Chapter 2

Traits, Motives, and Characteristics of Leaders


From the New York Yankees dugout the grass looks greener than it does on TV. The players seem taller and the baseline gravel seems coarser. But one image that appears the same from this on-field perspective is Joe Torre's cool game face. The Yankees' manager prides himself on his calm, on and off the field. It is key to an understated management style that enabled him since he took charge in 1996 to lead a culturally diverse team of players—with huge salaries and egos—to eight consecutive postseason appearances and six World Series appearances.

"My greatest talent is calmness and being positive," says Torre, 64. "I concentrate on what you can do even in the worst of times. You don't judge by last week's errors or lost opportunity." He keeps that attitude throughout the season.

"He never panics," says team captain and all-star shortstop Derek Jeter. Even when Jeter went hitless in thirty-two at-bats in the early 2004 season, Torre said Jeter was "still the one I trust. It's a long season."

Torre pushes his players for results, but only, he says, by treating them as he would wish to be treated—with fairness and honesty.

The vignette just presented describes a well-known manager who has several of the leadership traits discussed in this chapter, particularly stability under pressure and honesty. When people evaluate managers in terms of their leadership effectiveness, they often scrutinize the managers' traits and personal characteristics. Instead of focusing only on the results the managers achieve, those making the evaluation assign considerable weight to the manager's attributes, such as adherence to high standards. Many people believe intuitively that personal characteristics strongly determine leadership effectiveness.

The belief that certain personal characteristics and skills contribute to leadership effectiveness in many situations is the universal theory of leadership. According to this theory, certain leadership traits are universally important; that is, they apply in all situations. This and the following chapter concentrate on personal characteristics; Chapter 4 describes the behaviors and skills that are part of the universal theory. Of course, personal characteristics are closely associated with leadership skills and behaviors. For example, creative thinking ability (a characteristic) helps a leader formulate an exciting vision (leadership behavior).

Characteristics associated with leadership can be classified into three broad categories: personality traits, motives, and cognitive factors. These categories of behavior serve as helpful guides. However, they are not definitive: a convincing argument can often be made that an aspect of leadership placed in one category could be placed in another. Nevertheless, no matter how personal characteristics are classified, they point toward the conclusion that effective leaders are made of the right stuff. Published research about the trait (great person) approach first appeared at the turn of the century, and it continues today. Since a full listing of every personal characteristic ever found to be associated with leadership would take several hundred pages, this chapter discusses only the major and most consistently found characteristics related to leadership effectiveness.
Observations by managers and human resource specialists, as well as dozens of research studies, indicate that leaders have certain personality traits. These characteristics contribute to leadership effectiveness in many situations as long as the leader's style fits the situation reasonably well. For example, an executive might perform admirably as a leader in several different high-technology companies with different organizational cultures. However, his intellectual style might make him a poor fit with production workers. Leaders' personality traits can be divided into two groups: general personality traits, such as self-confidence and trustworthiness, and task-related traits, such as an internal locus of control.

**General Personality Traits**

We define a general personality trait as a trait that is observable both within and outside the context of work. That is, the same general traits are related to success and satisfaction in both work and personal life. Figure 2-1 lists the general personality traits that contribute to successful leadership.

**Self-Confidence** Self-confidence improves one's performance in a variety of tasks, including leadership. A leader who is self-assured without being bombastic or overbearing instills self-confidence in team members. A self-confident team leader of a group facing a seemingly impossible deadline might tell the group, "We are understaffed and overworked, but I know we can get this project done on time. I've been through tough demands like this before. If we work like a true team, we can pull it off."

Self-confidence was among the first leadership traits researchers identified, and it has recently received considerable attention as a major contributor to leadership effectiveness. In addition to being self-confident, the leader must project that self-confidence to the group. He or she may do so by using unequivocal wording, main-

**FIGURE 2-1 General Personality Traits of Effective Leaders**

- Self-confidence
- Humility
- Trustworthiness
- Extraversion
- Assertiveness
- Emotional stability
- Warmth
- Leadership
- Sense of humor
- Enthusiasm

**Humility** Although self-confidence is a key leadership trait, so is humility, or being humble at the right times. Part of humility is admitting that you do not know everything and cannot do everything, as well as admitting your mistakes to team members and outsiders. A leader, upon receiving a compliment for an accomplishment, may explain that the group deserves the credit. The case for humility as a leadership trait is made strongly by Stephen G. Harrison, the president of a consulting firm, in his comment about how the definition of great leadership has changed: "Great leadership is manifested or articulated by people who know how to understate it. There is leadership value in humility, the leadership that comes from putting people in the limelight, not yourself. Great leadership comes from entirely unexpected places. It's understatement, it's dignity, it's service, it's selflessness." Research by Jim Collins on what makes companies endure and dramatically improve their performance supports the importance of humility. He uses the term *Level 5 Leader* to describe the most accomplished leaders. Level 5 Leaders are modest yet determined to accomplish their objectives.

**Trustworthiness** Evidence and opinion continue to mount that being trustworthy and/or honest contributes to leadership effectiveness. An effective leader or manager is supposed to *walk the talk*, thereby showing a consistency between deeds (walking) and words (talk). In this context, *trust* is defined as a person's confidence in another individual's intentions and motives and in the sincerity of that individual's word. Leaders must be trustworthy, and they must also trust group members. Given that so many people distrust top-level business leaders, as well as political leaders, gaining and maintaining trust is a substantial challenge. The following trust builders are worthy of a prospective leader's attention and implementation:

- Make your behavior consistent with your intentions. Practice what you preach and set the example. Let others know of your intentions and invite feedback on how well you are achieving them.
- When your organization or organizational unit encounters a problem, move into a problem-solving mode instead of looking to blame others for what went wrong.
- Honor confidences. One incident of passing along confidential information results in a permanent loss of trust by the person whose confidence was violated.
Maintain a high level of integrity. Build a reputation for doing what you think is morally right in spite of the political consequences.

Tell the truth. It is much easier to be consistent when you do not have to keep patching up your story to conform to an earlier lie.

Make trust pay in terms of receiving rewards. Trust needs to be seen as a way of gaining advantage.

It takes a leader a long time to build trust, yet one brief incident of untrustworthy behavior can permanently destroy it. Leaders are usually allowed a fair share of honest mistakes. In contrast, dishonest mistakes quickly erode leadership effectiveness.

