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Article

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Journal of Applied Leadership and Management

Provided in Cooperation with:

Professional School of Business & Technology, Hochschule Kempten - University of Applied Sciences

Suggested Citation: Desjardins, Christoph; Baker, Mark (2013) : The Leadership Task Model, Journal of Applied Leadership and Management, ISSN 2194-9522, Hochschule Kempten - University of Applied Sciences, Professional School of Business & Technology, Kempten, Vol. 2, pp. 17-39, <http://www.journal-alm.org/article/view/11870>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/156736>

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The Leadership Task Model

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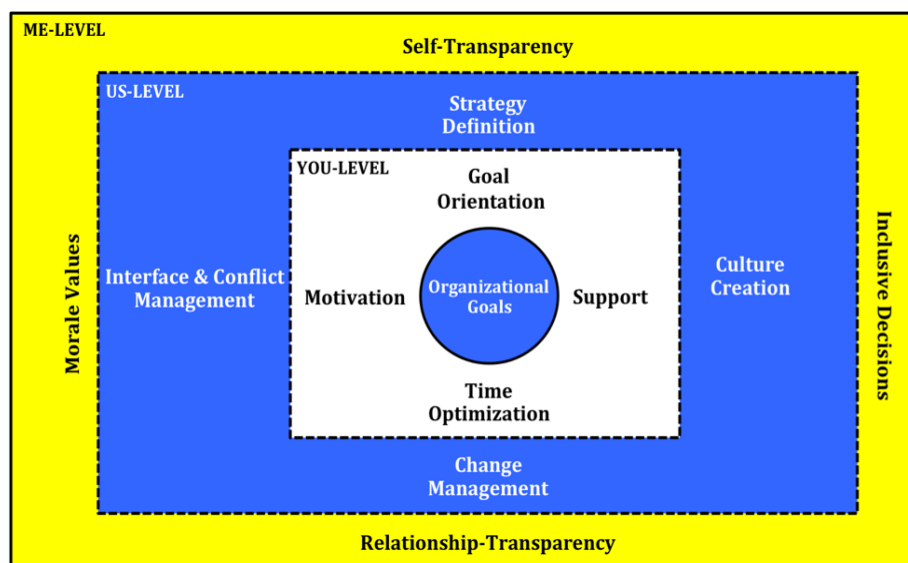
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Abstract

- Research questions:** What are the most relevant leadership tasks that drive leadership productivity? Which levels of leadership tasks exist?
- Methods:** Theoretical model development.
- Results:** Development of the Leadership Task Model with three task levels (Meta- or Me-Level, Makro- or Us-Level and Mikro- or You-Level) and 12 major leadership tasks (Me-Level: Self-Transparency, Relationship-Transparency, Morale Values and Inclusive Decisions; Us-Level: Strategy Definition, Culture Creation, Change Management and Interface- and Conflict Management; You-Level: Goal Orientation, Support, Motivation and Time Optimization).
- Structure of the article:** 1. Essay; 2. Literature Review; 3. Conclusions; 4. About the authors; 5. References

1. ESSAY



The Leadership Task Model has been developed to provide reflective leaders with a results oriented set of leadership behaviors derived from scientific theory and practical economic effectiveness. Simply speaking it answers the question: What do I need to do to be a good leader? Goodness is defined as a combination of socially and culturally defined role expectations regarding positive leadership behavior, and economic expectations towards the leadership role. That means a modern leader needs to achieve organizational goals and serve the purpose of a commercial enterprise, and be a responsible and positive member of his or her society. Just focusing on the first part leads to socially and economically devastating results like in the first financial crisis in 2008. But a thriving free society is dependent upon a solid, sustainable financial foundation, which is why good business leaders play a crucial part in our societies.

To be sustainably successful, business leaders need to have an awareness of the larger interdependent importance of their evolved modern role. Modern multi-layered, interdependent models are needed to help the business leader reflect on how they can best fulfill their role in order to maximize the benefits for their companies and their society at the same time. This reflection needs to take place on all three levels of the Leadership Task Model.

The Me-Level

The Me-Level emphasizes the reality that the performance of the leader is based upon the person who is the leader. To put it simply, the leader's ability to lead others is limited to her/his ability to lead him/herself. To gain reality-based results for both the organization and society, the good leader must develop through reflection the insight to see and accept her/himself as s/he is separate from what s/he does. With the mindfulness of a reality based self experience (centered and grounded), the leader can more objectively observe and evaluate his/her personality, attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors based upon what works (or does not work) to gain the desired results of creating value through actualizing potentials. This consciousness level of leadership is the foundation for the behaviors of Moral Values, Inclusive Decisions, Self-Transparency and Relationship Transparency.

The leadership task *Morale Values* requires that the leader reflect upon the existing morale values our society is based upon. It is vital for the leader to be able to distinguish between current social values, e.g. "I have to become a rich star", which orient people towards selfish consumption and competition ("Greed is good"), and the traditional values (often religious based) that encourage the cooperation and commitment which have always been foundation pillars for successful companies and countries.

When business leaders focus only on the profit of their organization and not the organizations interdependency within society, then they become like a cancer endlessly feeding off the host society and giving no value in return. Equally, the research is clear that within organizations value-less leaders are not trusted by their employees and their behavior creates a culture of demoralization, disengagement, and reduced profits harming both the organization and society. Like communication, a leader can not, not have an impact. Her/his managers and employees will comply with his commands but they won't be committed to his goals and strategies and it will be very hard for her/him to implement sustainable organizational changes of value.

The impact on society due to business leaders that model these social values is even worse. The disproportionate financial rewards they give themselves validate a self-centered competition of taking while simultaneously disengaging the majority, whose efforts are disproportionately rewarded, from feeling that they are contributing members of the organization. The lesson of empires from the beginning of time is that fragmentation and decline begins when the rich and intelligent stop contribution value and start isolating and hoarding resources.

For a leader to be good, there is the requirement that they examine and define their own value system with the mature consciousness of the interdependent nature of relationships in organizations. Reflected values provide a moral compass for creating the changes of value in thought, action and interaction that generate trust-self and other. Mature values provide the anchor necessary to resist short-term temptations in favor of the more difficult challenge of finding

transformational solutions. Values are especially important during times of economic crisis and market change. When the times appear uncertain and without personal value, then it is only those who have personal values that will be certain of the course to take. Those will be the leaders who have the self-trust and confidence to inspire in others the trust and confidence to take the uncertain step necessary to create changes of value. Morale Values are the compass of a Good Leader.

Self-Transparency means that a leader has clarity (self-awareness or mindfulness) about what is driving her/his leadership behavior. Without this insight, s/he won't be able to understand and accept responsibility for internal needs and will tend to project responsibility for her/his well-being onto the performance of employees. By recognizing and respecting her/his needs as legitimate, the leader has the awareness to develop inclusive solutions for the well-being of all organizational members in the achievement of company goals.

