Leadership

11

Key Terms

charismatic leadership

contingency model

identification

implicit theories of leadership

leadership style

presidential leadership

self-fulfilling prophecy

trait approach

transactional leadership

transformational leadership

Chapter Outline

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Before every political election, politicians focus on strategic policies, topics of controversy, and economic reforms in the hope of persuading voters of the benefits of electing their party. However, many if not all elections may largely be decided on the basis of one factor, namely, who will make the best leader. Likewise, children playing in a playground may differ in their potential for leading others, in school, university, or at work.

The present chapter examines some of the salient psychological theories of leadership. What these theories have in common is their attempt to explain the emergence and effectiveness of leaders in terms of psychological variables, notably individual differences in certain aspects of personality, intelligence, and the capacity to influence others.

Whilst the complex and multiple causes of leadership make it difficult to predict who will become a leader, psychology has provided valuable information to explain why certain individuals

Figure 11.1 Famous leaders (six examples). *Clockwise from left*: Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandela, Albert Einstein, Ronald Reagan, Mohandas Ghandi, Che Guevara.
Sources: INTERFOTO Pressebildagentur/Alamy; © POPPERFOTO/Alamy; Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-13040; Topfoto/Dinodia; akg-images/ullstein bild.

are better candidates to lead others and therefore more likely to become successful leaders than others.

Many scientific textbooks in the social sciences start by examining encyclopedic definitions of the constructs they will discuss. In the case of leadership, it seems more appropriate and interesting to examine *examples* than actual definitions. Let us consider some random (but relatively undisputed) cases: Winston Churchill (1874–1965), Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), Adolf Hitler (1889–1945), Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–68), Nelson Mandela (b. 1918), Pope John Paul II (1920–2005), and Ronald Reagan (1911–2004). You may notice that most of these figures are associated with political leadership. However, several leaders outside the political arena have often been identified. For example, Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and Salvador Dali (1904–89) were leading artists, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) and John Lennon (1940–80) were leading musicians, Isaac Newton (1642–1727) and Albert Einstein (1879–1955) were leading

physicists, and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–80) and James Joyce (1882–1941) were leading writers.

Interestingly, even when we compare individuals who excelled *within* the same domain (i.e., in the same field), it may be difficult to identify some overarching or common features that may help us describe and define the essence of leadership. There are nonetheless two aspects that are rarely disputed as the key elements of leadership:

1. Excellence and outstanding *achievement* within one field or professional career. Thus leaders are people who excel at what they do and are recognized as competent by other people in the field.
2. The capacity to *influence* others. This influence may involve direct leadership when there is personal interaction with the leader, or indirect leadership if the leader's impact is merely based on his/her ideas or products (Gardner, 1995).

Thus, if asked what Mohandas Gandhi and Pablo Picasso had in common, our answer may be that they were salient figures in their own fields (politics and art) and had a substantial influence in shaping some of the major ideas of the twenty-first century. If we wanted to provide a shorter answer, it would probably be sufficient to mention the word "leadership." But, what is leadership?

Most psychologists have regarded leadership as a *process* rather than as a static attribute or trait. In particular, advocates of the *contingency/situational* approach to leadership (see Box 11.2) define it as "a process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task" (Chemers, 2000, p. 27).

From an organizational perspective, on the other hand, leadership has been defined as the ability to build, motivate, and maintain high-performing teams, groups, departments, and organizations. Accordingly, Hogan, Curphy, and Hogan (1994) argued that "leadership involves persuading other people to set aside for a period of time their individual concerns and to pursue a common goal that is important for the responsibilities and welfare of a group" (p. 493).

As will be noted, the above definitions may apply to some (*charismatic* and *transformational*, see sections 11.3.1 and 11.3.2, respectively) but not to other (*transactional*, see 11.3.4) forms of leadership. Very often, then, psychologists have used the word "leadership" to refer to quite different processes and psychological phenomena. This has marked different approaches to leadership, which ought to be examined in order to understand what leadership is about. Although psychological theories of leadership are often complex, they are generally aimed at answering three broad but simple questions, namely:

- *Who will lead?* (Leadership emergence)
- *Who should lead?* (Leadership effectiveness)
- *Are leaders born or made?* (Characteristics of leader)

11.2 APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP

The concept of leadership has attracted popular and scientific interest alike and is examined not only in the context of differential psychology but also in areas such as psychoanalysis and social psychology. In fact, the inclusion of a leadership chapter in this book may seem unusual and has been questioned by some reviewers who did not recognize leadership as a central topic in individual differences. Whilst the leadership literature is far more eclectic and less empirical than other individual difference concepts, recent studies have provided valuable evidence for understanding individual differences in leadership. Thus the construct of leadership is not exclusive to individual differences but should be included in any comprehensive textbook of individual differences, particularly because of its applied relevance.

Perhaps the most popular question regarding leadership (and this is one that has been asked with regard to most individual difference constructs) is the extent to which leadership can be explained by specific characteristics of leaders that would make them almost naturally different from the rest, or by certain

situational events that bring leaders into effect. The two extreme alternative answers to this question have been reflected in the two principal approaches to leadership, the *trait* approach (see 11.2.2 and 11.2.4) and the *situational* approach (see Box 11.2).

Trait approaches to leadership assume that there are distinctive psychological characteristics accounting for leadership emergence and effectiveness, in much the same way that personality traits can account for the consistent patterns of thought, behavior, and emotion that make each individual different from others (see sections 2.2 and 2.3). Consequently, specific individual differences in, say, personality or intelligence would explain why some people become leaders but not others, and why some people end up being "good" (successful) leaders but not others.

On the other hand, situational leadership theories, also known as **contingency models**, assume that leadership is determined more by situational factors than by personal characteristics of the leader, much in the same way that situational approaches to personality conceptualized individual differences as a succession of volatile states that are dependent on the context more than on internal traits (sec-

> **contingency model** theory of leadership which assumes that leadership is determined more by situational factors than by personal characteristics, positing that anyone has the potential to become a leader given a favorable context

tion 2.5). Thus contingency theories of leaders posit that pretty much anybody has the potential to become a leader as long as he/she is "in the right place at the right time."

In recent decades, a third approach to leadership has been increasingly investigated and added to the trait and situational models, namely, the *behavioral* perspective on leadership (see section 11.3). This approach posits that there are different behavioral patterns or *leadership styles* that may vary between, but also within, individuals. More importantly, different leadership styles can be expected to have different effects on people and involve different psychological processes and techniques.

Because of their relevance with regard to understanding individual differences, in this book we shall focus mainly on trait and behavioral theories of leadership, though situational approaches will be briefly examined.

11.2.1 Early foundations of leadership: Freud's group psychology

Whether acknowledged or not, Freud's work on group psychology (a relatively late development in his psychoanalytic theory, but one of the earliest psychological explanations of leadership) had a marked and longstanding impact on modern and contemporary leadership theories. It has even been recently argued (Goethals, 2005) that virtually all modern findings on leadership can be explained in terms of psychoanalytic theory, though this is probably an exaggeration, not uncommon in devoted psychoanalysts. It is, however, clear that Freud's ideas were unusually insightful and, albeit counterintuitive and surreal at times, seem to explain some of the key processes underlying the relationship

between leaders and followers with unmatchable elegance and surprising simplicity.

Freud's ideas on leadership were inspired by the French sociologist and early social psychologist Gustav Le Bon (1841–1931), who is extensively quoted in Freud's (1921) book on leadership entitled *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. In this monograph, Freud's central thesis is that, in group situations, individuals are highly suggestible and easily influenced by others. In fact, so high is their level of susceptibility that they would seem to enter a trance-like state of mind, comparable to that of hypnotized individuals (see also section 4.4.1). Furthermore, Freud argued that this state of mind would involve a "regression" to a lower intellectual level where individuals "are easily swayed by the words and actions of leaders toward a dramatic action and rapidly changing emotions" (Goethals, 2005, p. 546).