When a leader is perceived as trustworthy, the organization benefits. Kurt T. Dirks and Donald L. Ferrin examined the findings and implications of research during the last four decades about trust in leadership. The review involved 106 studies and 27,103 individuals. The meta-analysis (quantitative synthesis of studies) emphasized supervisory leadership based on the importance of trust in day-to-day interactions with group members. Trusting a leader was more highly associated with a variety of work attitudes of group members. The highest specific relationships with trust were as follows:56

- Job satisfaction (r = .51)
- Organizational commitment (r = .49)
- Turnover intentions (r = -.40) (If you trust your leader, you are less likely to intend to leave.)
- Belief in information provided by the leader (r = .35)
- Commitment to decisions (r = .24)
- Satisfaction with the leader (r = .73)
- LMX (r = .69) (LMX refers to favorable exchanges with the leader.)

The relationship of trust to job performance was statistically significant but quite low (r = .16). One reason may be that many people perform well for a leader they distrust out of fear of being fired or bad-listed.

Being trustworthy and earning trust are considered so essential to effective leadership that some companies use these factors to evaluate leaders and managers. For example, IBM evaluates its leaders on ten key factors, one of which is earning trust. A leader who earns trusts "does what is right for the long-term good of relationships inside and outside of IBM." As with the other traits (some of which are really behaviors), the relevance of earning trust was uncovered from interviews with thirty-three IBM executives who had been regarded as outstanding leaders within the company.11

Leadership Self-Assessment Quiz 2-1 gives you the opportunity to examine your own tendencies toward trustworthiness.

Extraversion Extraversion (the scientific spelling for extraversion) has been recognized for its contribution to leadership effectiveness because it is helpful for leaders to be gregarious and outgoing in most situations. Also, extraverts are more likely to want to assume a leadership role and participate in group activities. A meta-analysis of seventy-three studies involving 11,705 subjects found that extraversion was the most consistent personality factor related to leadership effectiveness and leadership emergence.53 (Emergence refers to someone being perceived as having leadership qualities.)
Even though it is logical to think that extraversion is related to leadership, many effective leaders are laid-back and even introverted. Michael Dell, the famous founder of Dell Inc., is a reserved individual who is sometimes described as having a vanilla personality. Yet Dell has been working to become more extraverted in recent years.

**Assertiveness** Letting others know where you stand contributes to leadership effectiveness. Assertiveness refers to being forthright in expressing demands, opinions, feelings, and attitudes. Being assertive helps leaders perform many tasks and achieve goals. Among them are confronting group members about their mistakes, demanding higher performance, setting high expectations, and making legitimate demands on higher management. A director of her company's cell phone service unit was assertive when she said to her staff, "Our cell service is the worst in the industry. We have to improve." An assertive person is reasonably tactful rather than being aggressive and obnoxious. Leadership Self-Assessment Quiz 2-2 gives you the opportunity to determine how assertive you are.

### THE ASSERTIVENESS SCALE

**INSTRUCTIONS** Indicate whether each of the following statements is mostly true or mostly false as it applies to you. If in doubt about your reaction to a particular statement, think of how you would generally respond.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>Mostly False</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is extremely difficult for me to turn down a sales representative when he or she is a nice person.</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I express criticism freely.</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If another person is being very unfair, I bring it to that person's attention.</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Work is no place to let your feelings show.</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is no use asking for favors; people get what they deserve.</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
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6. Business is not the place for tact; say what you think. ☐ ☐
7. If a person looks as if he or she is in a hurry, I let that person in front of me in a supermarket line. ☐ ☐
8. A weakness of mine is that I am too nice a person. ☐ ☐
9. If my restaurant bill is even 50 cents more than it should be, I demand that the mistake be corrected. ☐ ☐
10. If the mood strikes me, I will laugh out loud in public. ☐ ☐
11. People would describe me as too outspoken. ☐ ☐
12. I am quite willing to have the store take back a piece of furniture that was scratched upon delivery. ☐ ☐
13. I dread having to express anger toward a coworker. ☐ ☐
14. People often say that I am too reserved and emotionally controlled. ☐ ☐
15. I have told friends and work associates exactly what it is about their behavior that irritates or displeases me. ☐ ☐
16. I fight for my rights down to the last detail. ☐ ☐
17. I have no misgivings about returning an overcoat to the store if it does not fit me right. ☐ ☐
18. After I have an argument with a person, I try to avoid him or her. ☐ ☐
19. I insist that my spouse (or roommate or partner) do his or her fair share of undesirable chores. ☐ ☐
20. It is difficult for me to look directly at another person when the two of us are in disagreement. ☐ ☐
21. I have cried among friends more than once. ☐ ☐
22. If someone near me at a movie keeps up a conversation with another person, I ask him or her to stop. ☐ ☐
23. I am able to turn down social engagements with people I do not particularly care for. ☐ ☐
24. It is in poor taste to express what you really feel about another individual. ☐ ☐
25. I sometimes show my anger by swearing at or belittling another person. ☐ ☐
26. I am reluctant to speak up at a meeting. ☐ ☐
27. I find it relatively easy to ask friends for small favors such as giving me a ride to work while my car is being repaired.  
28. If another person is talking very loudly in a restaurant and it bothers me, I inform that person.  
29. I often finish other people's sentences for them.  
30. It is relatively easy for me to express love and affection toward another person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORING KEY</th>
<th>1. Mostly false</th>
<th>11. Mostly true</th>
<th>21. Mostly true</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. Mostly true</td>
<td>12. Mostly true</td>
<td>22. Mostly true</td>
<td></td>
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<td>5. Mostly false</td>
<td>15. Mostly true</td>
<td>25. Mostly true</td>
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<td>7. Mostly false</td>
<td>17. Mostly true</td>
<td>27. Mostly true</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Mostly true</td>
<td>20. Mostly false</td>
<td>30. Mostly true</td>
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**SCORING AND INTERPRETATION:** Score 1 for each of your answers that agrees with the scoring key.
- 0-15: Nonassertive
- 16-24: Assertive
- 25+: Aggressive

Do this exercise again about thirty days from now to see how stable your answers are. You might also discuss your answers with a close friend to determine if that person has a similar perception of your assertiveness.

A score in the nonassertive range could suggest that you need to develop your assertiveness and self-confidence and become less shy to enhance those aspects of your leadership that involve face-to-face interaction with people. To help verify the accuracy of this score, ask a current or former boss whether he or she agrees that you are nonassertive.

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**Emotional Stability:** Anyone who has ever worked for an unstable boss will attest to the importance of emotional stability as a leadership trait. Emotional stability refers to the ability to control emotions to the point that one's emotional responses are appropriate to the occasion. Emotions associated with low emotional stability include anxiety, depression, anger, embarrassment, and worry.