Being aware of morale values and having a participative mindset is part of self-transparency. But dealing with this philosophical and sociological aspect of leadership is easier than looking at the psychological drivers, which is at the core of self-transparency. A higher degree of self-reflection is required which means that the leader must be willing to analyze her/his own personality with an in-depth, objective perspective. All human beings "survive" the immaturity of childhood with certain defense mechanisms that while protecting us during our growing years also blind us as adults from seeing ourselves as others see us. Insight into this "shadow side" allows the Good Leader to develop more mature ways for meeting needs and self-protection. This more open, honest self-perception is the foundation for the trust that is a central value for engaging followers. With this level of self-transparency, the leader can assess whether or not their personality profile and motivational needs matches the demands of the leadership role. For instance, somebody with a low stress resistance and high levels of introversion might not be the best fit for such a role. The same is true for individuals who mostly seek to gain a sense of purpose and personal fulfillment and growth through a work activity, and are less motivated by acknowledgement from others and the feeling of

control, which normally comes with a leadership role.

Therefore a good leader needs to have a depth of insight into how her/his personality and personal needs fit to the particular demands of the leadership role. Each individual's personality is formed from genetics and life experiences to meet the needs that drive all behavior. In a leadership position, immature and dysfunctional ways of meeting needs not only continuously limits the leadership potential but, most importantly, negatively influences the well being of all followers and adversely influences the achievement of organizational goals. With personal insight and the motivation to actualize her/his potential, the good leader can model "doing your best by being your best".

This leadership development process needs to be triggered and sustained to actualize potential. As it is a profound behavioral change, a one-time seminar won't be sufficient to start a sustainable successful process. Instead a series of seminars over a certain time period or a leadership coaching program would be required to be effective. From a learning perspective such ongoing one-to-one sessions are especially valuable as they allow supervision of the transfer of the new behaviors to the leadership practice and the development of the leaders ability to "learn how to learn" from life experiences.

The leadership task *Inclusive Decisions* refers to leadership behavior that needs to reflect the democratic values of our society. A leader is only a leader if s/he has people who willingly follow. As such, leadership is dependent upon the expectations of followers. In democratic societies, people expect that their voice is heard and their vote counts in the governing of the society. When the people feel that the leadership decisions are inclusive of their needs, they feel valued and willing to engage in the process of creating the vision of the leader. A mature human being with his/her own moral values and vision can use the power of their position wisely as they are aware that the power comes from their followers. Immature leaders with a narcissistic need to be acknowledged and powerful are vulnerable to being seduced by the power of their position as if it is their own power. This leadership ignorance leads to "right" decisions (often egocentrically defined) that disregard the real needs

of the organization or the people who are the organization. Experiencing a selfish disregard by the leader, the followers disengage from the process and begin looking to their own needs. When the leader's narcissism comes to an absolute level and a dictatorship (command and control) is installed, then the followers will passively comply out of fear and tend to move towards active resistance or passive helplessness. Neither, of course, leads to the company attaining their goals. The responsibility of a good leader is to actualize the potential of the company through creating an engaged culture of cooperation, collaboration and innovation. An organization can only grow when there is an open forum for sharing knowledge and new ideas that the employees trust because they trust that the leader will listen objectively to facilitate solutions that are inclusive. When the good leader through inclusive decisions demonstrates that s/he can be trusted with power, the people are empowered, intrinsically motivated and follow the leader thereby giving him/her more power. Growing an organization means to gather all knowledge and creativity that exist amongst its members. This demands a participative attitude that is guided by the insight that a leader is a facilitator of solutions and not the creator. Human beings are driven by an intrinsic motivation that is triggered by engagement in a participative process that allows them to include their personal objectives within organizational goals. A Participative Mindset is a fundamental leadership value for engaging all the stakeholders in the inclusive definition and implementation of the strategic goals of a company.

Relationship-Transparency is a mandatory fundament of effective interactive leadership. Leaders that do not have a clear understanding of how to effectively relate to their team members can not fully achieve their objectives. Relationship-Transparency is based on various factors beginning with the awareness of the interdependent nature of relationships. A leader needs to communicate in a conscious way with and not at her/his followers. Therefore he needs to understand the basic rules of communication and is capable of maintaining awareness that is necessary to apply these rules during the time hurried pressure of daily business. Empathy is a foundation value of Relationship Transparency. To be able to observe (not evaluate)

the real needs of a counterpart is crucial for fulfilling the basic leadership tasks as they have been defined on the You-Level of the Leadership Task Model. Without Empathy, it is not possible for the leader to form the relationship of acceptance and trust with the performer necessary to then evaluate the performance through giving feedback and coaching in order to achieve the desired work goals. With Empathy, the leader is able to form relationships of trust (or engagement) and personal development with performers while holding them accountable for their performance.

Relationship-Transparency also includes a systemic awareness of the interdependent nature of the roles of the leader, managers, employees and other stakeholders in the current business environment. This knowledge is necessary to create and maintain the social harmony that is necessary for the human resources in an organization to effectively and efficiently work together.

The leader needs to consistently behave congruently in order to achieve transparent relationships of trust with team members. Personal authenticity is based on reflected personal values, which are shared with others through attitudes, actions and interactions. Such a value-based reliable behavior from a leader will create high levels of trust and engagement in team members. When followers experience trust that means that the probability and the value of achieving organizational goals will be rated as high which results in high levels of motivation and therefore work related effort.

The Us-Level

Looking at the organizational role of a leader, especially a top manager, *Strategy Definition* is one of the most important leadership tasks s/he has to fulfill as it is directing the success or the failure of the whole organization. So it is no surprise when the public opinion on prominent business leaders is mostly based on their successful strategic visions. A recent example is the late Steve Jobs who led Apple to become the most valuable company in the world. At the same time he was also widely well known for his egocentric and aggressive behavior toward employees and other people. Being narcissistic and on the edge of autism might even have been a personal asset for Jobs to be able to consequently follow his personal vision for such a long time

span. But at the same time he did recognize his dysfunctional behavior and tried to compensate for it to protect his employees. Jobs insulated lower levels from his pace setting style by putting more relationship oriented people below him. Without doing this Apple would not have survived its first two decades of its company history and would not have achieved such high level of success.

