly used measure of leader effectiveness is the extent to which the leader's group or organization performs its task successfully and attains its goals. In some cases, objective measures of performance or goal attainment are available, such as profit growth, profit margin, sales increase, market share, sales relative to targeted sales, return on investment, productivity, cost per unit of output, costs in relation to budgeted expenditures, and so on. In other cases, subjective ratings of leader effectiveness are obtained from the leader's superiors, peers, or subordinates. The relative advantage of subjective versus objective measures and of a composite criterion versus separate criteria continues to be debated in leadership as it is in personnel psychology.

Much of the research on leadership effectiveness has examined only a leader's influence on end-result variables such as subordinate performance. Long ago Likert (1967) recognized that the influence of leaders on end-result variables is mediated by intervening variables (e.g., subordinate attitudes and behavior, group processes and properties) that reflect the influence of leader actions much sooner than end-result variables. It is easier to assess leader influence on intervening variables than on end-result variables, which are affected by many things besides the actions of a single leader. Few studies have been designed to systematically track the causal paths of leader effects on intervening and end-result variables.

Questionnaire measures of subordinate satisfaction with the leader have been used in many studies to evaluate leadership effectiveness (Bass, 1990). A smaller number of studies have used objective measures that reflect follower dissatisfaction and hostility toward the leader (e.g., subordinate absenteeism, voluntary turnover, grievances, complaints to higher management, requests for transfer, slowdowns, and deliberate sabotage of equipment and facilities). In recent years, researchers have measured other attitudes and behavior relevant to leader effectiveness, such as subordinate commitment to the leader's proposals and strategies, commitment to the organization, self-efficacy, and organizational citizenship behavior. In addition, leadership effectiveness is occasionally measured in terms of leader contribution to the quality and efficiency of group processes, as perceived by followers or outside observers. Examples of these intermediate criteria include the level of cooperation and teamwork, the effectiveness of group problem solving and decision making, the efficiency of role specialization and organization of work activities, and the readiness of the group to deal with change and crisis.

Some of the criteria of leadership effectiveness may be negatively correlated. For example, growth in sales or output is sometimes achieved at the cost of reduced efficiency and lower profits. Likewise, as noted earlier, some charismatic leaders have a very strong influence over the attitudes and behavior of followers, but lead them down a path of eventual disaster for the organization. Tradeoffs can occur even within the same criterion at different points of time. For example, profits may be increased in the short run by neglecting activities that have a delayed effect on profits, such as maintenance of equipment, research and development, investment in new technology, and development of employee skills and loyalty. In the long run, the net effect of cutting these essential activities is likely to be lower profits.

The selection of effectiveness criteria in leadership research is usually very subjective and arbitrary. It is influenced by the objectives and values of the person making the evaluation, as well as by opportunities and difficulties of data collection in a particular research setting. To avoid excessive bias and to cope with the problems of partially incompatible criteria, it is

usually best to include a variety of different criteria and to examine the influence of the leader on each criterion and the causal paths among criteria over an extended time period. Multiple conceptions of effectiveness, like multiple conceptions of leadership, serve to broaden our perspective and enlarge the scope of inquiry (Yukl, 1989a).

Research on leadership succession illustrates some of the criterion problems encountered in evaluating the magnitude of leadership influence on the effectiveness of an organization. Succession studies examine changes in performance occurring after changes in leadership. It is assumed that, if leadership is important, changes in top leadership should be associated with changes in the performance of the organization. Results from studies by Salancik and Pfeffer (1977b) and Lieberson and O'Connor (1972) were interpreted by some writers (e.g., Brown, 1982; Pfeffer, 1977) as evidence that organizational effectiveness depends primarily on factors beyond the leader's control, such as the economic conditions, market conditions, governmental policies, and technological change. However, Day and Lord (1989) found that results from the two succession studies were understated due to methodological problems such as failure to correct for the effects of organization size, failure to correct dollar-denominated criteria for effects of inflation, use of criteria not influenced directly by leaders (e.g., stock prices), and failure to allow enough time for new leaders to influence quantitative performance outcomes. Methodological problems in succession research are also discussed by Thomas (1988).