Emotional stability is an important leadership trait because group members expect and need consistency in the way they are treated. A sales manager had this to say about her boss, the vice president of marketing: "It was difficult to know whether to bring problems to Larry's attention. Some days he would compliment me for taking customer problems seriously. Other times he would rant and rave about the ineffectiveness of the sales department. We all worry about having our performance appraised on one of Larry's crazy days." In contrast, you will recall that calmness and stability contribute to the leadership of Joe Torre, the New York Yankees manager.

One study found that executive leaders who are emotionally unstable and lack composure are more likely to handle pressure poorly and give in to moodiness, outbursts of anger, and inconsistent behavior. Such inconsistency undermines their relationships with group members, peers, and superiors. In contrast, effective leaders are generally calm, confident, and predictable during a crisis.

**Enthusiasm:** In almost all leadership situations, it is desirable for the leader to be enthusiastic. Group members tend to respond positively to enthusiasm, partly because enthusiasm may be perceived as a reward for constructive behavior. Enthusiasm is also a desirable leadership trait because it helps build good relationships with team members. A leader can express enthusiasm both verbally ("Great job!""); "I love it") and nonverbally (making a "high five" gesture). An executive newsletter made an enthusiastic comment about enthusiasm as a leadership trait:

People look to you for [enthusiasm] to inspire them. It is the greatest tool for motivating others and for getting things done. As a leader, you have to get out in front of your people. Even the most enthusiastic employee is loath to show more of it than his or her boss. If you don't project a gung-ho attitude, everybody else will hold back.

**Sense of Humor:** Whether humor is a trait or a behavior, the effective use of humor is an important part of the leader's role. Humor adds to the approachability and people orientation of a leader. Claudia Kennedy, as a three-star army general and the army's senior intelligence official, occupied a key leadership position. During an interview for a magazine article, she mentioned that although she had no regrets, her demanding career had not allowed for having a husband and children. The reporter commented, "You could still get married." Kennedy retorted, "Well certainly—put my phone number in this article."

Laughter and humor serve such functions in the workplace as relieving tension and boredom and defusing hostility. Because humor helps the leader dissolve tension and defuse conflict, it helps him or her exert power over the group. Self-effacing humor is the choice of comedians and organizational leaders alike. By being self-effacing, the leader makes a point without insulting or slighting anybody. Instead of criticizing a staff member for being too technical, the leader might say, "Wait, I need your help. Please explain how this new product works in terms that even I can understand." Notice that General Kennedy’s comments were slightly self-effacing by implying that she needed to have her phone number widely disseminated in order to obtain dates.

Leadership Skill-Building Exercise 2-1 provides an opportunity to use humor effectively.
Warmth Being a warm person and projecting that warmth contribute to leadership effectiveness in several ways. First, warmth helps establish rapport with group members. Second, the projection of warmth is a key component of charisma. Third, warmth is a trait that helps provide emotional support to group members. Giving such support is an important leadership behavior. Fourth, in the words of Kegan Page, “Warmth comes with the territory. Cold fish don’t make good leaders because they turn people off.”

Task-Related Personality Traits Certain personality traits of effective leaders are closely associated with task accomplishment. The task-related traits described here are outlined in Figure 2-2.

Passion for the Work and the People A dominant characteristic of effective leaders is their passion for their work and to some extent for the people who help them accomplish the work. The passion goes beyond enthusiasm and often expresses itself as an obsession for achieving company goals. Many leaders begin their workday at 6:00 A.M. and return to their homes at 7:00 P.M. After dinner they retreat to their home office to conduct business for about two more hours. Information technology devices, such as personal digital assistants and cell phones, feed the passion for work, making it possible to be in touch with the office even during golf or a family picnic. The downside to extreme passion for work is that it can lead to work addiction, thereby interfering with other joys in life.

Passion for their work is especially evident in entrepreneurial leaders, no matter what size and type of business. A given business, such as refurbishing engines, might appear mundane to outsiders. The leader of such a business, however, is willing to talk for hours about tearing down old engines and about the wonderful people who help do the job. Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon.com and one of the world’s best-known entrepreneurs, exemplifies passion for work. Asked if running Amazon was as much fun as it used to be, he replied:

The truth is yes. Sure I like being the poster child instead of the piñata a little bit more. But I’m a change junkie. I love the rate of change. I love the intellectual challenge of what we’re doing. I love the people I work with. It’s not like me against the world. We’ve got a big team of people. It’s fun.\footnote{17}

Being passionate about the nature of the business can be a major success factor in its survival. Randy Komisar, a strategy consultant to many dot-com business firms, argues that the purpose of business cannot be simply to make lots of money. He says that too many business start-ups lack a deep foundation in values and are managed by a drive for success, not by passion. “Drive pushes you toward an objective, and you can deny part of yourself by sheer will to achieve a goal,” Komisar explains. “Passion irresistibly pulls you toward the need to express yourself and has to come from within and be nurtured.” A problem with drive alone is that the end justifies the means.\footnote{18}

Emotional Intelligence Leadership researchers and experienced workers have long known that how well a person manages his or her emotions and those of others influences leadership effectiveness. For example, recognizing anger in yourself and others, as well as being able to empathize with people, can help you be more effective in exerting influence. In recent years, many different aspects of emotions, motives, and personality that help determine interpersonal effectiveness and leadership skill have been placed under the comprehensive label of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to do such things as understand one’s feelings, have empathy for others, and regulate one’s emotions to enhance one’s quality of life. This type of intelligence generally has to do with the ability to connect with people and understand their emotions. Many of the topics in this chapter (such as warmth) and throughout the text (such as political skill) can be considered related to emotional intelligence.

**FIGURE 2-2 Task-Related Personality Traits of Leaders**
Based on research in dozens of companies, Daniel Goleman discovered that the most effective leaders are alike in one essential way: they all have a high degree of emotional intelligence. Cognitive intelligence (or general mental ability) and technical skills are considered threshold capabilities for success in executive positions. Yet, according to Goleman, without a high degree of emotional intelligence, a person can have excellent training, superior analytical skills, and loads of innovative suggestions, but he or she will still not make a great leader. His analysis also revealed that emotional intelligence played an increasingly important role in high-level management positions, where differences in technical skills are of negligible importance. Furthermore, when star performers were compared with average ones in senior leadership positions, differences in emotional intelligence were more pronounced than differences in cognitive abilities. Four key factors in emotional intelligence are described next, along with a brief explanation of how each factor links to leadership effectiveness. The components of emotional intelligence have gone through several versions, and the version presented here is tied closely to leadership and interpersonal skills. The leader who scores high in emotional intelligence is described as resonant.