According to Freud, then, leadership emerges as the natural consequence of a group's "thirst for obedience" and willingness to "submit itself instinctively to anyone who appoints himself its master" (Freud, 1921/1957, p. 81). This almost instinctual "passion for authority" (p. 127) is consistent with Darwin's (1809–82) idea that "the primitive form of human society was that of a horde ruled over despotically by a powerful male," and Freud believed that "the fortunes of this horde have left indestructible traces upon the history of human descent" (p. 122) (see Figure 11.2). Accordingly, individuals would experience a subconscious form of nostalgic desire to obey rules, which predisposes them – or shall I say "us" – to follow a leader. In that sense, leaders would be determined by the group rather than vice versa.

Freud's emphasis on groups as the very determinants of leadership would later be captured by contingency/situational leadership theories (see Box 11.2), though theories focused on the characteristics of the leader – as opposed to the group – would receive most attention during the last century.
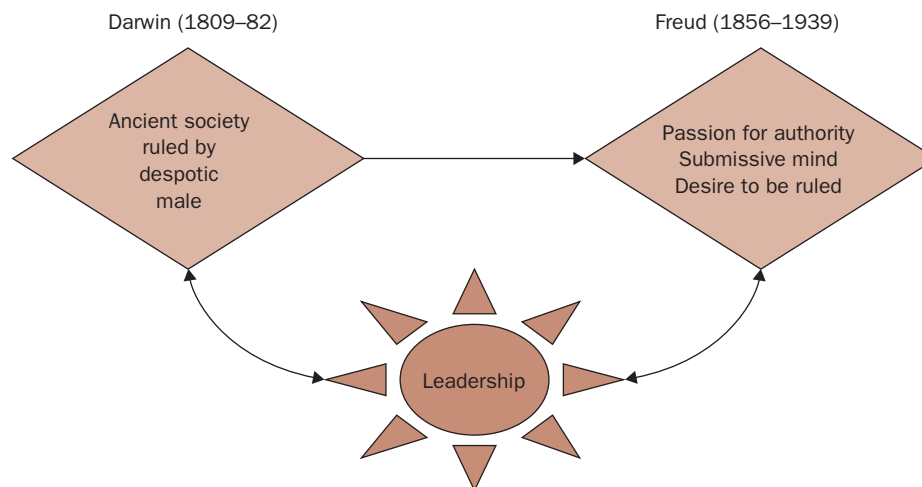
In Freud, the idea that leadership may be determined by the group's "hunger" for leadership is not incompatible with the notion of certain distinctive attributes leaders ought to possess to be elected or selected as such. Groups' craving for leaders may explain why leadership – as a general phenomenon – occurs, but the emergence or choice of a particular leader may be better explained by an individual's personal characteristics, specifically, whether they match the groups' instinctual leader figure: "People have an archaic memory of a despotic male leader who was feared and loved" (Goethals, 2005, p. 548). Freud (1921/1957) thought leaders must be strong, well-spoken, and bright. More importantly, they must "possess the typical qualities of the [group] in a particularly clearly marked and pure form" (p. 129). Thus, leaders must be representative or prototypical of the group.

Other aspects of Freud's psychoanalytic theory of leadership have been influential for understanding the processes underlying the relationship between leaders and groups, in particular the mechanisms by which leaders achieve their influence on subordinates, that is, **identification**. Used widely throughout psychoanalytic theory (not merely in regard to leadership), the concept of identification refers to the subconscious process by which the ego uses image to guide its action toward an object. In simple

> **identification** process that refers to an individual's unconscious desire to be like someone else, involving an idealized perception of a role model

terms, it refers to an individual's unconscious desire to be like someone else. This desire is most strongly manifested during early childhood years, when individuals identify with their parents (most commonly boys with their father and girls with their mother). Identification involves an idealized perception of a role model.

An important aspect of the group's perception of a leader as role model is the "illusion" – in Freud's terms – that the leader loves each of the group members alike, almost like a son or daughter. Thus, individuals in a group would sacrifice their own selfish interests in order to devote themselves to the interests of a leader who, in return, will offer his/her unconditional love to the group. Figure 11.3 outlines the major ideas derived from Freud's theory of leadership.

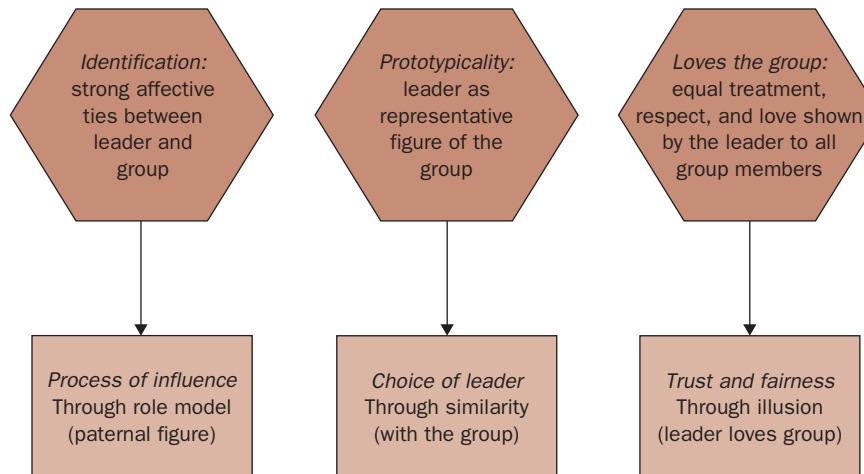**Figure 11.2** Internalized authority (Darwin and Freud on leadership).

Figure 11.3 Freud (1921/1957) on leadership.

11.2.2 Trait approaches to leadership: The Great Man theory

The history of the world was the biography of great men.
(Carlyle, 1907, p. 18)

There has been a great deal of speculation about the personality of leaders. Historians, political scientists, novelists, and business people as much as psychologists have long attempted to identify the characteristics of great, as well as failed and derailed, leaders. Psychological research and theories focusing on the personality of leaders are usually referred to as **trait approaches** to leadership and will be discussed throughout this section.

trait approach theories of leadership that examine the psychological characteristics and personal attributes of leaders in an attempt to identify common traits and predict leadership potential

Trait approaches were characterized by Carlyle's (1907) *Great Man* or "Great Person" theory of leadership. Carlyle's theory is no doubt still popular and views leaders as essentially "different" from non-leaders in that they possess certain attributes or personal characteristics that are unique and absent in most individuals.

Three questions guided the research efforts of the trait theorist prior to World War II, namely:

a) Which are the common traits underlying all great leaders?
b) Can we predict people's leadership potential on the basis of these "appropriate" traits?
c) Can people "learn" to become good (effective) leaders?

The Great Man theory assumed that a limited set of individual traits could be used to distinguish between leaders and non-leaders and persuaded researchers to invest a considerable amount of effort into identifying these traits. Physical characteristics included height and energy, social variables comprised level of education and socioeconomic status, ability variables included IQ and verbal fluency, and personality traits comprised dominance, assertiveness, self-confidence, and stress tolerance. This mix of very different types of variables was problematic because of the lack of hierarchical or logical order to make sense of the literature. In a subsequent review of 30 years of leadership research, Stogdill (1948) concluded that only a handful of these traits could be used to distinguish effectively between leaders and followers, as well as between successful and unsuccessful leaders. Stogdill's list was topped by intelligence (see Box 11.1), and also included dominance, sociability, responsibility, self-confidence, diplomacy, extraversion, ambition, integrity, emotional control, and cooperation. (Note that the writing of "Extraversion" with an upper-case E is usually reserved for the *Big Five* or *Gigantic Three* version of the trait; see section 2.6.)

However, no single variable – not even intelligence – could predict leadership in all situations. Thus, there were no universal predictors of leadership that could be consistently identified in the literature. Stogdill's (1948) analysis went on to become an important determinant of the shift of paradigm from trait to situational approaches to leadership (see Box 11.2).