Another reason why single-minded strategic leaders might fail is rooted in their lack in understanding how to effectively create *Change Management*. The CEO of EADS, Tom Enders, might have had the right strategy when he wanted his company to merge with the British defense giant BAE, but obviously he did not understand how to convince his stakeholders of this vision, which is one of the first and crucial steps to successfully manage organizational change. Why did Edzard Reuter and Dieter Zetsche, the top executives from Mercedes fail to integrate Chrysler and why did Fiat boss Sergio Marchionne succeed? But *Change Management* is not only a top management domain, which strategy might often be, but a challenge for every leader in engaging every member of the organization in the change. In times of continuous change, managers on every level of an organization need to communicate the purpose of changes and have to cope with the natural resistance of her/his team members towards change. *Change management* is a major leadership task based on the psychological fact that human beings for good reasons do not accept changes that they did not initiate or are able to control. Therefore every manager has to face this reality and ignoring it only leads to the failure of implementing planned changes or to an unexpected increase of the time and costs for the change.

A leader needs to develop her/his Emotional Intelligence, which then enables her/him to see and understand the concepts and tools of *Change Management* on the Us-Level. A lot of the *Change Management* doing takes place on the You-Level when he is interacting with her/his team members. That explains why top executives who are pursuing their strategic vision, yet have a lack of empathic understanding towards the need of leading their employees through the difficulties of their envisioned changes.

Culture Creation is an organizational change that is

based on a specific strategic intent. Culture is an agreement on how we work together to meet our needs. It is inherent in social groups and arises independent of intention. The move by the leader is to purposely engage the followers in the creation of a single culture that is based upon the strategic vision and an agreement coming from the bottom-up on how the strategic vision is implemented at each tactical level with defined goals, roles/responsibilities and rules. It is one of the most effective tools of the leader as it creates a value potential for each member in providing organizational cultural decision-making guidance. When faced with the decision options usual in complex business situations, the member decides for that option that best meets the local tactical needs while also moving the process towards the organization's strategic vision. This decision making response-ability engages each member in a results oriented, aligned cultural identification. It is linked to the leadership tasks of Strategy Definition as well as *Change Management*. An example is an innovation driven company like Google. Having the strategy of continuously inventing new data and IT based services means that they also need to implement the value "Innovation Driven" in their company in order to generate the necessary innovations. This is something they did in an exemplary way in define work time slots (20% day), which are purely for pursuing new and own ideas and by creating a work environment that supports breaks at work, which is known to foster creativity. By this measure every Google employee knows that he is allowed to be creative and does not need a personal leadership interaction to generate new ideas. This is cultural leadership and has the double benefit of achieving a company's objectives (e.g. creating new products and services) and setting the leader free to focus on other leadership tasks as her/his followers are self-response-able and self-motivated to pursue the organizational goals. Then the leader has his/ her time for innovation in terms of where the organization needs to be in the future.

Once such a strong culture has been established, it is a durable competitive advantage as it can not be easily copied or transferred to another company. The reason is that changing a culture is one of the most challenging leadership tasks the good leader faces as it is a long-term achievement requiring

organizational empathy, two way information flow and the willingness of leaders to be inclusive in the creation of the culture.

A leader needs to define and live the values that he wants to be shared by her/his followers. These core values need to support the corporate strategy. The vulnerable point for the organization is the authenticity of the leader in “walking the talk”. Employees of a company are very sensitive and will directly detect if a core value is real or just leadership talk. There is also the danger that an organization’s core values are not lived consequently over a longer time period due to leadership changes or given up for short-term economic reasons. Here Google is also an example as their once famous value “Don’t be evil” has been contradicted by their aggressive policies in collecting and using personal data.

In former times our ancestors looked for the strongest individual in the tribe as their leader as s/he was supposed to give them a competitive advantage over other tribes, especially when it came to a direct confrontation between rivaling chiefs, an ancient kind of *Interface Management*. This idea of the need for an aggressive and potent leader still prevails in modern competitive organizations, as these silverback types fit a leadership stereotype that is increasingly out of step in a modern interdependent global marketplace where sustainable success is based upon sustainable cooperation and loyalty between organizations, suppliers, customers and the local society. The Leadership Tasks Model emphasizes the need for a more mature, cooperative individual as a Good Leader. Aggressive competition still has a place as a leadership attitude towards rival organizations. However, as an internal leadership style it is toxic for both the well being of the employees and the sustainable success of the organization. So the prototype of a modern leader is rather supposed to be a *Conflict Manager* instead of a conflict initiator. This is a leadership style that supports the development of the feminine as well as the masculine cultural values, which is the mark of the mature Good Leader.

As work environments get less hierarchical and lean management becomes anorexic, employees are required (not necessarily empowered) to work autonomously, which has a multiplicity of potential

positive benefits like increased motivation and performance, but also leads to more interpersonal conflicts between self-steered co-workers and a lack of organizational focus in individual efforts. At the same time, the structures of global organizations are getting more and more multi-dimensional with different functional and geographical matrixes including other collaborating companies, which also leads to a growing organizational complexity which makes Interface and Conflict Management an important leadership task.

The You-Level

The You-Level describes the interactions the leaders need to perform with others in order to achieve the goals of the corporation. The leadership tasks Goal Orientation, Support and Time Optimization have been already described as part of the Leadership Productivity Model (Desjardins, 2012).

Clearly the core leadership task is to achieve the set organizational goals. Leadership attention needs to focus on these goals and a leader needs to reflect if s/he spends his/her time with activities that are aligned to this *Goal Orientation*. But a leader can only be truly committed to the organization’s goals if there is a substantial match with her/his morale values. In times where corporate goals are defined based on creating shareholder value this becomes more and more difficult. A goal like Deutsche Bank chairman Ackermann’s famous 20% profit margin or billion-dollar corporate cost cutting programs are completely abstract and not linked to any real purpose, besides the self-destructive economic idea of creating maximum profit. Therefore, it creates no real value for the employees of a company. Worse, it leads to layoffs, pay cut-downs and other actions that contradict humanistic values and the common sense of the staff and also the middle management of a company. To parallel a children’s teaching tale, it is like cutting open the goose to get all the golden eggs.

But goals do not only need to be meaningful but also clearly defined. An example lies in the popular use of Key Performance Indicators which are often a major productivity barrier. Goal definition is a typical communication problem: The leader as the sender of the goal related message assumes that the

receiver has the same level of information in order to achieve his/her goal expectations. Obviously this is often not the case and consequently employees fail to achieve their leader's unspoken expectations. Also leaders often do not communicate the reason for goal changes to their followers, which is then another reason for a low work productivity as employees are not clear on what is expected and why. Leaders, especially if they have been promoted to this position based on their former position as the "best" technical subject matter expert, often show a fundamental lack of awareness and willingness to let go of the "best doer" identification and develop that expertise in their employees through accepting their work results as a necessary step in developing self-efficacy and competency potential. The resulting lack of autonomy reduces work motivation as well as the quality of the work results. Control by the supervisor and unnecessary rework is the highly inefficient result.