1. **Self-awareness.** The ability to understand your own emotions is the most essential of the four emotional intelligence competencies. Having high self-awareness allows people to know their strengths and limitations and have high self-esteem. Resonant leaders use self-awareness to accurately measure their own moods, and they intuitively understand how their moods affect others. (Effective leaders seek feedback to see how well their actions are received by others. A leader with good self-awareness would recognize such factors as whether he or she was being liked or was exerting the right amount of pressure on people.)

2. **Self-management.** This is the ability to control one’s emotions and act with honesty and integrity in a consistent and adaptable manner. The right degree of self-management helps prevent a person from throwing temper tantrums when activities do not go as planned. Resonant leaders do not let their occasional bad moods ruin their day. If they cannot overcome the bad mood, the work associates know of the problem and how long it might last. (A leader with high self-management would not suddenly decide to fire a group member because of one difference of opinion.)

3. **Social awareness.** This includes having empathy for others and intuition about organizational problems. Socially aware leaders go beyond sensing the emotions of others by observing them. In addition, they accurately size up political forces in the office. (A team leader with social awareness or empathy would be able to assess whether a team member had enough enthusiasm for a project to assign it to him. A CEO who had empathy for a labor union’s demands might be able to negotiate successfully with the head of the labor union to avoid a costly strike.)

4. **Relationship management.** This includes the interpersonal skills of being able to communicate clearly and convincingly, disarm conflicts, and build strong personal bonds. Resonant leaders use relationship management skills to spread their enthusiasm and solve disagreements, often with kindness and humor. (A leader with good relationship management skills would not burn bridges and would continue to enlarge his or her network of people to win support when support is needed. A leader or manager with good relationship management skills is more likely to be invited by headhunters to explore new career opportunities.)

If leaders do not have emotional intelligence, they may not achieve their full potential. Steve Heyer, a former high-level executive at Coca-Cola, is a case in point. He was highly intelligent and became COO (Coca-Cola as a person with the ability to be COO). But Heyer’s personality ran against the company’s ingrained culture, and he did not pick up on the subtle cues about how he should behave (part of emotional intelligence). He was harsh with people and flaunted his position. Because Coke depends on its bottlers, company executives have a saying: “If your bottler drives a Cadillac, you drive a Buick. If your bottler drives a Buick, you drive a Ford. If your bottler drives a Ford, you walk.” Heyer drove a Mercedes. Furthermore, he purchased a house on the same street as Coke’s patriarch, Robert Woodruff. Heyer was denied promotion to CEO, and he left the company in June 2004. He also clashed with key people in his next executive position, as key executive in a investment banking firm. In contrast to Heyer, many of the leaders described in this text have high emotional intelligence. Research on emotional intelligence and leadership has also focused on the importance of the leader’s mood in influencing performance. Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee believe that the leader’s mood and his or her associated behaviors greatly influence bottom-line performance. One reason is that moods are contagious. A cranky and ruthless leader creates a toxic organization of underachievers (who perform at less than their potential). In contrast, an upbeat and inspirational leader helps followers who can surmount most challenges. Thus mood finally affects profit and loss. The implication for leaders is that they have to develop emotional intelligence regarding their moods. It is also helpful to develop a sense of humor, because lightheartedness is the most contagious of moods.

Despite all the attention paid to emotional intelligence, it is a supplement to, not a substitute for, mental ability. A person cannot be an effective leader on the basis of emotional intelligence alone.

**Flexibility and Adaptability** A leader is someone who facilitates change. It therefore follows that a leader must be flexible enough to cope with such changes as technological advances, downsizings, outsourcing, a shifting customer base, and a changing work force. Flexibility, or the ability to adjust to different situations, has long been recognized as an important leadership characteristic. Leaders who are flexible are able to adjust to the demands of changing conditions, much as antilock brakes enable an automobile to adjust to changes in road conditions. Without the underlying trait of flexibility, a person could be an effective leader in only one or two situations. The manufacturing industry exemplifies a field in which situation adaptability is particularly important because top executives are required to provide leadership for both traditional production employees as well as highly-skilled professionals.

**Internal Locus of Control** People with an internal locus of control believe that they are the prime mover behind events. Thus, an internal locus of control helps a leader in the role of a take-charge person because the leader believes fundamentally in his or her innate capacity to take charge. An internal locus of control is closely related to self-confidence. A strong internal locus facilitates self-confidence because the person perceives that he or she can control circumstances enough to perform well. A leader with an internal locus of control is likely to be favored by group members. One reason is that an "internal" person is perceived as more powerful than an "external" person because he or she takes responsibility for events. The leader with
an internal locus of control would emphasize that he or she can change unfavorable conditions, as did Allen Questrom during his time at J.C. Penney (Chapter 1). You may recall that he also encouraged the managers reporting to him to take responsibility for their part in Penney’s turnaround.

Leadership Skill-Building Exercise 2-2 provides you with an opportunity to begin strengthening your internal locus of control. Considerable further work would be required to shift from an external to an internal locus of control.

DEVELOPING AN INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

A person’s locus of control is usually a deeply ingrained thinking pattern that develops over a period of many years. Nevertheless, you can begin developing a stronger internal locus of control by analyzing past successes and failures to determine how much influence you had on the outcome of these events. By repeatedly analyzing the relative contribution of internal versus external factors in shaping events, you may learn to feel more in charge of key events in your life. The events listed below are a good starting point:

1. A contest or athletic event that you either won or made a good showing in
   What were the factors within your control that led to your winning or making a good showing?

2. A course in which you received a poor grade
   What were the factors within your control that led to this poor grade?

What were the factors beyond your control that led to your winning or making a good showing?

What were the factors beyond your control that led to this poor grade?

3. A group project to which you were assigned that worked out poorly
   What were the factors within your control that led to this poor result?

What were the factors beyond your control that led to this poor result?

Courage Leaders need courage to face the challenges of taking prudent risks and taking initiative in general. Courage comes from the heart, as suggested by the French word for heart, cœur. Leaders must face up to responsibility and be willing to put their reputations on the line. It takes courage for a leader to suggest a new undertaking, because if the undertaking fails, the leader is often seen as having failed. The more faith people place in the power of leaders to cause events, the more strongly they blame leaders when outcomes are unfavorable.

It also takes courage to take a stand that could backfire. David Dorman, the chairman and chief executive of AT&T, made a courageous decision several years ago when he announced that AT&T would stop promoting its local and long-distance services to home consumers and focus exclusively on business customers. AT&T had been providing long-distance services since 1885, and at one time the company served virtually every U.S. home with a phone. Thus Dorman's decision marked the end of an era. Dorman said the decision to pull the plug on the consumer business was painful but necessary because revenues from consumer services were falling 20 percent per year.25 But this decision, if wrong, could lead to the total demise of AT&T as a free-standing company.