After the late 1950s, psychologists continued to search for the distinctive personality attributes that could effectively discriminate between leaders and non-leaders (Atkinson, 1958; McClelland & Winter, 1969). Towards the 1970s, leaders' personality was discussed in light of Murray's (1938) basic motives (see sections 9.3, 9.4) and there was a growing consensus that effective leaders had a higher *need for power*, higher *activity inhibition*, and lower *need for affiliation* than ineffective leaders and non-leaders in general (McClelland, 1975; McClelland & Burham, 1976) (see also Box 11.3 on presidential leadership).

As a consequence, leaders would exhibit significantly higher levels of concern when choosing actions that influence others' thoughts, emotions, and behaviors (Winter, 1973). This concern would be manifested in leaders' motivation to establish, maintain, and restore relationships with others (Heyns, Veroff, & Atkinson, 1958).

Box 11.1

INTELLIGENCE AND LEADERSHIP

After Stogdill's (1948) review of 30 years of leadership research, several studies suggested, consistently with that review, that leadership could best be predicted on the basis of intelligence. This box presents a brief summary of the findings on the relationship between intelligence and leadership.

Lord, Foti, and De Vader (1984) found that intellectual ability was more prototypical of leaders than were honesty, charisma, and kindness. A meta-analysis published around the same time reported a correlation of r .50 between leadership and intelligence (Lord, De Vader, & Alliger, 1986). Such findings are consistent with the more general assertion that "intelligence is the most important trait or construct in all of psychology, and the most 'successful' trait in applied psychology" (Schmidt & Hunter, 2000, p. 4).

However, other researchers have questioned the validity of intelligence measures as predictors of leadership, arguing that "intellectual abilities . . . do not predict leadership performance to any appreciable degree" (Fiedler, 2002, p. 92).

A recent meta-analysis by Judge, Colbert, and Illies (2004) examined the link between leadership and intelligence in a total of 151 samples. The authors estimated the true correlation

between intelligence and leadership to be in the region of $r = .27$. This correlation (based on an impressive sample of $N = 40,652$) suggests that the link between leadership and intelligence is considerably lower than expected, and possibly even lower than the correlations of leadership with Extraversion ($r = .31$) and Conscientiousness ($r = .28$) (see 11.2.4, in particular Figure 11.5).

In their study, Judge et al. (2004) emphasized the distinction between "objective" and "perceived" leadership, and the fact that these two constructs may be differentially related to intelligence.

Whilst previous studies had examined the extent to which intelligence measures were correlated with perceived leaders (Lord et al., 1986), more recent investigations found that intelligence is more related to perceived than "actual" leadership (the latter term is usually referred to as leadership effectiveness, whilst the former is associated with leadership emergence).

The distinction between objective and perceived leadership is useful to understand some of the inconsistencies across different studies on leadership and intellectual ability.

Box 11.2

CONTINGENCY AND THE SITUATIONAL DETERMINANTS OF LEADERSHIP

After the 1950s, criticisms of and skepticism about the validity of trait approaches to leadership, notably the theory of the Great Man, increased substantially, no doubt influenced by the publication of Stogdill's (1948) review and the atrocities of World War II, which reminded both laypeople and scientists of the dark side of leadership.

Criticisms referred to three major problems.

1. The list of traits used to distinguish between leaders and non-leaders was not *grouped*, *rank-ordered*, or *parsimoniously described*, making it almost impossible to see how they did or did not relate to one another.
2. The trait approach tended to be *retrospective*, raising questions about whether the identified traits were a cause or a consequence of leadership.
3. It was uncertain whether all the traits on the list were *necessary* and *sufficient*. Thus, some attributes may not have been relevant whilst other relevant attributes may not have been listed.

Finally, it was clear that leadership could not be understood merely on the basis of personal characteristics, such as

individual differences in personality and abilities, but was also determined by *situational factors*.

It was this final argument that inspired the development of the "contingency" approach to leadership, which received an important academic boost from the publication of Fiedler's studies in the 1960s and attracted increasing support during the 1970s (a period that, incidentally, was marked by growing skepticism toward the relevance and validity of stable personality traits) (see Mischel, 1973, and section 2.5).

Fiedler's (1967, 1993) contingency model is based on the distinction between task vs. emotional leadership roles (see also Bales, 1958, and section 11.3 on behavioral approaches). Task-oriented leaders are believed to care about the appropriate execution of the task and are negatively predisposed towards low-performing individuals. On the other hand, emotionally oriented leaders emphasize the importance of good interpersonal relations and are therefore more likely to tolerate and accept poorly performing individuals.

There are specific conditions – Fiedler argues – under which task-oriented and emotionally oriented leaders may or may not be effective, and different individuals make better leaders under different circumstances. The extent to which

the situation is favorable to the leader, in the sense of in-creasing his/her certainty, predictability, and control over the group, is reflected in the dimension of *situational favorableness* or situational control.

Thus different situations may require different styles:

> When the task is clear and followers supportive, the leader should use more time-efficient, autocratic styles. If the task or information is unclear, using [the] consultative strategies

increases the information yield and likelihood of a higher quality decision. When the leaders lack follower support, the participative strategy helps to ensure follower commitment to the decision and its implementation. (Chemers, 2000, p. 30)

Although Fiedler's theory remained more popular within social than differential psychology, today even trait advocates and psychometricians accept that context matters, often more than individual traits (Simonton, 1987).

Box 11.3

PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP AS PARADIGM OF TRAIT APPROACHES

Some psychologists have addressed the study of leadership through a comparative examination of effective vs. non-effective presidents and presidential candidates, mostly in the United States. This small but growing area of research is referred to as **presidential leadership** and combines findings and theories from different disciplines, from psychology to political sciences, sociology, and economics.

presidential leadership area of leadership research which uses a multidisciplinary approach to examine the effectiveness of presidents and presidential candidates

In a seminal book on the topic of presidential leadership, Simonton (1986) applied psychometric analysis to identify the attributes of successful American presidents and listed a total of 14, namely, moderation, friendliness, intellectual brilliance, Machiavellianism, poise and polish, achievement drive, forcefulness, wit, physical attractiveness, pettiness, tidiness, conservatism, inflexibility, and pacifism. Barber (1992, p. 153) provided a shorter, albeit largely overlapping, list of presidential attributes, namely, Machiavellian, forceful, moderate, poise and polish, and flexible.

In another retrospective analysis of the personality of effective vs. non-effective presidents, Spranger and House (1991) suggested that presidential performance may be largely explained by individual differences in the *need for power*, *affiliation*, and *achievement*.

A review article by Goethals (2005) concluded that successful American presidents could be characterized by their higher levels of *activity*, *intelligence*, *optimism*, and *flexibility*, though luck and opportunity play an important role, too.

11.2.3 From attributes to attributions: Leadership as a perceived construct

During the late 1970s and much of the 1980s, personality approaches to leadership were increasingly focused on the *perceived attributes* of leaders, which did not, however, differ substantially from the previously identified traits. Theoretically, however, attempts to identify followers' perceptions of leaders were inspired by the idea that leadership is largely determined by followers' choices. Hence there was "no way of measuring leadership apart from social perceptions, [and] leadership exists primarily as an *attribution* rather than a testable construct" (Chemers, 2000, p. 32, emphasis added).

Personal attributes, such as charisma, were "considered to be invested by followers and accorded or withdrawn by them" (Hollander, 1993, p. 41). This implied that leaders are ultimately *legitimated* or recognized as such by the group, an idea that had already been anticipated by Freud (1921/1957) (see 11.2.1). According to Hollander, the two main factors determining whether a group will legitimize a leader as such are perceived trustworthiness and task competence.