**Attributional Biases**
**About Importance of Leadership**

A number of writers have argued that the importance of leadership is exaggerated by the need for people to explain events in a way that fits their assumptions and implicit theories (Calder, 1977; Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich,

1985; Pfeffer, 1977). Organizations are complex social systems of patterned interactions among people. In their effort to understand the causes, dynamics, and outcomes of organizational processes, people interpret events in simple, human terms. Stereotypes, implicit theories, and simplified assumptions about causality help people make sense of events that other-wise would be incomprehensible. One especially prevalent explanation of organizational events is to attribute causality to the influence of leaders. Leaders are pictured as heroic figures who are capable of determining the fate of their organizations.

The emphasis on leadership as a cause of organizational events reflects a common cultural bias toward explaining experience primarily in terms of the rational actions of people, as opposed to uncontrollable natural forces, actions by supernatural beings, or random events not susceptible to human comprehension. A related cause is the widespread faith in human organizations as rational, goal-oriented systems that fulfill the needs of members and contribute to the general welfare of society. The people who occupy positions of top leadership in organizations symbolize the promise of organizations in modern civilization (Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985).

The attributional biases about leaders are exploited and magnified by political leaders and top executives who seek to create the impression that they are in control of events. Symbols and rituals, such as elaborate inaugural ceremonies, reinforce the perceived importance of leaders (Pfeffer, 1977). Successes are announced and celebrated; failures are suppressed or downplayed. Symbolic action is most likely when situational constraints and unpredictable events make it impossible for management to exert much influence over organizational performance. In this situation it is all the more important to maintain the impression that organizational leaders know what they are doing and are making good progress toward attaining organizational objectives (Bettman &

Weitz, 1983; Salancik and Meindl, 1984; Staw, McKechnie, & Puffer,1983).

Research on attributional biases indicates that people tend to exaggerate the importance of leadership as a cause of organizational performance. However, the attribution research does not demonstrate that leaders are unable to influence events and outcomes in their organizations. Taken together, the attribution research, the research on leadership importance (e.g., Day & Lord, 1989; Pfeffer & Davis-Blake, 1986; Smith, Carson, & Alexander,1984; Thomas, 1988; Weiner & Mahoney,1981), and the research on charismatic and transformational leaders supports the conclusion that top executives are able to exert a moderate influence on the performance of their organizations. Thus, an accurate conception of leadership importance appears to lie between the two extremes of heroic leader and impotent figurehead.

## Data Collection Methods

A major controversy about research methodology concerns the relative advantage of quantitative, hypothesis-testing research and descriptive, qualitative research (Morgan & Smircich, 1980; Strong, 1984). There is disagreement about what research methods (e.g., questionnaires and observation) are appropriate for studying leadership and what type of empirical data are needed to advance our understanding of leadership processes.

As we saw earlier, some critics of quantitative, hypothesis-testing research contend that it has an inherent bias toward exaggerating the importance of individual leaders. Most quantitative research on leadership behavior uses questionnaires filled out by subordinates or peers. The respondents are given the difficult task of retrospectively rating how often or how much a leader exhibited some behavior over a period of several months or years. There is growing evidence that these leader behavior descriptions are biased by attributions and other cognitive processes. One source of bias is respondent attributions based on information about leader effectiveness and other social cues (Cronshaw & Lord, 1987). For example, subordinates will likely attribute more desirable behaviors to leaders of high-performing groups than to leaders of low-performing groups, even though the actual behavior of the leaders was the same (Lord, Bining, Rush, & Thomas, 1978; Mitchell, Larson, & Green, 1977). It is likely that leader behavior ratings on questionnaires are also influenced by stereotypes and implicit assumptions about the nature of leadership (Phillips & Lord, 1986).

The amount of bias in behavior description questionnaires depends in part on the type of items used. A study by Gioia and Sims (1985) found that ratings of leader behavior were less accurate when the behaviors were ambiguous rather than concrete and easily observable. Bias may be affected also by the response format of the items. Most leader behavior description questionnaires ask how often each behavior is used rather than asking whether it is used in a skillful manner at an appropriate time. A frequency format may reduce the relevance of the measures, especially if a scale has many behaviors that are ineffective when overused or when used at inappropriate times (Shipper, 1991; Yukl, 1981).