Leadership Motives

Effective leaders, as opposed to nonleaders and less effective leaders, have frequently been distinguished by their motives and needs. In general, leaders have an intense desire to occupy a position of responsibility for others and to control them. Figure 2-3 outlines four specific leadership motives or needs. All four motives can be considered task related.

The Power Motive

Effective leaders have a strong need to control resources. Leaders with high power motives have three dominant characteristics: (1) they act with vigor and determination
to exert their power; (2) they invest much time in thinking about ways to alter the behavior and thinking of others; and (3) they care about their personal standing with those around them. The power motive is important because it means that the leader is interested in influencing others. Without power, it is much more difficult to influence others. Power is not necessarily good or evil; it can be used for the sake of the power holder (personalized power motive) or for helping others (socialized power motive).

**Personalized Power Motive** Leaders with a personalized power motive seek power mostly to further their own interests. They crave the trappings of power, such as status symbols, luxury, and money. In recent years, some leaders have taken up power boating, or racing powerful, high-speed boats. When asked how he liked his power-boating experience, an entrepreneurial leader replied, “It’s fun, but the startup cost are about $500,000.”

Because of his love for the trappings of power, Donald Trump is seen as a leader with a strong personalized power motive. Even the name Donald Trump is registered; that is, it is supposed to be written with the “registered” symbol upon first mention. Trump has a penchant for naming yachts, hotels, and office buildings after himself. His drive for power is intertwined with his immorality and lack of humility. Trump’s television show, *The Apprentice*, helped make him a national symbol of power, and his firm even tried to make the term “You’re fired” a registered trademark.

Despite Trump’s elevated personalized power motive, he does not fit all three characteristics stated above. Trump gives his financial managers considerable latitude in running his enterprises. In contrast to Trump, some leaders with strong personalized power motives typically enjoy dominating others. Their need for dominance can lead to submissive subordinates who are frequently sycophants and yes-people.

**Socialized Power Motive** Leaders with a socialized power motive use power primarily to achieve organizational goals or a vision. In this context, the term socialized means that the leader uses power primarily to help others. As a result, he or she is likely to pro-

![Figure 2-3 Leadership Motives](image)

**The Drive and Achievement Motive**

Leaders are known for working hard to achieve their goals. Drive refers to a propensity to put forth high energy into achieving goals and to a persistence in applying that energy. Drive also includes achievement motivation—finding joy in accomplishment for its own sake. Entrepreneurs and high-level corporate managers usually have strong achievement motivation. Such people have a consistent desire to:

1. Achieve through their own efforts and take responsibility for success or failure
2. Take moderate risks that can be handled through their own efforts
3. Receive feedback on their level of performance
4. Introduce novel, innovative, or creative solutions
5. Plan and set goals

**A Strong Work Ethic**

Effective leaders typically have a strong work ethic, a firm belief in the dignity of work. People with a strong work ethic are well motivated because they value hard work. Most leaders need this quality because they have a heavy workload. A strong work ethic helps the organizational leader believe that the group task is worthwhile. For example, the outside world might not think that the production of specialty soft drinks (such as high-caffeine cola) and bottled spring water is important. Yet the founder of one such company said that he delights in the pleasure his company brings to so many people. He also added, “a lot of IT [information technology] specialists wouldn’t be nearly as productive without getting energized by our cola.”

**Tenacity and Resilience**

A final observation about the motivational characteristics of organizational leaders is that they are tenacious. Leaders are better at overcoming obstacles than are nonleaders. Tenacity multiplies in importance for organizational leaders because it takes a long time to implement a new program or to consummate a business deal, such as acquiring another company. A study of 150 leaders conducted by Warren Bennis reinforces the link between leadership effectiveness and tenacity. All interviewees exhibited a strongly developed sense of purpose and a willful determination to achieve what they want.
THE PERSEVERING AND RESILIENT ED BREEN, NOW OF TYCO

When Motorola acquired General Instrument Corporation in January 2000, Edward D. Breen lost his CEO job and became a division head. Many executives would have quit to avoid living with a bruised ego from shrunken power and reduced visibility, especially if they were independently wealthy. Breen not only stayed, but he also flourished in the new company. Breen’s strategy was to retain nearly all his former management team, make fast decisions, and pursue top posts elsewhere.

The 46-year-old executive, a former college wrestler, had made a rapid rise to president and chief operating officer of General Instrument Corporation. He became a General Instrument and then Motorola senior executive just ten years later. In 2001 he was the only top officer to earn a raise or restricted shares. He also garnered more stock options than Christopher Galvin, the chairman, CEO, and founder’s grandson.

While a division head, the loyalty Breen fostered with fifty former General Instrument vice presidents paid off. All but one followed him to Motorola. “Everybody was pretty loyal to the team,” said one insider. “A lot of them thought he would move up in the company.”

Breen and his team represented the kind of talent Motorola needed, and he soon emerged as a key architect of Motorola’s recovery effort. He agreed to remain for one year, and Motorola promised him a $1.7 million bonus if he stayed for two. As head of Motorola’s new broadband communications division, Breen refused to act demoted. He insisted on continuing to use a leased Gulfstream jet so he could visit distant customers, even while the company was making deep budget cuts that included many jobs. And he worked fast. He integrated the two companies’ cable-gear businesses in two months instead of the six months demanded by Galvin. He also consolidated sales forces and drafted a strategic plan.

In the fall of 2000 the departure of a veteran once viewed as Motorola’s next president created a horse race between Breen and two others for the number 2 position. In the past, Motorola had picked longtime insiders for its top spots. Afraid of losing Breen, however, in January 2001 Motorola named him head of its network sector and gave him several rewards, including restricted shares initially valued at $10.3 million. Breen was offered the number 2 spot just before Labor Day and took his seat four months later.

Then, in July of 2002, he abruptly stepped down as president and chief operating officer of Motorola and moved into the position of chairman and chief operating officer of Tyco International Ltd., a giant conglomerate plagued with financial scandal in the ranks of top management.

At Tyco Breen viewed his opulent office as an embarrassment. Dennis Kozlowski, the former Tyco CEO, had spared no expense in using company funds to adorn his corporate offices and his numerous personal residences. His ten-year reign of greed and extravagance had left the conglomerate’s reputation in tatters. In 2005, Kozlowski was sentenced to up to 25 years in prison for stealing hundreds of millions of dollars from the company. However, over an eight-year period Tyco management had acquired 1,000 businesses, and many of these were relatively unharmed by the financial excesses of the former regime.