Accordingly, **implicit theories of leadership**, which study the nature of lay people's beliefs about and perceptions of leaders, suggested that leaders are generally regarded as caring, outgoing, honest, competent, repetition verbally skilled, decisive, educated, dedicated, aggressive, and elegant (Lord et al., 1984). In a later study, Kenney, Blascovich, and Shaver (1994) identified four higher-order factors underlying people's conceptions of leaders, namely, the ability to learn the group's goals, taking charge (being in command), being a "nice person," and being emotionally stable (not being nervous).

implicit theories of leadership theories that study perceived attributes of leadership rather than leaders' personal characteristics, examining lay people's beliefs about and attributions of personal qualities to leaders

Perhaps the most important legacy of attributional/implicit theories of leadership is the reminder that leadership effectiveness may only be judged in terms of followers' perception and performance. This is a crucial theoretical consideration because, whilst it may be relatively easy to agree on whether someone is a leader or not, it is often impossible to determine whether someone is a

"good" (effective) leader or not (think, for instance, of Hitler and Stalin), except by judging his/her effects on others.

Thus a leader may consider himself very effective but nonetheless have little or negative impact on others. As Hogan et al. (1994, p. 496) argued, "there is a kind of manager who routinely over-evaluates his or her performance, and that tendency is associated with poor leadership." This is why implicit theories of leadership are generally better for explaining and predicting leadership emergence than leadership effectiveness, as people may often be "chosen" as leaders when they lack the necessary qualities to perform well (otherwise, all political elections would generate good results!).

11.2.4 Trait approach: Survival and revival

Although Great Man theories of leadership are part of the history – rather than the present – of leadership research, the trait approach has arguably survived the emergence of situational theories and began to be the focus of much leadership research during the 1990s. In fact, in recent years there has been a revival of the trait approach.

In a widely quoted article, Locke (1997) identified various leadership traits (see Table 11.1), which – unlike previous dispositional models – not only referred to twentieth-century US leaders but were also *timeless* and *universal*. More importantly, higher-order factors could be identified to reduce the number of traits that characterize effective leaders:

> Would quantitative analysis support 12 distinct traits, or could they be grouped into a smaller number without loss of important information? My prediction is that they can be combined into a smaller number. Do the traits operate independently (e.g. in additive fashion) or are there interactions between them? I have one prediction here: I think dishonesty negates all a person's other virtues in that it divorces a person from reality in principle . . . A

complicating factor, however, is that people are not always consistent in their honest and dishonesty. (Locke, 1997, p. 22)

Locke's (1997) paper is often referenced as an example of the reemergence or revival of the trait approach to leadership, and there are three reasons for this reemergence.

1. As noted in chapter 2 (in particular section 2.11), there has been considerable consensus since the early 1990s around the idea that individual differences in personality are best described and predicted in terms of the Five Factor Model, allowing researchers – including leadership psychologists – to compare their findings and perform large-scale analyses (Goldberg, 1990; Matthews & Deary, 1998).
2. Advances in measurement have helped to describe and understand some of the psychological mechanisms underlying differences in behavior.
3. Robust, state-of-the-art, meta-analytical studies have demonstrated the predictive power of personality traits in applied settings, notably academic and job performance (see Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2005, for a review).

Furnham (1994) was amongst the first to speculate about the role of the Big Five personality traits at work. In contemporary organizations, he argued, leaders are likely to be open, conscientious, stable, agreeable, and extraverts (see Table 11.2). This combination of traits was replicated, the same year, in a well-quoted review article by Hogan et al. (1994), where previously examined personality variables were "translated" into the Big Five language. In addition, Hogan et al. (1994) referred to the "dark side of personality" as a combination of traits likely to predict and explain derailed leadership; they named arrogance, hostility, passive aggressiveness, compulsiveness, and abrasiveness.

Cross-cultural studies have generally replicated the pattern of the Big Five correlates of leadership hypothesized by Furnham (1994) and Hogan et al. (1994). For instance, Silversthorne (2001)

Table 11.1 Locke's (1997) leadership traits

Cognitive ability and thinking modes	*Motivation, values, and action*	*Attitudes toward employees (subordinates)*
1 *Reality focus*: Not susceptible to evasions and delusions, but facing reality however grim it may be	7 *Egoistic passion for work*: Intrinsic motivation, workaholic	11 *Respect for ability*: Hiring and developing people with drive, talent, and right attitudes
2 *Honesty*: Realistic assessment (accurate insight) of one's own and others' abilities and weaknesses	8 *Action commitment*: Doing (not just thinking)	12 *Commitment to justice*: Rewarding (and punishing) people appropriately
3 *Independence/self-confidence*: "Thinking outside the box,"[a] innovating, breaking new ground	9 *Ambition*: Personal drive and desire to achieve expertise and responsibility	
4 *Active mind*: Constantly searching for new ideas and solutions	10 *Effort and tenacity*: Hard-working, resilient, not discouraged by failure	
5 *Intelligence* (IQ): Ability to reason, learn, and acquire knowledge		
6 *Vision*: Innovative, long-term plan, "thinking ahead"		

[a] See figure 10.6 in section 10.5.3 for an explanation of the psychological conceptualization of "thinking outside the box."
Source: Adapted from Locke (1997) and Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham (2005).

Table 11.2 Probable relationships between personality and work variables

Work variables	N	E	O	A	C
Absenteeism	+++	–			–
Accidents	+	–			
Creativity		+	+++		–
Derailment	+++		–		–
Leadership	–	++	+++	+	+++
Vocational choice	–	++	+		++
Sales		++		+	++
Job satisfaction	–	+++		+	++
Motivation	–	+++	++	+	+++
Productivity	–	++			+++

N = Neuroticism, E = Extraversion, O = Openness to Experience,
A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness. The "+" sign indicates a positive
relation, whilst the "–" indicates a negative relation; the number of "+" and "–"
signs indicates the strength of the correlation.
Source: Adapted from Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham (2005).

found that effective leaders tended to score significantly higher on Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness, and lower on Neuroticism, than non-effective leaders in US as well as Chinese samples. However, previous studies indicated that, whilst Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability (low Neuroticism) tend to represent sociably desirable traits in almost every culture, Extraversion (with its primary facets of assertiveness and dominance) is less likely to be regarded as a virtue in Eastern than in Western cultures (Redding & Wong, 1986).

Judge et al. (2002) reviewed the extensive literature on personality and leadership. Ten writers, mainly from the 1990s, listed what they thought to be the essential traits of effective or emergent and effective leaders. Judge et al. noticed considerable overlap, such that most writers included self-confidence, adjustment, sociability, and integrity, whilst a minority listed persistence and masculinity (see Table 11.3).

After this qualitative analysis of the literature, Judge et al. performed a large-scale quantitative meta-analysis, which included 222 correlations from 73 studies. Results showed that Emotional Stability, Extraversion, Openness, and Conscientiousness were all positively correlated with both leadership emergence (perceived leadership) and effectiveness (leadership performance). Judge et al. (2002) concluded that Extraversion is the most consistent predictor of both leadership and emergence and effectiveness.

The estimated validities for the Big Five as predictors of leadership emergence and effectiveness are summarized in Figure 11.4.