Although evidence of rater bias raises doubts about measurement accuracy in behavior research involving questionnaires, the extent of the problem remains to be determined. Most research on the limitations of questionnaires consists of laboratory studies in which subjects had limited opportunity to observe leaders directly. The question of rater bias needs to be examined further with research in field settings.

Critics of questionnaire-correlational research advocate greater use of descriptive methods such as observation, interviews, and intensive case studies (e.g., Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Bryman, Bresnen, Beardworth, & Keil, 1988; Kotter, 1982; Luthans, Rosenkrantz, &

Hennessey, 1985). However, these descriptive research methods also have limitations, regardless of whether the form of data analysis is qualitative or quantitative (House, 1988a; Martinko & Gardner, 1985). Standards for the application and evaluation of qualitative methods are not as explicit as those for traditional quantitative methods, and interpretations based on qualitative methods are sometimes very subjective. The data collection methods in descriptive research are also susceptible to biases and distortions. Information obtained from critical incidents and interviews may be biased by selective memory for aspects of behavior consistent with the respondent's stereotypes and implicit theories about effective leadership. Direct observation is susceptible to selective attention and biased interpretation of events by the observer due to stereotypes and implicit theories. Attribution errors may occur if an observer or interviewer has information about unit performance.

Descriptive research methods do not automatically provide rich, detailed information about leadership processes; they are sometimes used in very superficial ways. For example, in some observation studies the observer merely checks off predetermined categories to classify events rather than writing narrative descriptions to be coded at a later time. This highly structured observation may focus attention away from the most interesting aspects of the events being observed, and unlike narrative description, it precludes other researchers from verifying the coding or reclassifying events in terms of different category systems. It is rare to find observational studies in leadership that include supplementary methods, such as interviews with key figures, to discover the context and meaning of events. Some exceptions are the study by Morris, Crowson, Hurwitz, and Porter-Gehrie (1981) and the study by Brown and Hosking (1986). However, there are risks as well as benefits from supplementary interviews; observers who ask leaders about their behavior increase the likelihood of becoming involved in the very processes under observation, thereby risking objectivity.

The limitations of each type of methodology make it desirable to use multiple methods in research on leadership (Jick, 1979; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1982). It is important to select methods that are appropriate for the type of knowledge sought rather than merely using whatever methods seem most convenient. The purpose of the research should dictate the methodology and choice of samples, not the other way around. Unfortunately, much of the research literature in leadership appears to be the result of uninspired researchers seeking yet another use for a questionnaire or test laying around on the shelf.

Leadership researchers are not limited to questionnaire-correlational studies and descriptive field studies. Controlled experiments in laboratory and field settings are appropriate for some types of leadership research and should be used more often. Field experiments can be conducted over a fairly long time interval with a combination of descriptive methods (e.g., interviews, observation, diaries) and repeated application of questionniares. Some other research methods that may have promise for studying particular aspects of leadership include protocol analysis (Schweiger, 1983), stimulated recall (Burgoyne & Hodgson,1984) and SYMLOG (Bales, Cohen, & Williamson, 1979), detailed ethnographic analysis (Strong, 1984), and realistic simulations (Kaplan, Lombardo, & Mazique, 1985).

## Group Versus Individual Level of Analysis

Issues involving level of analysis have complicated interpretation of research results from questionnaires and raised questions about comparison of findings across studies. One issue is the appropriate level of analysis for research on the relationship of leadership behavior, power, or traits to effectiveness criteria. Analysis of consequences can be made at the

individual level (e.g., correlate subordinate perception of leader power or behavior with a criterion of subordinate performance or satisfaction) or at the group level (e.g., aggregate subordinate ratings of each type of leader behavior or power and correlate the mean scale scores with a criterion of leader effectiveness). There are both advantages and disadvantages for each level of analysis. On the negative side, group-level analysis obscures differences in a leader's behavior toward different subordinates (Dansereau & Dumas, 1977). However, on the positive side, averaging ratings from several subordinates tends to reduce the effects of perceptual biases and rating errors (e.g., leniency, attributions, differential opportunity to observe leader) in behavior ratings made by individual subordinates.