Empirical studies with the Leadership Productivity Survey (LPS), which measure the fulfillment of the leadership tasks on the You-Level, show that *Support* is trailing way behind the other tasks (Desjardins, 2012). While personal interaction is still satisfying in mid-sized companies with a lot of communication opportunities, giving enough information to the employees is already below the optimum. Potential for improvement can be especially detected in the area of feedback. More negative than positive feedback is given, while the ratings for negative feedback are lower. Also it can be assumed that most leaders are not aware of the basic rules of effective feedback, which are not the same as the famous "Golden Rules of Feedback". Both positive feedback and especially negative feedback need to focus on increasing the employee's work motivation in order to finally achieve the work goals according to the agreed KPIs. The lowest figure of all LPS values in all surveys has been the coaching of employees. This seems to be a leadership task that the managers are the least familiar with, while from a theoretical and practical leadership perspective, this should be the dyadic leadership activity where they should spend the most of their time. Their support of the employees should encourage reflection and consequential thinking in order to foster self-learning processes as the most effective way of

learning and changing human behavior. Instead of telling their employees what to improve, leaders need to shape their followers towards developing "real" results oriented solutions for their work problems. This enables them to work autonomously, which is the most efficient and most motivating way of organizing work and therefore results in high performance.

Motivation is one of the most frequently addressed leadership tasks and probably the one, which is the least understood. As long as managers believe that they can trigger high performance of their employees with bonus systems and other external rewards, they did not fully grasp the idea of what drives human motivation. Again Self-Reflection and Empathy could be the crucial eye-openers. When reflecting their own motivational schemes, most managers won't rate money as their prime motivator, but would rather state the major sources of motivation: recognition, growth, purpose, autonomy and goal achievement (performance) as defined by the Leadership Task Model. The next step to realize that the same motivators are relevant for every human being is then not far away. One barrier to accept the global rule of motivation is the fact that motivational needs are the same for everybody, but not to the same extent. So a leader needs to listen to understand the personal levels of motivational needs from her/his employees in order to address them properly.

Also leaders have to be aware of what is required from them to develop and maintain the strength of their follower's motivation. For instance, autonomy has major advantages for productivity by enabling direct employee responsibility to customer demands and process efficiency requirements. However, while managers would like to create additional degrees of freedom for their team members, they often find that the team members are reluctant to accept the additional responsibility. A common reason for this refusal is a self-perceived lack of competencies to handle the autonomy often combined with a negative personal learning history, where developing competency results were not accepted and shaped. Here a leader needs to understand that her/his staff members are not generally resistant and demotivated, but need to be coached to gain the confidence to become their full potential both in competencies and motivation.

Motivation as leadership tasks becomes even more

important when confronted with the new Generation Y, the 20-30ties year old who are starting to enter the job market. They are the forefront of the 21st century knowledge workers and a demographic shift generation. They have grown up in a world at peace where their needs and wants were met by working parents and Facebook is their primary social media. They will present the modern leader with different motivational challenge.

Time Optimization is often something leaders do for themselves but not for their employees where the performance leverage is greater. Perhaps the most common complaint of employees is that they “have too much to do and too little time to do it”. Due to “time hurriedness”, leaders often “dump” tasks rather than taking the time to delegate to develop employees. A major task of the good leader is the workload balance of the employees.. The basic message is that optimizing the work time usage of their followers is a key leadership task that increases overall work productivity. Time optimization starts with task allocation, which needs to be based on a realistic “time to completion” estimate and the actual work time capacities of an employee. Another scheme of leaders to optimize their time schedule instead of their employees’ is to get their followers attention whenever they need, not taking into account that the employee might need to interrupt their current work activities. This behavior causes frustration and work time losses. Another common scheme for work interruptions and productivity losses are meetings. Here a major lack of planning and facilitation of the meetings can be observed.

The consciousness of the Good Leader needs to be as interdependent and complex as the world s/he leads. From Leading Self (Me-level) arises maturity. From Leading Others (You-level) arises innovative and engaged human resources. From Leading the Organization (Us-level) arises an aligned and synergetic culture. To have the wisdom to be aware of what is real and the courage to do what works to get sustainable results, that is what you need to do to be a Good Leader.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Leadership Task Model

The Leadership Task Model follows a multiple-level approach in order to integrate all relevant leadership task areas. It contains the individual, dyads and groups as meaningful levels of analysis for leadership behavior (Yammarino, Dionne, Uk Chun, & Dansereau, 2005). The individual perspective on a leader is described on the Meta-Level of the model, which is called the Me-Level. The Macro-Level is labeled as Us-Level and contains the focus on major organizational tasks of a leader. The You-Level analyses the dyadic interactions of a leader and is the Micro-Level of the model. Macro- and Micro-Levels have been defined similarly in other theoretical approaches (Nicholls, 1988; Yammarino et al., 2005), while the specific definition of the Meta-Level is unique to the Leadership Task Model .

The Me-Level focuses on the analysis of the individual characteristics and behavior of a leader, which should then result in a more productive leadership behavior. The difference to the Self-Leadership approach (Markham & Markham, 1995) is that the self-management is directed towards the leader and not the follower and leads to improved leadership behavior and not its substitution. Charismatic leadership (House, 1977) can be part of such an improved leadership behavior, but is rather seen as an effect of a high emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1989), which is recognized as an underlying fundament of all productive leadership behavior. Authentic leadership behavior (Avolio, B. J., Gardner, W. L., Walumbwa, F. O., Luthans, F., & May, 2004) is directly linked to the Leadership Task area *Morale Values*, which is part of the Me-Level.

The You-Level of the Leadership Task Model describes the dyadic interaction between a leader and its follower. The dyadic perspective is the most commonly taken in leadership research and has been described in different theoretical approaches like Participative Leadership (Vroom, V. H. & Yetton, 1973), Path-Goal theory (House, 1971), Vertical Dyad Linkage (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975) and Transformational Leadership (Bass, 1985). While all these theories are trying to define the most relevant dimensions of relevant leadership behavior as incremental parts of their models, the

Leadership Task Model is based on a more open approach. Here the description of how leaders should interact with their followers is based on fundamental psychological theories and research results and therefore open for new insights and subject to continuous change. This is true for all three levels of the model. The Leadership Task Model has the function of a meta-model or structural framework for exploring and explaining fundamental leadership tasks rather than delivering an exclusive theoretical definition of productive leadership behavior.