Judge et al.'s (2002) study showed strong support for the personality approach to leadership once the traits are organized according to the Big Five model. Extraversion was the most consistent correlate, no doubt because of the assertiveness, dominance, and sociability of extraverts (see Figure 11.5 and Box 11.4). However, the authors accept that the research does not always explain why these traits related to leadership:

> Is Neuroticism negatively [related] because neurotic individuals are less likely to attempt leadership, because they are less inspirational, or because they have lower expectations of themselves or others? Similarly, Extraversion may be related to leadership because extraverts talk more, and talking is strongly related to emergent leadership. Alternatively, it may be that individuals implicitly expect leaders to be extraverted. Implicit views of leaders include aspects of both sociability ("outgoing") and assertiveness ("aggressive," "forceful"), or extraverts could be better leaders due to their expressive nature or the contagion of their positive emotionality. Open individuals may be better leaders because they are more creative and are divergent thinkers, because they are risk-takers, or because their tendencies for esoteric thinking and fantasy make them more likely to be visionary leaders. Agreeableness may be weakly correlated with leadership because it is both a hindrance (agreeable individuals tend to be passive and compliant) and a help (agreeable individuals are likeable and empathetic) to leaders. Finally, is Conscientiousness related to leadership because conscientious individuals have integrity and engender trust because they excel at process aspects of leadership, such as setting goals, or because they are more

Table 11.3 Traits of effective or emergent leaders as identified by past reviews

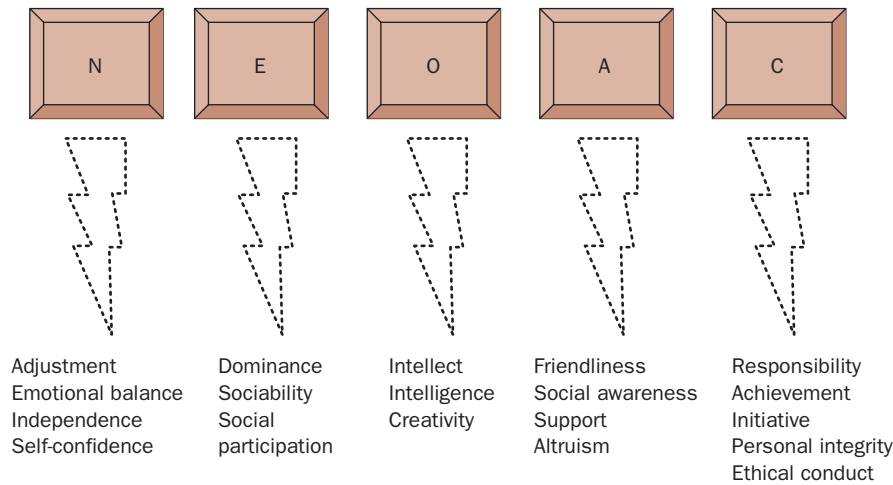| Study	Traits
Stogdill (1948)	Dependability, sociability, initiative, persistence, self-confidence, alertness, cooperativeness, adaptability
Mann (1959)	Adjustment, extraversion, dominance, masculinity, conservatism
Bass (1990)	Adjustment, adaptability, aggressiveness, alertness, ascendance, dominance, emotional balance, control, independence, nonconformity, originality, creativity, integrity, self-confidence
Kirkpatrick & Locke (1991)	Drive (achievement, ambition, energy, tenacity, initiative), honesty/integrity, self-confidence (emotional stability)
Yukl & Van Fleet (1992)	Emotional maturity, integrity, self-confidence, high energy level, stress tolerance
Hogan et al. (1994)	Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability
House & Aditya (1997)	Achievement motivation, prosocial influence motivation, adjustment, self-confidence
Northouse (1997)	Self-confidence, determination, integrity, sociability
Yukl (1998)	Energy level and stress tolerance, self-confidence, internal locus of control, emotional maturity, personal integrity, socialized power motivation, achievement orientation, low need for affiliation
Daft (1999)	Alertness, originality, creativity, personal integrity, self-confidence

Source: Adapted from Judge et al. (2002).

Figure 11.4 Stogdill's (1974) leadership traits in Big Five language.
N = Neuroticism, E = Extraversion, O = Openness, A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness.
Source: Adapted from Hogan et al. (1994).
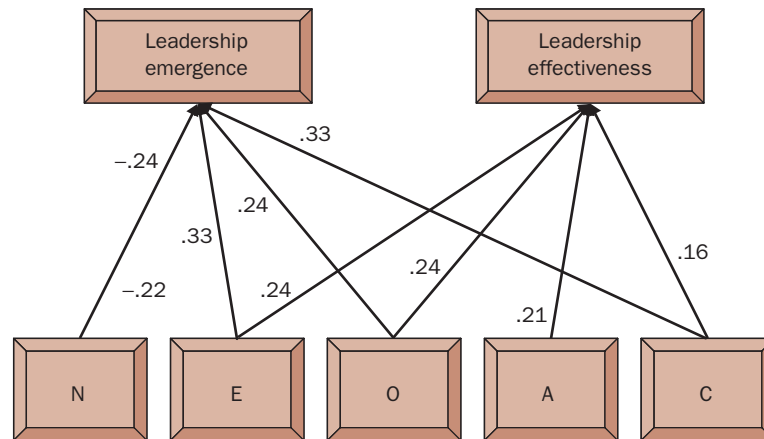
Figure 11.5 Big Five correlates of leadership emergence and effectiveness: meta-analytic findings by Judge et al. (2002). Estimated corrected correlation coefficients (number of correlations varied from 17 to 37). N = Neuroticism, E = Extraversion, O = Openness, A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness.

likely to have initiative and persist in the face of obstacles? Our study cannot address these process oriented issues, but future research should attempt to explain the linkages between the Big Five traits and leadership. (p. 774)

▶ *Exercise*: Think of three leaders you know and rate them on the Big Five personality traits.

11.2.5 Criticism of the trait approach

Despite its popularly unchallenged position at the center of the individual difference approach to leadership research and theory, there have been a number of criticisms of the trait approach to leadership.

Spangler, House, and Palrecha (2004) argued that, whilst the Five Factor Model had indeed helped our understanding of leadership, its various limitations should not be neglected. First, the Big Five fails to provide *causal* explanations for individual differences in thought, emotionality, and behavior, and this would also apply to work-related aspects of individual differences. Second, the Five Factor Model does not provide a theoretical explanation of individuals' *motivation* to become a leader, and how individual differences may operate in this respect. Third, there remains the debate as to the *comprehensiveness* of the Big Five in fully describing behavior at work (Block, 1995). Last but not least, the Five Factor Model does not explain the mechanisms by which traits interact with *situational* factors to produce leader behavior and outcomes.

However, in their review of the literature, Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2005) concluded that the "bottom line"

Box 11.4
HELP!

How to interpret Figure 11.5. (*You should skip this section if you are confident of understanding Figure 11.5.*)

- Each arrow (connector) in Figure 11.5 represents a correlation between two variables. Variables (e.g., N, E, Leadership Emergence, etc.) are represented by boxes.
- The wider the arrow connecting two variables, the larger the size of the correlation (i.e., the stronger the association between two variables). However, correlations are based on a different number of studies, and tend to be all in the region of .15 to .35. Correlations can be negative or positive.
- A positive correlation implies that high scores on one variable are associated with high scores on the other variable, and vice versa. On the other hand, a negative correlation means that high scores on one variable will be associated with low scores on the other variable, and vice versa.

- For example, we can see that the highest correlations in Figure 11.5 are between Extraversion (E) and leadership emergence (.33), as well as between Conscientiousness (C) and leadership emergence (.33).

Need some practice? Try answering the following questions.

a) What correlation is larger, that between N and leadership emergence, or that between A and leadership effectiveness?
b) Is Openness more highly correlated with leadership emergence or leadership effectiveness?
c) What is the correlation between Conscientiousness and leadership effectiveness?

Correct answers: a) N and leadership emergence,
b) equally with both (.24), c) .16

is that stable individual differences (i.e., traits) *do* predict who becomes, stays, and derails as a leader. Different datasets, from different countries and different perspectives and different historical periods, yield similar results. Great leaders tend to be bright, open to experience, conscientious, extraverted, and stable.

11.3 BEHAVIORAL APPROACHES: LEADERSHIP STYLES

Behavioral approaches to leadership attempt to conceptualize different **leadership styles** as well as their effects on subordinates. They are derived from an early tradition in social psychology that distinguished between different strategies adopted by leaders and defined their relationship with others or with a group.

leadership style a stable pattern of behaviors adopted by leaders that determines their relationship with and influence over group members

Such a distinction was in turn derived from observational studies that were carried out in the form of laboratory experiments (rather than large correlational designs) and looked at the effects of different leadership styles on small groups (Lewin, Lippit, & White, 1939). However, the behavioral approach soon combined with psychometric techniques, specifically self- and other-reports, in order to identify leadership styles in real-life samples.