While auditors were still digging into Tyco’s accounting ledgers for indicators of fraud and deception, Breen wanted to make sure no financial malfeasance happened on his watch. In his first five months on the job he replaced Tyco’s entire executive team and its entire board, something no one can recall a major U.S. company ever having done before. Everyone who worked in the company’s 57th Street (Manhattan) offices was fired except for one receptionist and two assistants. Breen also slashed the generous executive compensation.

To help reduce costs, Breen also assembled a team of 270 people charged with eliminating redundant factories, storage facilities, and offices all across the company. In addition, many purchasing contracts will be renegotiated. Breen hopes to save $1 billion in reduced costs. Furthermore, he is looking to move to modest headquarters in Princeton, New Jersey.

Breen is confident he can restore Tyco’s reputation. In 2002, Tyco lost more than $9 billion on revenues of $36 billion. But Breen believed that by managing the conglomerate properly, such as by rolling out centralized efficiency programs, he could create healthy growth at Tyco. For 2004, Tyco earned $3 billion from sales of $40 billion. Breen has plenty of supporters who think that if anyone can pull off such a turnaround, he can. Breen is known as a down-to-earth, practical collaborator who believes in accomplishing tasks and achieving goals. "Ed is full of energy and has impeccable integrity," says Ralph Whithworth, a shareholder activist who added more shares to his Tyco holdings after Breen joined. By 2003, Tyco had generated close to $1 billion in profits with $38 billion in sales, and the positive results were still in place two years later.

Questions

1. In what way is Breen courageous and resilient?
2. If Breen is so ethical, why did he leave Motorola so soon after receiving a promotion to CEO?
3. Identify several of Breen’s leadership traits, motives, and characteristics.

SOURCE: Joan S. Lubin, "CEO Remains Loyal After An Acquisi-

The preceding Leader in Action describes a business leader who is both tenacious and resilient. Leadership Self-Assessment Quiz 2.3 gives you the opportunity to obtain a tentative measure of your resilience.

THE PERSONAL RESILIENCY QUIZ

INSTRUCTIONS Answer each of the following statements mostly agree or mostly disagree as it applies to yourself. In taking a questionnaire such as this, it can always be argued that the true answer to any one particular statement is “It depends on the situation.” Despite the validity of this observation, do your best to indicate whether you would mostly agree or disagree with the statement.

Mostly Mostly Score
Agree Disagree (see key)

1. Winning is everything. □ □
2. If I have had a bad day at work or school, it tends to ruin my evening. □ □

(continued)
3. If I just keep trying, I will get my share of good breaks.
4. It takes me much longer than most people to shake the flu or a cold.
5. If it were not for a few bad breaks I have received, I would be much further ahead in my career.
6. There is no disgrace in losing.
7. I am a generally self-confident person.
8. Finishing last beats not competing at all.
9. I like to take a chance, even if the probability of winning is small.
10. If I have two reversals in a row, I do not worry about it being part of a losing streak.
11. I am a sore loser.
12. It takes a lot to get me discouraged.
13. Every "no" I encounter is one step closer to a "yes."
14. I doubt I could stand the shame of being fired or being downsized.
15. I enjoy being the underdog once in a while.

SCORING KEY: Give yourself 1 point for each statement you responded to that is in agreement with the answer key below. If your response does not agree with the key, give yourself a zero. Add your points for the 15 statements to obtain your total score.

1. Mostly disagree
2. Mostly disagree
3. Mostly agree
4. Mostly disagree
5. Mostly disagree
6. Mostly agree
7. Mostly agree
8. Mostly agree
9. Mostly agree
10. Mostly agree
11. Mostly disagree
12. Mostly agree
13. Mostly agree
14. Mostly agree
15. Mostly agree

SCORING AND INTERPRETATION: Your score on the Personal Resiliency Quiz gives you a rough index of your overall tendencies toward being able to back bounce from adversity. The higher your score, the more resilient you are in handling disappointment, setbacks, and frustration. The following breakdown of scores will help you determine your degree of resiliency.

- 13+: Very Resilient: You are remarkably effective in bouncing back from setback, or very resilient. Your resiliency should help you lead others when setbacks arise.
- 4-12: Moderately Resilient: Like most people, you probably cope well with some type of adversity but not others.
- 0-3: Not Resilient: You are the type of individual who has difficulty coping with adversity. Focusing on learning how to cope with setbacks and maintain a courageous outlook could help you in your development as a leader.

Cognitive Factors and Leadership

Mental ability as well as personality is important for leadership success. To inspire people, bring about constructive change, and solve problems creatively, leaders need to be mentally sharp. Another mental requirement is the ability to sort out essential information from less essential information and then store the most important information in memory. Problem-solving and intellectual skills are referred to collectively as cognitive factors. The term cognition refers to the mental process or faculty by which knowledge is gathered. We discuss six cognitive factors that are closely related to cognitive intelligence, as shown in Figure 2-4. The descriptor cognitive is somewhat necessary to differentiate traditional mental ability from emotional intelligence.

General Mental Ability (Cognitive Intelligence)

Being very good at solving problems is a fundamental characteristic of effective leaders in all fields. Business leaders, for example, need to understand how to analyze
Knowledge of the Business or Group Task

Intellectual ability is closely related to having knowledge of the business or the key task the group is performing. An effective leader has to be technically competent in some discipline, particularly when leading a group of specialists. It is difficult for the leader to establish rapport with group members when he or she does not know what they are doing and when the group does not respect the leader’s technical skills.

A representative example of the contribution of knowledge of the business to leadership effectiveness is the situation of Jim Press, the executive vice president and chief operating officer of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. Press is considered to be one of the most influential executives in the American auto industry. A middle-aged man, he conducts regular pep rallies with Toyota employees. Press has a rare blend of attributes. He is a thirty-four-year Toyota veteran who has mastered the company’s highly regarded engineering and manufacturing systems. His interpersonal skills combined with his intimate knowledge of auto manufacturing give him enormous clout within Toyota, and within the U.S. automotive industry in general.

The importance of knowledge of the business is increasingly being recognized as an attribute of executive leadership. Leaders at every level are expected to bring forth new organizational carrying out the mission of the organization or organizational unit. An analysis of CEO leadership concluded that one of the basic ways in which top executives lead is through the expertise approach. Executives who lead by using this approach think that the leader’s most important responsibility is providing an area of expertise that will be a source of competitive advantage. Such CEOs devote most of their time to continually improving their expertise through such means as studying new technological research, analyzing competitors’ products, and conferring with customers and engineers.