Leadership theories like Charismatic or Transformational Leadership also describe the organizational impact of a specific leadership behavior, but do not specifically define organizational leadership tasks. The Us-Level of the Leadership Task Model describes the organizational tasks of a leader, which do have an impact on individuals but are mostly targeted on all organizational members or specific organizational groups. These tasks like Strategy, Cultural Change and Change Management are mostly not part of the scientific leadership theories and are subject to the area of management research. The Leadership Task Model can therefore be seen as an approach to integrate leadership and management research to create a holistic perspective on the leadership role in organizations. At the current state it does not describe the interaction between the leadership tasks at the micro and macro level as required for a meso-model for leadership, (Gardner & Coglisier, 2009) but acknowledges that the organizational context has a moderating impact on the dyadic interactions as well as on the self-management of a leader. The idea that leadership is contingent on the specific organizational context and the needs of the follower (Fiedler & Chemers, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977) is seen as basic assumption for every reflection on leadership behavior. But as the number of possible moderators is high and in combination of organizational and personal variables almost infinite, it is very challenging to integrate this perspective in a multi-level leadership model.

Meta-Level of the Leadership Task Model: The Me-Level

Self-Transparency or leaders' perception of their self as leaders is not a well researched area

(Murphy, 2002). Still it is an important perspective on leadership as it has a fundamental impact of the dyadic interaction with the followers (Carey, 1992). Not trying to look inside the self can even lead to negative leadership outcomes like wrong decisions, employee dissatisfaction and organizational decline (Clements & Washbush, 1990).

One area of self-regulation is goal-setting (Latham & Locke, 1991), which is the trigger for any behavioral change towards a more productive leadership behavior.

Before setting these goals, a leader needs to self-reflect her/his current behavior and underlying personal characteristics, as self-regulation begins with self-awareness (Bass & Bass, 2009). In reality many leaders do not focus on developing self-awareness and have a limited capability for self-reflection (Sherman & Freas, 2004).

One successful approach to enhance self-awareness in Graduate Management Education is based on using self-assessment questionnaires and individual development plans that are focusing on the elements of emotional intelligence. The results are an increase of personal and social competencies and a significant increase of the emotional intelligence (Boyatzis, Stubbs, & Taylor, 2002; Desjardins, 2009), which includes the capability for reflecting and managing the own emotions.

A widely used instrument to enhance self-reflection and as a consequence to trigger behavioral changes in managers is executive coaching (Grant, 2012; Joo, 2005). It should result into increased self-awareness, sustained behavior change and more effective leadership (Wasylyshyn, 2003). Another goal of executive coaching is to empower managers to lead teams of people through business transformation and continuous organizational change, which shows the link between the Me-Level and the Us-Level of the Leadership Task Model (Niemes, 2002).

Successful coaching is supposed to increase the individual performance of a leaders as well as the overall productivity of an organization (Luthans & Peterson, 2003; Olivero, Bane, & Kopelman, 1997; Smither, London, Flautt, Vargas, & Kucine, 2003).

Relationship-Transparency as part of the Leadership-Task-Model is also seen as based on a high level of emotional intelligence and

corresponds to the interpersonal competency factors from the Bar-On model of Emotional Intelligence (Bar-On, 1997). There is a clear link between the extent of emotional self-awareness and the quality of social relationships (Lopes, Salovey, & Straus, 2003), meaning that self-transparency is a prerequisite for relationship transparency.

The Relational Leadership theory defines leadership as a process of social construction in which leadership outcomes are created during the dyadic interaction between a leader and a follower (Uhl-Bien, 2006), which makes relationship-transparency a core leadership task.

Leaders empathy has been found to be a prerequisite for identifying the dyadic leadership behavior that will generate a positive leaders-follower relationship (Mahsud, Yukl, & Prussia, 2010). Showing empathy is perceived by members of a group as a crucial part of typical leadership role behavior (Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2002).

Part of such a high quality relationship between leaders and follower is the creation of trust which leads to statistically significant increases in Organizational Citizenship Behavior as well as strong effects on attitudes like job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

Generally the quality of the relation between a leader and its follower has a direct positive impact of the outcomes of the leadership behavior (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Nathan, Mohrman, & Milliman, 1991; Nelson, Basil, & Purdie, 1998).

Morale values are seen as a mandatory framework for leadership behavior (Yukl, 2010) mostly driven by the fear of abusive leaders (Flanagan, 2003; Lewis, Jolla, Kay, Kelso, & Larson, 2010). From the perspective of the Leadership Task Model the focus of business ethics is also on increasing leadership productivity by showing a congruent value-based behavior an effect which has been also reported by leaders themselves (Bennis, W. G. & Thomas, 2002). Several recent studies are supporting this assumption of a positive impact of ethical leadership on performance. Ethical leadership behavior increases optimism and organizational commitment in employees (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; W. G. Kim & Brymer, 2011; Neubert, Carlson, Kacmar, Roberts, & Chonko, 2009) and reduces turnover (Elçi, Şener,

Aksoy, & Alpkan, 2012). Also a direct effect on employees' performance has been observed (Walumbwa et al., 2011; Zehir & Erdogan, 2011). Authentic leaders are supposed to show this kind of congruent value-based behavior (Avolio, B. J., Gardner, W. L., Walumbwa, F. O., Luthans, F., & May, 2004) that develops trust in employees, even though some authors claim that authenticity does not automatically include high ethical standards (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012).

Inclusive Decisions can be also interpreted that any kind of management decision needs to include ethical considerations (Teske III & Hallam, 2009). However the Leadership Task Model itself is seen as an inclusive model which integrates the different aspects of leadership behavior. The leadership task of considering Inclusive Decisions is related to what in most parts of the existing literature is defined as Participative Leadership Style (Likert, 1967). The alternative term is used to stress the democratic principles that should underlay a participative leadership approach. This approach has been described by the movement for Inclusive Democracy. Inclusive Democracy aims to find a way out of the modern multi-dimensional crisis (economic, ecological, social, cultural and political) by replacing the rule of a few elites by a fundamental democratic process (Fotopoulos, 1987, 2003). Transferring this concept to a corporate environment Inclusive Decisions as defined in the Leadership Task Model does not mean the replacement of the management by self-steered work cells but the inclusion of the knowledge and motivation of employees into management decisions which benefits the whole organization and its stakeholders. Potential benefits are higher levels of decision quality, decision acceptance, decision process satisfaction and decision-making skills (Yukl, 2010). The empirical findings regarding the performance effects of participation are not consistent which might be caused by methodological problems (Leana, Locke, & Schweiger, 1990). The effect of participation on trust-based performance enhancement seems to be mediated by various factors (Huang, Iun, Liu, & Gong, 2010; Yan, 2011). It is also suggested, that participative leadership might be especially productive in certain areas like strategic decision making (S. Kim, 2002; Teske III & Hallam, 2009). Overall the effects of participative leadership can

be considered as performance-oriented and even if this aspect is seen as not finally proven, including employees into corporate decision processes is an ethical imperative (Rok, 2009; Sashkin, 1984).