One of the first consistent findings was that leaders differed on the basis of how "considerate" they were of their subordinates' feelings and needs. It is important here to emphasize the distinction between the identification of trait (discussed in sections 11.2.2 and 11.2.4) and behavioral aspects of leadership. Although at first sight it may appear that showing consideration (a behavior)

may be the natural consequence of being a considerate person (a trait), trait approaches would try to establish whether, *in general*, leaders tend to be considerate or not. On the other hand, behavioral approaches would posit that *some* leaders behave in a considerate manner, whilst *others* do not. This means that, from the perspective of trait theory, consideration may be a distinctive feature of leaders, whilst from a behavioral point of view some leaders may be considerate whereas others may not.

In the 1950s (e.g., Bales, 1950; Hemphill & Coons, 1957) researchers introduced another distinction, that between *task-oriented* and *interpersonally oriented* leadership styles (see Box 11.2). Task-oriented leadership is characterized by the leader's concern with the completion of relevant tasks (in order to accomplish goals), whereas interpersonally oriented leadership is characterized by the leader's concern with maintaining good relationships with and between the group (followers/subordinates).

Another classification of leadership style was the distinction between *democratic* and *autocratic* leaders, also referred to as *participative* and *directive* leadership. Thus leaders differ in the extent to which they seek (democratic/participative) or avoid (autocratic/directive) participation of their followers/subordinates in key decision-making and planning. Psychologists have also conceptualized the *laissez-faire* (literally "let do") style, which is characterized by a passive leader who tends to avoid decision-making and escape responsibilities for group outcomes.

From the late 1970s onwards, leadership research has tended to emphasize the effects of leaders on subordinates, with particular focus on leaders' effectiveness to *inspire* (motivate) and *empower* (give a sense of power to) their followers, enabling them to give of their best. Such attempts are best subsumed under the concepts of *charismatic* and *transformational* leadership (Burns, 1978) and are discussed in more detail in sections 11.3.1 and 11.3.2.

Another salient classification for leadership style – often contrasted with the transformational/charismatic style – has been that of *transactional* leadership (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1998), which is discussed in section 11.3.4. Transactional leadership in part consists of merely the exchange of interests between the leader and subordinates. Thus transactional leaders focus on their followers' needs and establish a relationship with them based on the satisfaction of these needs. In many senses transactional leadership represents the prototypical relationship between manager and employees, as well as the inherent processes of rewards and punishment that underlie the accomplishment or failure to accomplish organizational goals, respectively.

11.3.1 Charismatic leadership

charismatic leadership a leadership style that is visionary, motivational, innovative, and capable of inspiring optimism in others, also characterized by exceptional communication skills

In recent decades, differential psychologists have shown increased interest in the construct of **charismatic leadership** (Bass, 1997; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House & Shamir, 1993). This leadership style is characterized by leaders who are visionary, capable of arousing motivation in their followers, and who project optimism, challenge the status quo, and represent excellent role models.

Experimental studies seem to indicate that charismatic leaders are also characterized by superior communication skills (more so than leaders with other leadership styles). In particular, charismatic leaders would "speak with a captivating voice tone; make direct eye contact; show animated facial expressions; and have a powerful, confident, and dynamic interactional style" (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996, p. 38). As seen in section 11.2.1, the idea that leaders have superior communication skills was already present in Freud's leadership theory.

Unlike other leadership styles (notably autocratic or *laissez-faire*), charismatic leaders are particularly able and likely to *empower* their followers, that is, to raise followers' feelings of self-efficacy, motivation, and self-confidence (Bass, 1997). This is achieved through the leader's ability to describe "a better future for followers" (House & Shamir, 1993). Accordingly, followers would be more likely to emulate their leaders by taking risks, challenging the status quo, and searching for creative and innovative solutions.

Many psychologists have emphasized that charismatic leadership is mainly a "perceived" construct or leadership style, which depends almost exclusively on the image the leader projects to others (see also section 11.2.3). This is why charismatic leadership has been mainly assessed through *other-estimates* of charisma, such as the Transformational Scale of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1985, 1995). This scale comprises Likert-type items that assess inspirational motivation, attributed charisma, and idealized influence, such as "displays a strong sense of power and purpose" and "acts in ways to build your trust" (other sample items are shown in Table 11.4). In that sense, one may almost recognize charismatic leadership as the leadership style that is positively rated by others, in the sense of being associated with positive attitudes, perceptions, and performance of followers.

The concept of charismatic leadership is founded on the psychoanalytic notion of personal identification, i.e., the process by which an individual's belief about a person becomes self-defining or self-referential. Simply explained, to identify with someone is to want to be like that person (see also section 11.2.1 on Freud). Thus charismatic leaders would position themselves as *role models* for their subordinates, who would in turn imitate and adopt the beliefs, feelings, and behaviors of the leaders (Conger &

Table 11.4 Leadership styles as defined by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

Scales and sub-scales	Description of leadership style
1 Transformational	
(a) *Idealized influence (attribute)*	Shows qualities that generate respect and pride from others associated with leader
(b) *Idealized influence (behavior)*	Communicates values, goals, and importance of organization's aims
(c) *Inspirational motivation*	Is optimistic and excited about goals and future plans
(d) *Intellectual stimulation*	Looks at new ways of solving problems and completing tasks
(e) *Individualized consideration*	Develops and mentors followers and attends to their needs
2 Transactional	
(a) *Contingent reward*	Rewards others for good performances
(b) *Management by exception (active)*	Attends to followers' mistakes and failure to meet standards
(c) *Management by exception (passive)*	Waits for problems to become serious before intervening
3 Laissez-faire	Frequently absent and not involved in critical decision-making processes/stages

Source: Adapted from Avolio, Bass, & Jung (1999), and Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen (2003).

Kanungo, 1998; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). In that sense the leader is to a group what a father or mother is to a child.

Although there is wide consensus on the benefits of charismatic leadership for both the organization and the individual, identification with the leader and empowerment of subordinates also generate high *dependence* of subordinates on the leader. Conger and Kanungo (1988) pointed out that dependence is an intense form of identification and is the feature that distinguishes charismatic leadership from other leadership styles (except transformational leadership, which is itself a form of charismatic leadership; see section 11.3.2). In simple terms, this implies that followers are dependent on the leaders' approval, by which I mean moral and psychological recognition rather than organizational reward. The consequences of dependency are manifested more clearly upon the leader's departure, which "will result in a crisis, intense feelings of loss and severe orientation problems on the part of the followers" (Shamir, 1991, p. 96).

Charismatic leaders are influential in that they ensure and strengthen subordinates' level of *social identification* (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), the process by which individuals identify with the group or organization. Under social identification, individuals are happy to replace their own personal goals with those of the group, and tend to experience the group's success and failures as their own. Recent studies (see Bono & Judge, 2003) have shown that leaders who succeed at raising subordinates' level of social identification also increase subordinates' eagerness to engage with, and contribute to, group goals and projects.

In recent years, the concept of charismatic leadership has been progressively replaced (and absorbed) by that of **transformational leadership** (discussed in section 11.3.2). In fact you may have noticed that the sub-scale of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire shown in Table 11.4 is called "transformational" rather than "charismatic." It is therefore noteworthy that both notions have a clear overlap, and, moreover, some have interpreted transformational leadership as merely the effect of charismatic leadership.

For instance, House and Shamir (1993) argued that charismatic leadership produces transformational effects. Likewise Bass (1997) conceptualized charisma as the overarching factor of transformational leadership, which includes the minor dimensions of motivation, inspiration, and consideration (see again Table 11.3).