There is continuing controversy about the appropriate level of analysis. Some theorists contend that it depends on the level of measurement for the predictor and criterion variables. Other theorists argue for multiple levels of analysis. For example, Dansereau, Alutto, and Yammarino (1984) proposed a method (within and between analysis, or WABA) for analyzing results at both levels simultaneously and separating the effects of average leader behavior from differential behavior toward individual subordinates. The method has been applied in several studies, and the results indicate that different conclusions about leadership effects are likely to be drawn depending on the level of analysis (Avolio & Yammarino, 1990; Yammarino, 1990; Yammarino & Bass, 1990). However, WABA is not appropriate when only a group-level criterion is available.

The WABA method provides some unique insights. However, there is so much ambiguity in data from most leader description questionnaires that interpretation of the results is still difficult even when WABA is used. To reduce the ambiguity of results, researchers should attempt to improve the accuracy of leadership questionnaires, and questionnaire data should be supplemented with information obtained from other methods such as interviews, diaries, and observations.

## Interpretation of Leadership Training Experiments

Field experiments in organizations are rare, and training studies are probably the most common form of field experiment on leadership. Most of the training experiments have been used to test leadership theories (see reviews by Bass, 1990; Latham, 1988). The typical approach is to compare the performance of managers trained in a particular leadership theory to the performance of managers in an untrained control group. Performance is usually measured with ratings made by the manager's immediate superior. If the trained managers perform better after training and they perform better than the control group, then the results are interpreted as supporting the theory.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to interpret positive results from this type of study because a number of rival hypotheses exist. For example, performance of the managers may have improved because of criterion contamination (superiors knew which managers were trained and were biased in rating them), differential treatment (superiors knew which managers were trained and provided more encouragement and assistance to facilitate training success), residual learning (trainees gained insights about effective practices from other managers in the training or acted differently after becoming aware of problems previously ignored), and networking during training (managers improved their working relationships with peers who participated in the training, thereby increasing cooperation and mutual problem solving after training). These rival hypotheses are not mutually exclusive, and each may explain higher performance ratings after training, even though trainees did not learn the leadership theory

showcased in the training or did not apply it back on the job.

Some special problems occur for tests of contingency theories. A training study should not be interpreted as supporting a contingency theory in which leader behavior is the focal independent variable unless the researcher demonstrates that performance improved only after behavior changed in a way consistent with the leadership theory. Measures of behavior over a period of several months before and after training are necessary to evaluate changes in behavior. A training study cannot be interpreted as supporting only the showcased theory if the behavior change is consistent also with other leadership theories.

In some tests of leadership theories the focal independent variable is a trait or skill rather than leader behavior. An example is an intervention to increase managerial motivation or interpersonal skills. In this type of study, it is not enough to demonstrate that training resulted in an increase in managerial effectiveness. The study should confirm that training increased the focal trait or skill and did not increase other traits or skills that could account for the improvement in effectiveness. Furthermore, it is much easier to interpret the results if measures of intervening processes are included (e.g., leader behavior, influence processes). In summary, more attention needs to be paid to the design of future training studies intended to test theories of leadership.

## Individual Versus Shared Leadership

Most research and theory on leadership has favored a definition of leadership that emphasizes the primary importance of unilateral influence by a single, "heroic" leader. As noted earlier, the prevalence of this perspective is due in part to our attributional biases. An alternative perspective is in terms of shared leadership processes and systems dynamics. According to this perspective, leadership in large organizations involves reciprocal influence processes among multiple individuals at different levels, in different subunits, and within executive teams. Leadership processes cannot be understood apart from the dynamics of the social system in which they are embedded (Dachler, 1988). The importance of a systems perspective is supported by research on power struggles and political processes in organizations (Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981).

Bradford and Cohen (1984) contend that the stereotype of the "heroic leader" undermines effective leadership by a chief executive. The heroic leader is expected to be wiser and more courageous than anyone else in the organization and to know everything that is happening in it. However, these expectations are unrealistic, and leaders are seldom able to live up to them. Shared responsibility for leadership functions and empowerment of subordinates is more effective than heroic leadership, but it is unlikely to occur as long as people expect the leader to take full responsibility for the fate of the organization.