Knowledge of the business or the group task is particularly important when developing strategy and formulating mission statements. Chapter 13 deals with strategy formulation at length.

Creativity

Many effective leaders are creative in the sense that they arrive at imaginative and original solutions to complex problems. Creative ability lies on a continuum, with some leaders being more creative than others. At one end of the creative continuum are business leaders who think of innovative products and services. One example is Steve Jobs of Apple Computer, Inc., and Pixar Animation Studios. Jobs has contributed creative product ideas to both firms, including endorsing the development of the iPod. At the middle of the creativity continuum are leaders who explore imaginative—but not breakthrough—solutions to business problems. At the low end of the creativity continuum are leaders who inspire group members to push forward with standard solutions to organizational problems. Creativity is such an important aspect of the leader’s role in the modern organization that the development of creative problem-solving skills receive separate attention in Chapter 11.
Farsightedness and Conceptual Thinking

To develop visions and corporate strategy, a leader needs farsightedness, the ability to understand the long-range implications of actions and policies. A farsighted leader recognizes that hiring talented workers today will give the firm a long-range competitive advantage. A more shortsighted view would be to hire less-talented workers to satisfy immediate employment needs. The farsighted leader/manager is not oblivious to short-range needs but will devise an intermediate solution, such as hiring temporary workers until people with the right talents are found.

Conceptual thinking refers to the ability to see the overall perspective, and it makes farsightedness possible. A conceptual thinker is also a systems thinker because he or she understands how the external environment influences the organization and how different parts of the organization influence each other. A good conceptual thinker recognizes how his or her organizational unit contributes to the firm or how the firm meshes with the outside world.

Being farsighted benefits the leadership of basic businesses as well as that of high-technology firms. Two twin brothers, Norman Leenhousts and Nelson Leenhousts, started a real estate business fifty-three years ago that is now called Home Properties. Today their total properties are valued at $2.9 billion and include 49,000 apartments in twelve states and more than 1 million square feet of commercial space. The Leenhousts have been able to see the possibilities in properties that others might consider undesirable. Their basic concept is to buy older, mostly brick complexes with deteriorating kitchens and bathrooms. Home Properties then fixes up the kitchens and bathrooms, raises the rents, and turns a profit.44

Openness to Experience

Yet another important cognitive characteristic of leaders is their openness to experience, or their positive orientation toward learning. People who have a great deal of openness to experience have well-developed intellects. Traits commonly associated with this dimension of the intellect include being imaginative, cultured, curious, original, broad-minded, intelligent, and artistically sensitive.

The WICS Model of Leadership in Organizations

Robert J. Sternberg has developed a new approach to understanding leadership based on cognitive factors. The WICS model of leadership encompasses and synthesizes wisdom, creativity, and intelligence to explain leadership effectiveness. To be a highly effective leader, one needs these three components working together or synthesized, as diagrammed in Figure 2.5. Intelligence in this model includes both the traditional and analytical intelligence, as well as practical intelligence. The last-mentioned attribute refers to the ability to solve everyday problems by using experience-based knowledge to adapt to and shape the environment—sometimes referred to as street smarts. Creativity is the same type of creativity mentioned in this chapter. Wisdom is the most important quality a leader can have, but it is relatively rare. The insight and intuition referred to earlier in the chapter are much like wisdom. A leader with wisdom would use intelligence, creativity, and experience for a common good.45

According to the WICS model, a leader needs the following for the successful utilization of intelligence:

- Creative skills to generate new ideas
- Analytical skills to evaluate whether the ideas are good ones
- Practical skills to implement the ideas and to persuade others of their value

Jim Press of Toyota, described earlier, might classify as a leader with intelligence, creativity, and wisdom because he has contributed to the design and manufacture of high-quality vehicles and to the creation of thousands of jobs. The WICS model emphasizes that cognitive factors are indeed useful for leadership. Personality factors, however, are still a key part of being an effective leader.

To help personalize the information about key leadership traits presented so far, do Leadership Skill-Building Exercise 2.3.
The Influence of Heredity and Environment on Leadership

Does heredity or environment contribute more to leadership effectiveness? Are leaders born or made? Do you have to have the right stuff to be a leader? Many people ponder these issues now that the study of leadership is more in vogue than ever. The most sensible answer is that the traits, motives, and characteristics required for leadership effectiveness are caused by a combination of heredity and environment. Personality traits and mental ability traits are based on certain inherited predispositions and aptitudes that require the right opportunity to develop. Mental ability is a good example. We inherit a basic capacity that sets an outer limit to how much mental horsepower we will have. Yet people need the right opportunity to develop their mental ability so that they can behave brightly enough to be chosen for a leadership position.

The physical factor of energy also sheds light on the nature-versus-nurture issue. Some people are born with a biological propensity for being more energetic than others. Yet unless that energy is properly channeled, it will not help a person become an effective leader.

The nature-versus-nurture issue also surfaces in relation to the leadership characteristic of creativity and innovation. Important genetic contributors to imaginative thinking include brainpower and emotional expressiveness. Yet these traits require the right environment to flourish. Such an environment would include encouragement from others and ample opportunity to experiment with ideas.

Research about emotional intelligence reinforces the statements made so far about leadership being a combination of inherited and learned factors. The outermost areas of the brain, known as the neocortex, govern analytical thinking and technical skill, which are associated with cognitive or traditional intelligence. The innermost area of the brain governs emotions, such as the rage one feels when being criticized by a customer. Emotional intelligence originates in the neurotransmitters of the limbic system of the brain, which governs feelings, impulses, and drives.

A person therefore has genes that influence the emotional intelligence necessary for leadership. However, experience is important for emotional intelligence because it increases with age, and a person usually becomes better at managing relationships the more practice he or she has. As one turnaround manager said, “I’ve restructured five different companies, and I’ve learned to do it without completely destroying morale.”

The case histories of six sets of brothers highlight the complexity of sorting out the influences of heredity versus environment on leadership. All twelve achieved the title of president or higher at companies of at least 100 employees or $10 million in annual revenues. For example, the Leiweke became CEOs of hockey teams: Todd is the president of the Minnesota Wild, and Tim is the president of the Los Angeles Kings. The reporter who gathered these case histories presented them as evidence of “CEO DNA.” Whether or not the author was totally serious, the implication is that heredity was the primary reason that these brothers had similar successes. However, they also had quite similar environments: same parents, primary and secondary school study in the same neighborhood, similar education, similar learned values, and so forth. Thus this issue is far from settled.