Charismatic leadership has been recently linked with creativity (see chapter 10) (Bono & Judge, 2003; Sosik, Kahai, & Avolio, 1998). Such a link is hypothesized on the basis of the high degree of delegation of responsibility to subordinates by transformational leaders. Thus, rather than permanently giving orders or transmitting a specific set of instructions, transformational leaders allow their subordinates to come up with their own solutions and therefore encourage creative behaviors (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002). Furthermore, leaders who motivate and inspire

> **transformational leadership** a type of charismatic leadership style based on communicating and sharing the leader's vision in order to produce a change in followers' values, expectations, and motivations and inspire them to sacrifice personal interests for those of the group

their subordinates – and this applies largely to charismatic leadership – are more likely to facilitate subordinates' creativity.

The link between creativity and leadership has been the topic of much recent debate in both academia and industry because "managing creative talent" seems largely an unaccomplished goal (Hogan & Hogan, 2002).

11.3.2 Transformational leadership: Leaders as mentors

Burns (1978, 2003) and Bass (1985, 1998) distinguished between *transactional* (see section 11.3.4) and *transformational* leadership styles. As noted above, transformational leadership is essentially a type of charismatic leadership style. Thus it is based on the communication and sharing of the leader's vision to followers in order to inspire them to sacrifice personal interests for the interests of the group. This phenomenon was already conceptualized by Freud when he concluded that, in a group, "an individual readily sacrifices his personal interest to the collective interest" (Freud, 1921/1957, p. 75, quoting Le Bon). However, Freud hypothesized this to be a process underlying any form of leadership and group psychology and did not distinguish between transformational and other forms of leadership, at least not explicitly.

With transformational leadership (which is defined by its effects on others/the group), followers tend to identify strongly with and are very dependent on their leader. In that sense they are transformed by the leader. This produces a change in the values, expectations, and motivations of both leaders and followers (Yukl, 1998). Thus transformational leadership occurs "when one or more persons *engage* with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality" (Burns, 1978, p. 20, italics in the original). Consequently, a recent study found that transformational leaders were perceived as having higher moral standards than transactional leaders (Turner et al., 2002).

The construct of transformational leadership has attracted widespread attention from both academic and business settings because of consistent claims and accumulating evidence that it plays a substantial role in the processes that enhance employee motivation and performance (Barling et al., 1996; Dvir et al., 2002). Thus, several experts have indicated that in most contemporary organizational settings (at least in Western/industrialized economies), transformational leadership is highly effective and has benefits for the organization, the group, and the leader, and numerous studies reported that followers' commitment, loyalty, attachment, and satisfaction are all significantly related to transformational leadership (Becker & Billings, 1993; Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

Psychologists have also pointed out that transformational leaders (as with charismatic leaders) tend to be creative, innovative, and strive for changes and improvements. Accordingly, they "state future goals and develop plans to achieve them. Skeptical of the status quo, they innovate, even when the organization that they lead is generally successful. By mentoring and empowering their followers, transformational leaders encourage them to develop their full potential and thereby to contribute more

capably to their organization" (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003, p. 570).

Besides the benefits for the organization, transformational leadership may have a positive effect on the psychological aspects of the followers who experience growth, independence, and empowerment (Bass, 1995), although dependence on the leader may impose limitations on the subordinates (Howell, 1988). Whilst empowerment increases the subordinates' independence and autonomy, dependence requires constant leader approval to maintain high self-esteem.

Several authors have therefore argued that dependence may be the most common disadvantage (for both individuals and organizations) of transformational leadership. Unlike empowerment, which boosts subordinates' self-efficacy, motivation, and performance, dependence creates submissive loyalty, conformity, and blind obedience in subordinates (Howell, 1988). However, future research is needed to clarify the extent to which dependence and empowerment interact in both charismatic and transformational leadership, and in which direction (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003).

Traditionally, the concepts of empowerment and dependence have been treated as opposite, but in a recent study it was argued that "in early stages of the relationship, some dependence on the leader is a necessary condition for the leader's empowering effects, whereas in later stages the empowerment effects would depend on the followers achieving independence from the leader and on their need for affirmation and recognition" (Kark et al., 2003, p. 253). Further, personality traits and specificities of the task may contribute to an interaction between feelings of dependence and empowerment.

11.3.3 Personality of transformational leaders

Broadly speaking, leadership style could be defined in terms of "stable patterns of behaviors displayed by leaders" (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003, p. 569), which implies that there is a clear theoretical overlap between the concept of leadership style and personality traits. Accordingly, the question arises as to what specific personality dimensions are associated with each leadership style. In the past two decades several studies have aimed at answering this question by articulating or integrating established individual difference constructs (e.g., personality traits, intelligence, interests, and motivation) with different leadership styles. In particular, recent research has increasingly focused on the personality characteristics of transformational leaders, looking at empirical or psychometric links between measures of the Big Five and transformational leadership.

Recently, Judge and Bono (2000) looked at 14 samples of leaders in 200 organizations to see which of the Big Five traits predicted transformational leadership. They hypothesized that Emotional Stability (low Neuroticism), Extraversion, Openness to Experience, and Agreeableness would be positively related to ratings of effective leadership behaviors. Results were only partly supportive, as Extraversion ($r = .28$) and Agreeableness ($r = .32$), but not Emotional Stability and Conscientiousness, were related to leadership effectiveness.

Correlations between Extraversion and transformational leadership were mainly attributed to the "dominance" components of Extraversion, whilst correlations between transformational leadership and Agreeableness were interpreted in terms of the "empathy" components of Agreeableness. In addition, there was also a significant correlation between transformational leadership and Openness to Experience, though this correlation dropped to non-significant levels when Extraversion and Agreeableness were taken into account.

Hogan and Hogan (2002) argued that charismatic/transformational leaders tend to be more agreeable, open, and extraverted than transactional leaders. Transformational leaders need acceptance and status, which they would achieve by being generous and sensitive (agreeable). Transformational leaders also need to be expressive, dominant, and persuasive, for which their high Extraversion would be advantageous, whilst their high Openness score may be particularly beneficial in enabling them to "do things differently," that is, to innovate and create through an imaginative vision of the future (see Figure 11.6).

11.3.4 Transactional leadership: Controlling rather than inspiring
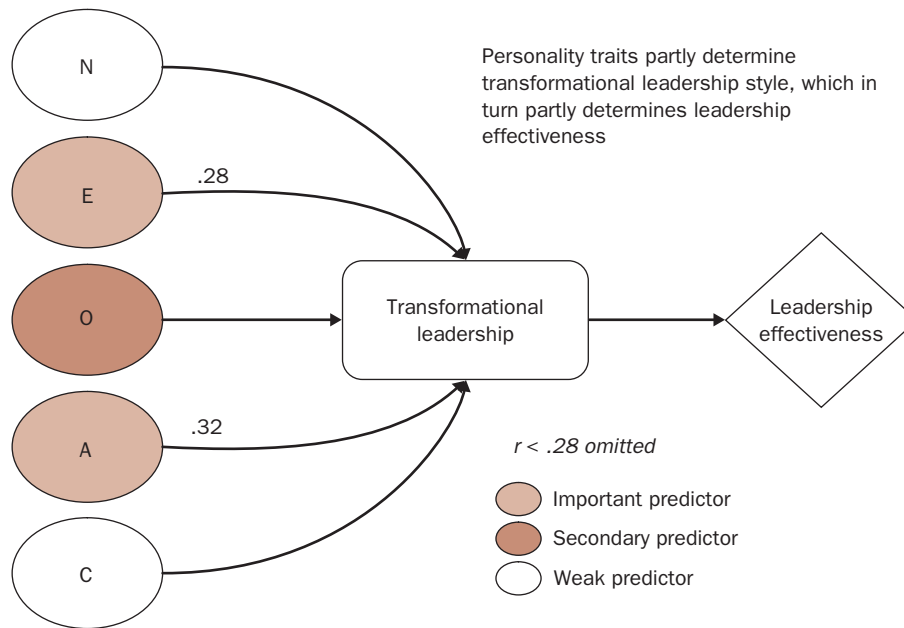
Transactional leadership is characterized by the leader's tendency to *control* followers' behaviors and apply corrective transactions (between leader and follower) that lead to the elimination of problems. Transactional leaders achieve influence over their subordinates by exchanging rewards (securing economic benefits) in return for compliance, that is, subordinates will grant authority to the leader.