The extent to which leadership can be shared, the conditions facilitating success of shared leadership, and the implications for design of organizations are all important and interesting questions that deserve more research. As yet, we have only begun to examine these research questions. A few social scientists have examined shared leadership in executive teams or at different levels in the organization (Barnes & Kriger, 1986; Eisenstat & Cohen, 1990; Krantz, 1990; Vanderslice, 1988). Research on self-managed autonomous work groups has explored the consequences of sharing leadership functions formerly performed by a first-level supervisor (Hackman, 1986, 1990; Kerr, Hill, & Broedling, 1986; Manz & Sims, 1987, 1989). Other researchers have examined leadership as a shared process embedded within social systems (Brown & Hosking, 1986; Crouch & Yetton, 1988; Dachler, 1984; Jacobs & Jaques, 1987). Lawler (1984) examined the implications of a systems approach for understanding the effectiveness of participative leadership. Viewing leadership

in terms of reciprocal, recursive influence processes among multiple parties in a systems context is a very different research paradigm from the study of unidirectional effects of a single leader on subordinates. New methods may be needed to describe and analyze the complex nature of leadership processes in social systems.

## Conclusion

Our review of different lines of leadership research conducted during the past 50 years clearly shows a prevailing pattern of segmentation and narrow focus in most of the theories and empirical studies. In trait research there has been little concern for direct measurement of leadership behavior or influence, even though it is evident that the effects of leader traits are mediated by leadership behavior and influence. In behavior research, leader traits are seldom considered, even though they influence a leader's behavior; likewise, power is seldom considered, even though some behavior is an attempt to exercise power. In research on power, leadership behavior is rarely examined except in studies that deal explicitly with influence tactics, and there has been little concern for traits except ones that are a source of leader power. The situational theories examine how the situation enhances or nullifies the effects of a few selected leader behaviors or traits, rather than taking a broader view of the way traits, power, behavior, and situation all interact to determine leadership effectiveness. Some theories of transformational and charismatic leadership incorporate a broader variety of variables (e.g., leader traits, behavior, power, and situation), but these theories focus only on particular aspects of leadership and ignore other aspects (Yukl, 1989a).

Despite the prevailing pattern of segmentation in leadership research, the number of studies that straddle more than one approach is slowly increasing, and the different lines of research are gradually converging. When the sets of variables from different approaches are viewed as part of a larger network of interacting variables, they appear to be interrelated in a meaningful way (Yukl, 1989a). We have made considerable progress in unraveling the mysteries surrounding the subject of leadership, and the rate of progress appears to be accelerating (House, 1988a; Yukl, 1989a). A broader perspective on leadership processes in future research would facilitate development of an integrated, general theory of leadership.

The last decade has seen a significant increase in the scope of inquiry and variety of methodology. Some interesting trends are beginning to emerge in leadership theory and research. The pendulum appears to be swinging back from extreme situationalism to a more balanced theoretical perspective that acknowledges the possible coexistence of both universal and situational elements of leadership. For example, the universal proposition that the behavior of effective leaders demonstrates high concern for both the task and people is not inconsistent with the situational proposition that leaders act in different ways depending on the situation. Another trend is increased use of cognitive theories to describe how leaders and followers perceive each other, instead of relying entirely on mechanistic behavior theories to explain leadership processes. Cognitive approaches were found in a number of the theories reviewed in this chapter. Still another emerging trend is the growing interest in examining leadership as a shared process embedded within social systems. Most of the prevailing leadership theories have been simple, unidirectional models of causality that focus on what a leader does to subordinates, but there is growing recognition that new theories and methods are needed to describe interactive leadership processes that unfold over time in social systems.

A final issue that is relevant to further development of knowledge about leadership processes is the growing awareness that leadership concepts and theories are subjective efforts by social scientists to interpret ambiguous events in a meaningful way, not precise descriptions of real events and immutable natural laws (Astley, 1985; Dachler, 1988). Social scientists interpret events for each other and for practitioners, just as leaders interpret events for followers, and this interpretation is itself a reflection of the prevailing culture and values (Calas & Smircich, 1988). Some social scientists, like some leaders, are more skilled at selling their ideas, and once a theory becomes widely known, it takes considerable time and negative evidence to lay it to rest. Perhaps the growing awareness of the extent to which our field is subjective and arbitrary rather than objective and systematic will help to make leadership researchers a little more humble about their theories and measures, and practitioners a little less preoccupied with finding the latest secret remedy for leadership success.

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