The Strengths and Limitations of the Trait Approach

A compelling argument for the trait approach is that the evidence is convincing that leaders possess personal characteristics that differ from those of nonleaders. Based on their review of the type of research reported in this chapter, Kirkpatrick and Locke concluded: “Leaders do not have to be great men or women by being intellectual geniuses or consistent prophets to succeed. But they do need to have the right stuff” and this stuff is not equally present in all people.” The current emphasis on emotional intelligence and ethical conduct, which are really traits, attitudes, and behaviors, reinforces the importance of the trait approach.

Understanding the traits of effective leaders serves as an important guide to leadership selection. If we are confident that honesty and integrity, as well as creativity and imagination, are essential leadership traits, then we can concentrate on selecting leaders with those characteristics. Another important strength of the trait approach is that it can help people prepare for leadership responsibility and all of the issues that accompany it. A person might seek experiences that enable him or her to develop vital characteristics such as self-confidence, good problem-solving ability, and assertiveness.

A limitation to the trait approach is that it does not tell us which traits are absolutely needed in which leadership situations. We also do not know how much of a trait, characteristic, or motive is the right amount. For example, some leaders get into ethical and legal trouble because they allow their ambition to cross the borderline into greed and gluttony. In addition, too much focus on the trait approach can breed an elitist conception of leadership. People who are not outstanding on key leadership traits and characteristics might be discouraged from seeking leadership positions.

The late Peter Drucker, a key figure in the modern management movement, was skeptical about studying the qualities of leaders. He believed that a leader cannot be categorized by a particular personality type, style, or set of traits. Instead, a leader should be understood in terms of his or her constituents, results, behaviors, and responsibilities. A leader must look in the mirror and ask if the image there is the kind of person he or she wants to be. (However, Drucker in this instance may have been alluding to the leader’s traits and values.)

A balanced perspective on the trait approach is that certain traits, motives, and characteristics increase the probability that a leader will be effective, but they do not guarantee effectiveness. The leadership situation often influences which traits will be the most important.
Summary

A universal theory of leadership contends that certain personal characteristics and skills contribute to leadership effectiveness in many situations. The trait approach to leadership studies the traits, motives, and other characteristics of leaders. General personality traits associated with effective leadership include (1) self-confidence, (2) humility, (3) trustworthiness, (4) extraversion, (5) assertiveness, (6) emotional stability, (7) enthusiasm, (8) sense of humor, and (9) warmth.

Some personality traits of effective leaders are closely associated with task accomplishment. Among them are (1) passion for the work and the people, (2) emotional intelligence, (3) flexibility and adaptability, (4) internal locus of control, and (5) courage. Emotional intelligence is composed of four traits: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

Certain motives and needs associated with leadership effectiveness are closely related to task accomplishment. Among them are (1) the power motive, (2) the drive and achievement motive, (3) a strong work ethic, and (4) tenacity and resilience.

Cognitive factors are also important for leadership success. They include general mental ability and knowledge of the business or group task: that is, technical competence. Creativity is another important cognitive skill for leaders, but effective leaders vary widely in their creative contributions. Insight into people and situations, including the ability to make effective judgments about business opportunities, also contributes to leadership effectiveness.

Farsightedness and conceptual thinking help leaders to understand the long-range implications of actions and policies and to take an overall perspective. Being open to experience is yet another cognitive characteristic associated with effective leaders. The WICS theory of leadership in organizations emphasizes that leaders must synthesize wisdom, intelligence, and creativity (all cognitive factors).

The issue of whether leaders are born or bred frequently surfaces. A sensible answer is that the traits, motives, and characteristics required for leadership effectiveness are a combination of heredity and environment.

The trait approach to leadership is supported by many studies showing that leaders are different from nonleaders and that effective leaders are different from less effective leaders. Nevertheless, the trait approach does not tell us which traits are most important in which situations or how much of a trait is required.

Key Terms

- Universal theory of leadership
- Trust
- Assertiveness
- Emotional stability
- Emotional intelligence
- Flexibility
- Internal locus of control
- Drive
- Achievement motivation
- Work ethic
- Cognitive factors
- Expertise approach
- Insight
- Farsightedness
- WICS model of leadership

Guidelines for Action and Skill Development

Because emotional intelligence is so important for leadership success, many organizations sponsor emotional intelligence training for managers. One way to get started on improving emotional intelligence would be to attend such a training program. However, like all forms of training, emotional intelligence training must be followed up with consistent and determined practice. A realistic starting point in improving your emotional intelligence is to work with one of its four components at a time, such as the empathy aspect of social awareness.

Begin by obtaining as much feedback as you can from people who know you. Ask them if they think you understand their emotional reactions and how well they think you understand them. It is also helpful to ask someone from another culture or someone who has a severe disability how well you communicate with him or her. (A higher level of empathy is required to communicate well with somebody much different from you.) If you have external or internal customers, ask them how well you appear to understand their position.

If you find any area of deficiency, work on that deficiency steadily. For example, perhaps you are not perceived as taking the time to understand a point of view quite different from your own. Attempt to understand other points of view. Suppose you believe strongly that money is the most important motivator for practically everybody. Speak to a person with a different opinion and listen carefully until you understand that person's perspective.

A few months later, obtain more feedback about your ability to empathize. If you are making progress, continue to practice. Then, repeat these steps for another facet of emotional intelligence. As a result of this practice, you will have developed another valuable interpersonal skill.

Discussion Questions and Activities

1. How much faith do voters place in the trait theory of leadership when they elect public officials?
2. Suppose a college student graduates with a major for which he or she lacks enthusiasm. What might this person do about becoming a passionate leader?
3. What would a manager to whom you report have to do to convince you that he or she has emotional intelligence?
4. What would a manager to whom you report have to do to convince you that he or she has humility?
5. Describe any leader or manager whom you know personally or have watched on television who is unenthusiastic. What effect did the lack of enthusiasm have on group members?
6. If emotional intelligence is considered to be so important for high-level leadership, where does traditional or cognitive intelligence fit as an important characteristic of executive leaders?
7. What are your best-developed leadership traits, motives, and characteristics? How do you know?
8. A disproportionate number of people who received an M.B.A. at Harvard Business School are top executives in Fortune 500 business firms. How does this fact fit into the evidence about the roles of heredity and environment in creating leaders?
9. Visualize the least effective leader you know. Identify the traits, motives, and personal characteristics in which that person might be deficient.
10. Many people who disagree with the trait approach to leadership nevertheless still conduct interviews when hiring a person for a leadership position. Why is conducting such interviews inconsistent with their attitude toward the trait approach?