Macro-Level of the Leadership Task Model: The Us-Level

One of the first scientists who clearly stated *Strategy Definition* as a leadership task was Alfred Chandler (Chandler, 1962), who defined two different types of management functions, the strategy thinking and the line management, whereas the strategy thinking is located in the headquarter of a company and the line management is responsible for the strategy implementation. Based on her/his approach strategy development was described by Ansoff (Ansoff, 1965) as a structured management task. This perspective on strategy was supported by the Harvard Model (Andrews, 1971; Learned, 1961) which depicted senior executives as responsible for defining the strategic objectives of a company (Hambrick, 1989) and later on shared by other well-know researchers on strategy like Porter (Porter, 1985) and Hamel & Prahalad (Hamel & Prahalad, 1996). Some strategy authors even defined the mindset and the behavior of managers as the key to defining a strategy (Kanter, 1992).

This top-down leadership driven approach to Strategy was criticized by authors like Mintzberg (Mintzberg, 2003), who claim that trying to implement a deliberate top-down strategy is futile, as only emergent bottom-up strategies are really implemented, an observation that was supported by the so-called Bower-Burgelman explanation (Bower, 1970; Burgelman, 1983) that claims that strategy develops as lower levels of an organization are fighting over resources allocations for their competing projects.

The responsibility for strategic decisions, either derived from a top-down or bottom-up approach, as a leadership task is undisputed among these authors. Despite this fact, strategy as a leadership task has been integrated only in a few of the existing leadership tasks taxonomies (Conger & Kanungo, 1994; Mintzberg, 1973; Tornow & Pinto, 1976; Yukl, 2010), while most of the taxonomies do ignore it (Fleishman et al., 1991. p. 247-252).

Empirical studies about strategic management did show that instead of its utmost importance,

managers do spend little or less time than wanted with this task. In a study by Kaplan & Norton (Niven, 2002) 85% of the managers spend less than 1 hr per month on strategic issues. In a McKinsey survey, executives reported that they spend an average of 15% of their work time on strategy development, but would like to increase the amount of time, given the importance of this leadership task (McKinsey & Company, 2011).

The concepts about Strategic Change show that the leadership tasks of Strategy Definition and *Change Management* are thoroughly interwoven. A new business strategy inclines changes of the structures, processes and the human behavior of a company and makes it necessary that the management steers this change process (Rajagopalan & Spreitzer, 1997; Tichy, 1983).

Looking at the fundamental theories about Change Management, one of the most important factors for successful change initiatives is the involvement of the management of an organization. Depending on their organizational level they need to act either as sponsors or as change agents and as role models. One of their key tasks is to define the purpose of a change and to ensure its communication to the members and stakeholders of the organization (Eccles, 1996; Kanter, 1992; Kotter, 1996; Pettigrew, 1991).

This theoretical assumption is supported by various empirical studies which show that the active involvement of managers is a critical success factor for change projects (Webb & Dawson, 1991; Whipp, Rosenfeld, & Pettigrew, 1989; Zand & Sorensen, 1975).

Like the leadership task Strategy Definition, Change Management is not part of most leadership tasks taxonomies (Fleishman et al., 1991). Exceptions are the taxonomy of Mintzberg (Mintzberg, 1973) and the model of Yukl (Yukl, 2010) where he defined Change-Oriented Behavior as one of the three major factors of leadership behavior. This model also reflects the popular theory of Transformational Leadership which implies that leaders need to be charismatic and intellectually stimulating, which then enables them to implement large scale changes in their organizations (Bass, 1985, 1990; Burns, 1978; Kanungo, 1987).

The idea that Culture Creation might be a leadership task came up when it was detected that a

company's culture seems to be an important impact factor for its economic success. This was derived from the observation of highly successful Japanese companies and their specific organizational cultures (Ouchi, 1981; Pascale & Athos, 1981) and then also confirmed based on the analysis of the corporate culture of highly successful US companies (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982).

It was then assumed that managers should influence a culture in order to create a competitive advantage for her/his company (Denison, 1990; Kotter & Heskett, 1992; Schein, 2000; Schein E.H., 1992; Trice & Beyer, 1991),

This perspective on cultural change is strongly shared by the purveyors of the theory of Transformational Leadership which define the leader as a role model for the values he wants to implement in her/his organization (Bass, 1985; Tucker & Russell, 2004; Vecchio, Justin, & Pearce, 2008).

Empirical studies did support the view that a specific normative functional culture leads to a significant higher economic success of a company compared with companies that do not possess such a culture (Cameron, 1999; Denison, D.R. & Neale, 1994; Kotter & Heskett, 1992)

To cope with the challenge of changing a culture leaders need competencies that are not part of their current skill profile but need to be developed to ensure the success of an organization (Baron, 1995), Schein (Schein E.H., 1992) even claims that "Culture creation, culture evolution, and culture management are what ultimately define leadership...".

Interface Management means the representation of the teams towards other parts of the organization and external stakeholders. This might be even the dominant role of a leader if he is operating in a self-leading team environment (Manz & Sims Jr., 1987). Leaders need to manage the organizational environment of their team and are successful if they follow a comprehensive strategy for their vertical and horizontal communication (D. G. Ancona & Caldwell, 1992). One aspect is to ensure that the team is provided with the necessary resources to fulfill its tasks (Deborah Gladstein Ancona, 1990; Polzer, 2003).

Even more important than the management of internal boundaries is the leadership task of

managing the external environment of an organization. The way of handling external stakeholders can directly create valued benefits for the organization and its financial performance (Berman, Wicks, Kotha, & Jones, 1999; Harrison & John, 1996). As the prior task of a company's management can be defined to create wealth, value or satisfaction for all its internal and external stakeholders, managing the stakeholder's expectations is a crucial leadership task (Clarkson, 1995).

Managing the boundaries of a team also means to cope with conflicts between the team and its boundaries as well as inside the team, which makes *Conflict Management* a leadership task that is directly linked to Interface Management (Baril, Korabik, Watson, Grenavage, & Gutkowski, 1990).

Conflicts in organizations are unavoidable, but must be resolved as they cause a multiplicity of negative effects, which are binding resources that are needed to achieve the corporate goals (Wall Jr & Callister, 1995). But in practice, conflicts are not managed constructively, thus reducing organizational effectiveness and missing the opportunity to realize collective learning opportunities that lay in the causes of a conflict (De Dreu, 1997; Pascale, 1990; Rahim, 2002).

Managing a conflict has been suggested to follow a contingency approach regarding the amount of self-concern and the concern for others. Potential conflict management styles are described as integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising (Rahim, 2002) or with similar terms (Thomas, 1992). Managers are not prepared to adopt these styles for their leadership behavior and therefore need to be trained to turn destructive conflicts into constructive ones. Conflict Management can be defined as a leadership task of growing importance as the low hierarchical organizational structures of today's companies do create interpersonal conflicts that need to be mediated (Bagshaw, 1998).