> **transactional leadership** a leadership style that is characterized by the leader's tendency to control followers' behaviors and to achieve influence by exchanging rewards (e.g., economic benefits) for compliance

The main difference between transformational (as well as charismatic) and transactional leadership is that empowerment of followers occurs only in the former. Thus, transformational and charismatic leaders may influence not only subordinates' behaviors but also their motivation, self-efficacy, and self-esteem, whereas transactional leaders will only affect subordinates' behaviors. More crucially, transformational and charismatic leaders manage to influence subordinates to think *beyond* their personal interests and act according to the interest of the whole group, whereas transactional leaders base their influence on the personal interests of the subordinates.

This theoretical distinction is manifested in the practicalities of everyday transactional leadership, which, unlike transformational leadership, does not include a high degree of delegation of responsibilities and decision-making to subordinates (Dvir et al., 2002). Rather, transactional leadership is based on a pragmatic exchange relationship between leader and follower that resembles a commercial/business agreement.

Think, for example, of the very basic relationship that arises between a boss and her employees. Employees will work in return for their salary/payment, and follow the boss's orders and

Personality traits partly determine transformational leadership style, which in turn partly determines leadership effectiveness

.28

Transformational leadership

Leadership effectiveness

.32

r < .28 omitted

Important predictor
Secondary predictor
Weak predictor

Figure 11.6   Personality traits, transformational leadership, and leadership effectiveness.
N = Neuroticism, E = Extraversion, O = Openness, A = Agreeableness, C = Conscientiousness.

rules as long as they are satisfied with what they get in return. Thus, if the salary is too low they may choose to "break" the agreement and finish their transactional relationship with their boss by moving to another company.

11.4 LEADERSHIP AND GENDER

The idea that there are observable gender differences in both leadership potential and effectiveness has been a topic of scientific, popular, and political debate. In simple terms, this debate can be explained by the unequal distribution of women and men in leadership positions across a variety of disciplines, professions, and fields (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Miller, Taylor, & Buck, 1991). For some, this is an indicator of males' superior leadership potential, whilst for others it is simply a sign of the sexist societies we live in. It has, for instance, been reported that females constitute only 5 percent of top corporate positions and only 1 percent of chief executive officers amongst America's top 500 companies (Catalyst, 2002a, b). In this section, we shall not concern ourselves with the ideological views that perpetuate this debate but with the scientific evidence that may help us shed light on the issue of gender differences underlying leadership.

During the 1970s and 1980s (few careful studies of gender differences had been conducted prior to the 1970s), the most widely held psychological view in regard to gender differences in leadership maintained, with the support of experimental/laboratory evidence, that female and male leaders do *not* differ in their leadership potential and effectiveness (Bartol & Martin, 1986; Nieva & Gutek, 1981). For instance, in the second edition of the *Handbook of Leadership*, Bass (1981) concluded that there are no

consistent gender differences in supervisory style. However, subsequent psychometric studies analyzed large sets of data and possible variations in leadership style between men and women, yielding conflicting results.

Theoretically, there are three major reasons to expect gender differences in leadership styles:

1. Biologically, men and women are different.
2. Culturally, men and women have different roles (these roles were more different in the past than they are now, but cultural differences still persist).
3. Perceptions of men and women (by others) are different.

Thus, differences between men's and women's leadership styles can be directly enhanced – and even caused – by lay beliefs about gender differences in leadership (see section 11.2.3, which looks at leadership as a perceived construct). These **self-fulfilling prophecies** (by which beliefs or expectations about an event cause the very event to occur) may explain stereotypical patterns of behavior which are particularly evident in regard to gender. Thus "internalized" gender roles would cause male leaders to behave in ways that are consistent with the "male-leader stereotype" and female leaders to act according to established "female-leader stereotypes" (Cross & Madson, 1997).

Given that, in most societies and cultures, women tend to be portrayed as more friendly, kind, and unselfish than men, the notion of leadership may be constructed upon male-like

> **self-fulfilling prophecy** the process by which expectations about other persons or groups lead those persons or groups to behave in ways that confirm expectations

attributes, such as dominant, masterful, and assertive (see also section 11.2.1). Accordingly, Schein (2001, p. 676) concluded that, for most people, the "think manager, think male" rule is deeply internalized. In fact, we may have all come across situations in which successful female leaders have been more or less deliberately compared with males, or described as more masculine than other women. On the other hand, several popular books published during the 1980s claimed that "feminine traits, such as warmth, nurturance, and flexibility, made women better leaders and managers than power-oriented male leaders" (Chemers, 2000, p. 33).

Eagly and Johnson (1990) meta-analyzed 162 studies (between the period 1961–87), looking at gender differences in autocratic vs. democratic leadership styles. The overall pattern of results showed that women tended to be more democratic than men, whilst men tended to be more autocratic than women. This pattern of results was later replicated by another meta-analysis (van Engen, 2001) and contradicted early experimental evidence that had equated men and women in regard to their leadership style and effectiveness.

In a recent state-of-the-art meta-analytic comparison of gender differences in transformational, transactional, and *laissez-faire* leadership styles, Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) analyzed data from 45 different studies (between 1985 and 2000) in order to test whether women and men differed in their *typical* leadership styles. Results showed female leaders tended to be more transformational than their male counterparts, whilst male leaders were generally more likely to adopt transactional and *laissez-faire* leadership styles. Although overall gender differences were relatively minor, the authors concluded that "positive" features of leadership are manifested more clearly in female than in male leaders, so that, if anything, women would have an advantage – rather than a disadvantage – in regard to leadership effectiveness. This is consistent with several claims by other authors that female leaders tend to be less hierarchical, more cooperative, and more other-oriented than their male counterparts (Helgesen, 1990; Loden, 1985). It has been noted, therefore, that in present-day organizations women's typical leadership styles would lead to greater effectiveness than those of males (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Sharpe, 2000), mainly because of their ability to display a transformational repertoire of leadership.

11.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this chapter I have looked at the construct of leadership, which is important in regard to individual difference because of the applied implications of understanding and predicting who will lead and, perhaps more importantly, who will make a successful leader. As seen:

1. Traditional approaches to leadership, such as the Great Man theory, attempted to identify the key attributes or traits that distinguish between successful and unsuccessful leaders on one hand, and leaders and non-leaders on the other. Although personality and intelligence were found to correlate with leadership emergence and effectiveness, they were insufficient to predict and understand leadership, partly because of their failure to account for important situational factors, which have been examined by contingency theories of leadership.

2. In recent years increasing research has examined the behavioral or stylistic aspects of leadership. Three major types of leadership emerged, namely, transformational (previously referred to as charismatic), transactional, and *laissez-faire*. Transformational leaders are those who inspire and serve as role models for others. Transactional leaders are those who are pragmatic and task-oriented (thus they may be obeyed but rarely admired). *Laissez-faire* leaders are those who adopt a passive approach and let the group take the initiative.

3. Recent meta-analysis has reported several links between established personality traits and leadership styles, most notably the correlations of transformational leadership with Extraversion and Agreeableness. Thus there has been a reemergence of the trait approach to leadership, which simultaneously accounts for both behavioral and dispositional aspects of leadership.

4. Meta-analytic comparison of gender differences in leadership styles has shown that female leaders tend to be more transformational than their male counterparts, whilst male leaders are generally more likely to adopt transactional and *laissez-faire* leadership styles. Overall gender differences were found to be relatively minor, although "positive" features of leadership are manifested more clearly in female than in male leaders.

Chapter 12 will look at individual differences in vocational interests, that is, the psychological factors that determine people's aspirations and career choices.

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