Motivation has been defined as putting undiverted attention to achieve a goal (Rheinberg, 2008). This makes it a leadership task as the role of a leader is to ensure the highest possible productivity of its followers (Desjardins, 2012; Witte, 1995), which is directly linked to goal achievement. Also based on the fact that the employee of the future is a

knowledge worker that needs to be led in a different way than workers before, motivation is seen as a key management task (Steers, Mowday, & Shapiro, 2004).

Micro-Level of the Leadership Task Model: The You-Level

The leadership tasks *Goal Orientation*, *Support* and *Time Optimization* are major drivers of the leadership productivity (Desjardins, 2012). Similar constructs have been stated by Bowers & Seashore (Bowers & Seashore, 1966) as “Support”, “Goal emphasis” and “Work facilitation”, but their definition of the underlying leadership tasks is not based on a literature review or empirical research nor is it comparable to the detailed leadership tasks in the Leadership Task Model.

Goal Orientation has been defined in the LTM with the leadership tasks *Goal Definition*, *Goal Clarification*, *Process Acceptance* and *Result Acceptance*.

Goal Orientation has been included by Kahn in the two supervisory tasks “Structuring the path to goal attainment” and “Modifying employee goals” (Kahn, 1958) and Yukl (Yukl, 2010) calls one type of leadership behavior “Clarification of roles and objectives”. These definitions are similar to the tasks of the Leadership Task Model, which have been stated as *Goal Definition* and *Goal Clarification* (Desjardins, 2012). The motivational need for these leadership tasks can be derived from the action theories (Frese & Zapf, 1994) and goal-setting theories in psychology (Locke & Latham, 1990). A clear goal definition combined with a participative leadership approach results in high performance (Sagie, 1996). On the other hand goal ambiguity that has been established based on a missing goal definition and goal clarification, has significant negative effects on the achievement of organizational goals (Chun & Rainey, 2005). A combination of goal setting and task clarification results in performance increases (Amigo, Smith, & Ludwig, 2008; Slowiak, Madden, & Mathews, 2006).

Process Acceptance and *Result Acceptance* are aspects of work autonomy. Hackman & Oldham described *Result Acceptance* as “Experienced

Responsibility for the outcome of the work” in their model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Autonomy and its positive impact on performance is a widely researched concept, which has been also described as “locus of control” (Lefcourt, 1982), *Handlungsspielraum* (Hacker, 1978) or “Empowerment” (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). There is empirical research that documents that high levels of perceived autonomy lead to a higher job performance (Ganster & Fusilier, 1989; Langfred & Moye, 2004; Spector, 1986) and organizational productivity (Wall, Kemp, Jackson, & Clegg, 1986). This effect of autonomy is not only achieved by triggering intrinsic motivation but also by the work process-based effects of autonomy, e.g. the decision autonomy of service representatives in customer interactions (Desjardins, 2001; Spreitzer, Cohen, & Ledford, 1999).

Process Acceptance and *Result Acceptance* as leadership tasks means that managers need to proactively do work & job design in order to create job control for their employees (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Parker, Wall, & Cordery, 2001).

Support has been defined in the Leadership Task Model with the leadership tasks *Interaction*, *Information*, *Feedback* and *Coaching*.

A lack of communication and therefore *Interaction* and *Information* is a major obstacle for productivity in complex modern organizations (Kayworth & Leidner, 2002). *Information* is a leadership task that has been included in most leadership taxonomies (Fleishman et al., 1991; Luthans & Lockwood, 1984) as it is seen as a core leadership task that a leader should provide all work-related information to his followers.

Feedback increases performance, but only if it is task-related and avoids negative personal messages that would trigger self-related cognitive processes, which lead to a diversion of task attention and therefore lower performance levels (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Giving feedback is a challenging task as it needs to be recognized as such by the recipient and then attributed towards the task and not the person, as the latter one would lead to self-defense strategies and not the acceptance of the feedback (King & Young, 2002). One way to improve the acceptance of feedback is to give the recipients control over the feedback process and to

create a perceived fairness of the feedback (Alder, 2007). It was found that the performance effect of feedback is higher for subordinates with lower levels of trust towards their leader (O'Reilly & Anderson, 2006), which indicates its importance for corporate goal achievement.

A way of providing feedback as a self-discovery process, which is the most effective way of learning is *Coaching*. Coaching has been defined as major leadership task with the purpose to develop the competencies of an employee (Yukl, 2010) and is an accepted technique for performance improvement in the management literature (Evered & Selman, 1989; Gilley & Boughton, 1995; Graham, Wedman, & Garvin Kester, 1994). Unfortunately its importance has not yet fully understood by managers (Heslin, Vandewalle, & Latham, 2006), Still its positive effect on work performance (Agarwal, Angst, & Magni, 2009; Huang et al., 2010) is empirically supported and undisputed and a coaching approach can be used in almost every leader-follower interaction (Krazmien & Berger, 1997). Its success however depends on the relationship between leader and follower and can be affected by a negative relationship (Gregory, 2010).

Time Optimization includes the leadership tasks *Workload Optimization*, *Scheduling* and *Meeting Optimization*.

Workload Optimization tries to avoid work overload by task allocation and priority setting. Work overload is correlated with (negative) performance), which is mediated by perceived stress (Glaser, Tatum, Nebeker, Sorenson, & Aiello, 1999). Workload related stress triggers psychosomatic symptoms like sleeplessness and fatigue (Dahlgren, Kecklund, & Åkerstedt, 2005), which also have a negative performance impact. Another effect of work overload is frustration, which causes low performance levels (Whinghter, Cunningham, Wang, & Burnfield, 2008). Work overload also causes time pressure and more errors in decision making processes (Maule & Svenson, 1993).

The performance in decision making processes also become lower if complex tasks are interrupted (Speier, Valacich, & Vessey, 1999). Efficient *Scheduling* decisions would take the current work schedule of an employee into account and would

avoid such task interruptions. Interrupting complex tasks leads to increased error rates and longer time to complete tasks (Conard & Marsh, 2010; Ratwani, Trafton, & Myers, 2006). Reflecting the occurrence of interruptions at the work place and avoiding unnecessary interruptions is therefore an important organizational challenge (Jett & George, 2003).

Work interruptions are also caused by meetings, which can have a negative impact on the well-being of employees by adding to the daily workload (Luong & Rogelberg, 2005). Meetings are very time consuming and therefore have a strong impact on work productivity as an average employee participates around six hours per week in meetings (Rogelberg, Scott, & Kello, 2007) and a large part of meeting time is perceived as having a very low productivity (Garcia, Kunz, & Fischer, 2003; Romano Jr & Nunamaker Jr, 2001).

Meeting Optimization is therefore a necessary leadership task and can be considered the centerpiece of the work of managers as they spend a very large part of the work time in meetings (Grove, 1983). Conducting efficient meetings was even defined as a crucial factor in the international competition which gave the Japanese a clear advantage based on their meeting skills (Ouchi, 1981; Pascale & Athos, 1981). Still the art of conducting effective meeting seems to be underrated by leaders (Tropman, 1987). The leadership task of optimizing meetings means to set up effective agendas and to facilitate meetings efficiently (Romano Jr & Nunamaker Jr, 2001).

Looking at the You-Level of the Leadership Task Model it can be seen that the leadership tasks Goal Orientation, Support and Time Optimization already have motivation implicitly included as they all have a causal positive impact on human motivation. Goal Definition and Goal Clarification are directly linked to the process of Conscious Goal Setting, which is one of the major approaches to explain intrinsic work motivation (Locke & Latham, 1990). Process and Result Acceptance by a superior will lead to self-perceived autonomy of an employee, which is a major driver of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1980). If Feedback is perceived as positive reinforcement of a behavior and promotes sense of personal competency it will increase performance (Harackiewicz, Sansone, & Manderlink, 1985; Komaki, Porter, & Steers,

2003). The impact of Coaching on performance has been widely observed in sports (Amorose, 2007), an effect which can be transferred to the business practice (Ellebracht, Lenz, & Osterhold, 2009; Whitmore, 2002).

Work Optimization is important not to undermine motivation as work overload is generally frustrating employees (Whinghter et al., 2008). Scheduling is relevant as interruptions have a negative impact on the performance of subsequent tasks as they diminish goal motivation (Freeman & Muraven, 2010).

The Leadership Task Model defines the motivational tasks that leaders need to perform as *Recognition, Development, Goal Setting, Creating Purpose* and *Creating Autonomy*.

Recognition (Herzberg, 1966) was defined by Maslow as Self-Esteem and Respect by Others (A. Maslow, 1954). It should provide people with positive information about their self-competence (Deci, 1975) and also provides information about a person's self-efficacy, another driver of self-esteem related motivation (Bandura & Cervone, 1983).

The leadership task Development targets the Growth Motivation (Herzberg, 1966; Abraham Maslow, 1955), which is rooted in the cognitive development of children (Piaget, 1937), and is a basic motivational need that varies in its strengths between people (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

The effect of HRM measures for the Development of employees on intrinsic motivation have been empirically supported (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2009) and has a direct impact on economic variables as the high levels of growth motivation in managers fosters the growth of a company (Delmar & Wiklund, 2008).

Goals have been defined as a central source of human motivation (Barone, Maddux, & Snyder, 1997; Frese & Zapf, 1994). If done consciously, Goal Setting leads to the definition of a specific and challenging goal and the clarification of the goal's importance and attainability, which will then generate high performance (Locke & Latham, 1990), a hypothesis that has been empirically supported (Mento, Steel, & Karren, 1987; Tubbs, 1986).

A mediating factor between goal setting and performance is goal commitment. Only high levels of goal commitment together with high goal

difficulty will result in high performance. Goal commitment is built by the attractiveness and the expectancy of the goal (Klein, Wesson, Hollenbeck, & Alge, 1999). Finally the achievement of a goal will fulfill the motivational needs that are attached to meaningful goals (Herzberg, 1966).

Therefore Creating Purpose is directly linked to Goal Setting. Defining a purpose for one's actions will cause well-formed, organized goal structures with a meaning, which then results in goal commitment and finally goal achievement. Also it can be derived from the existing literature that having a purpose leads to a longer life span, a higher level of perceived happiness and fewer health problems (McKnight & Kashdan, 2009), an insight that was also illustrated by Frankl and her/his logo therapy (Frankl, 1959).

Maslow believed that finding a purpose in life is based on embracing the so-called "Being-Values", which he defined as truth, goodness, beauty, wholeness, aliveness, uniqueness, perfection, completion, justice, simplicity, totality, effortlessness, humor, & autonomy (A. H. Maslow, 1968). Attributing purpose to work related goals can be also derived from a higher level value that the work creates for the society and its members (Leontjew, 1977). To show this value and to create purpose in a complex organizational environment is a challenging leadership task (Stern, 1981). One approach to help employees to experience the meaningfulness of their work can be a specific job design (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Autonomy is a major driver of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1980; Herzberg, 1966). Manager can Create Autonomy by job design (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), e.g. the creation of „Handlungsspielräume“ (degrees of freedom) (Hacker, 1978). Implementing specific degrees of freedom like determining the work goal, the work method, the work area or the work time has a causal effect on the customer satisfaction of a company as well as the employee satisfaction (Desjardins, 2001). Autonomy creates economic and humanistic benefits at the same time (Dwyer & Ganster, 1991; Ng, Sorensen, & Eby, 2006). There are also non-direct effects on productivity as autonomy significantly reduces stress and physical symptoms (Spector, 1986).

The experience of autonomy is also linked to an enhanced self-esteem, as it fosters the human's

perception of its own perfection and dominance (Dreikurs & Adler, 1933). But a given autonomy can only be used if a person has the necessary skills and competencies (Oesterreich, 1981). Ensuring this is linked to the leadership task Development.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The article describes the Leadership Task Model, which is a multi-layer taxonomy of leadership behavior and therefore complies with this criteria for a leadership model. It shows the different levels of leadership tasks, which are the self of the leader, the organization and the interaction with the followers of a leader and therewith adds an additional component to such models, which are primarily focusing on the dyadic and/or organizational perspective on leadership.

The different leadership tasks can be all derived from the current literature in leadership research and are proven enablers for leadership success. The model is consistent but does not claim to integrate all possible leadership tasks. The tasks on the You-Level of the model have been already empirically researched (Desjardins, 2012) and are detailed into sub-leadership tasks. This level of detail is still missing for the Us-Level and Me-Level of the model, which also need more empirical support.

Another area for future research are the dependencies between the different layers and the different tasks of the Leadership Task Model. Some of the causal relationships, e.g. between Self-Transparency and Support, have been already described, but still need to be validated by empirical studies.

But for now the Leadership Task Model already provides a framework and therefore guidance for any kind of leadership development program as it depicts the major leadership tasks that need to be fulfilled in order to achieve both the organizational goals as well as the humanistic goals of modern leadership.

4. ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Christoph Desjardins has been professor for Human Resources Management at the University of Applied Sciences in Kempten, Germany since 2003.

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Since 2005, he has been a lecturer at the University Kempten MBA Program where he created a series of courses focused on developing the emotional intelligence of the MBA students as a foundation competency in their attaining their management and leadership potential.

For the last four years, his focus has been on the development of multi-cultural leadership cultures for multi-internationals based in Asia.

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