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Communicative Leadership

Theories, Concepts, and Central Communication Behaviors

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the first report from the research project "Communicative Leadership – Conceptualization, Analysis and Development of Core Competence" at Mid Sweden University. The purpose of the report is to define the concept of Communicative Leadership, and provide an overview of research on communication and leadership, which include central communication behaviors of leaders.

A communicative leader is one who engages employees in dialogue, actively shares and seeks feedback, practices participative decision-making, and is perceived as open and involved.

Research highlights the important communication roles of top, middle, and team leaders. Leaders' framing of messages and events influence sensemaking processes and actions of both leaders and employees.

Key communication behaviors of leaders are to initiate structure, facilitate, relate and represent. Together, these behaviors lead to important features that drive organizational performance: employee role clarity, commitment and engagement as well as team cohesion and confidence. As a result of role clarity, employee commitment, and engagement; communicative leadership leads to higher levels of individual performance. As a result of unit cohesion, confidence, and effective group processes; communicative leadership leads to higher levels of performance at the unit level.

Eight key principles of Communicative Leadership emerge from research, which can guide the development of leadership theory and practice within organizations. These principles can also aid in assessments of leaders when matched with requirements of work design and context:

1. Communicative leaders coach and enable employees to be self-managing.
2. Communicative leaders provide structures that facilitate the work.
3. Communicative leaders set clear expectations for quality, productivity, and professionalism.
4. Communicative leaders are approachable, respectful, and express concern for employees.
5. Communicative leaders actively engage in problem solving, follow up on feedback, and advocate for the unit.
6. Communicative leaders convey direction and assist others in achieving their goals.
7. Communicative leaders actively engage in framing of messages and events.
8. Communicative leaders enable and support sensemaking.

Communication environments in organizations and units consist of culture, climate and systems for performance appraisal and feedback. Environments are shaped by and influencing leader and employee communication. Leaders' communication behavior is also related to their individual communication awareness, acquaintance, attitudes, and ability.

The concept of communicative leadership and research findings in this report must be translated and adapted to each and every organizational setting. The report may serve as a basis for further development of communicative leadership through: dialogue and discussions, evaluations, problem solving and support related to communication between leaders and employees. The following four recommend-dations may serve as a roadmap for developing communicative leadership in organizations:

1. Determine Values
2. Regularly assess Leader Communication and Communication Climates
3. Develop Coaching Systems
4. Increase collaboration between Human Resources and Communication Units

CONTENTS

COMMUNICATIVE LEADERSHIP

The concept of "Communicative Leadership" has been embraced during the past decade by a number of Swedish organizations that value communication. Communicative leadership refers to the way a leader communicates with her or his employees. The general assumption is that communicative leaders are better communicators than other leaders and managers, and that they have profound influence on employee attitudes, well-being and performance. In these organizations, communication of leaders is continuously evaluated, and leadership programs to develop communication skills are developed. The concept of "Communicative Organizations" is similarly used by the Swedish Public Relations Association about organizations where: leaders and members are convinced that effective communication creates value and is a competitive advantage, decision making integrates communication effects, more members are better at communication, leaders are role models in communication, and communication professionals provide core competence.[1]

Research has established that the benefits of good internal communication include job satisfaction, greater productivity, less absenteeism, improved quality of goods and services, reduced costs, and increased levels of innovation. Other studies confirm that employees who are more satisfied with top management's communication are more likely to commit to the organization, and that personal feedback, supervisor communication and organizational information are important to employees' identification with their organizations.[2] Increased commitment is positively associated with improved organizational functioning, and even small changes in employee performance often have a significant impact on the bottom line.[3]

Accordingly, well-developed communication programs are important to overall organizational performance, and many organizations devote increased attention to audits and assessments of their communication and the promotion of "communicative" leaders. However, these programs have heretofore not been studied by researchers.

Leadership theory generally states that communication is important to organizational success. More often than not though, most managerial texts gloss over the communication aspects of leadership, with the result that communication is treated as secondary to other managerial actions and responsibilities.[4] Yet, recent demands for higher levels of employee engagement along with increased decentralization are now leading organizations and

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[1] www.informationsforeningen.se
[2] Clampitt & Downs (1993); Downs & Adrian (2004)
[3] (Hargie & Tourish, (2009)
[4] Tourish & Jackson (2008)

researchers to investigate the communication behaviors of all levels of their leadership.[5]

This is the first report generated in the research project "Communicative Leadership: analysis and development of core competence" driven by the CORE research group at Mid Sweden University, Sundsvall. The report contains an overview of research on leadership and communication; a tentative definition of the concept "Communicative Leadership"; and key communication behaviors of leaders related to organizational outcomes such as employee engagement, team confidence and organizational performance.

The project is financed by the Swedish Knowledge Foundation and seven participating companies: Norrmejerier, Saab AB, Sandvik Mining and Construction, Sandvik Tooling, Spendrups, Volvo Group and Nordisk Kommunikation AB. The project is also sponsored by The Swedish Public Relations Association as well as Per Zetterquist. The following overall research objectives in the form of research questions are defined:

Scientific research questions

1. How can communicative leadership be conceptualized?
2. What are the core communicative leadership abilities, based on research findings on leadership communication, including results on discourse, sense-giving, framing and sense-making and how do these abilities affect employee health?
3. How do organizations audit and assess communicative leadership and employee health?
4. How do organizational leaders and employees perceive, frame and make sense of the practices of communicative leadership within their organizational contexts?

Applied research questions

1. What discrepancies between research and practice exist in organizational communication audits and audits of communicative leadership?
2. What is "best practice" in auditing communicative leadership?
3. What is the relationship between communicative leadership audit results and organizational performance (in terms of employee engagement and health, organizational innovation, productivity, and profitability)

This report will attend to the first and second scientific research questions in providing a conceptualization of "Communicative Leadership" and theories on

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[5] Morgeson, DeRue, & Karam (2010)

leadership and communication. Consecutive reports will attend to the following questions during the project period 2011 – 2013. The overall objective is that the project will contribute to knowledge creation and theory development on leadership and communication in the research areas of Communication Sciences, Quality Technology, and Management fields. Findings will be published in scientific journals, business journals, and public reports.

COMMUNICATION – AT THE CORE OF LEADERSHIP

"Leadership occurs through the process of interaction and communication"[6]

Communication is an absolute necessity to leaders and managers – not communicating equals to not leading or managing. CEOs and other senior executives in all industries and countries consistently list good communication skills among the most important qualities necessary for organizational success.[7] Studies show that some form of communication occupies 70 to 90 percent of managers' time every day.[8] The time managers spend communicating underscores the importance of communication to organizing, change management, and organizational performance.[9]

For the rest of this report, we will refer to leaders and managers interchangeably. There are innumerable debates about the distinctions between a leader and a manager. Consider the following quote by Jerry Jurendsen, CEO of Nationwide Insurance:

> Leadership is the art of convincing. It is the establishment of the values in an organization that will drive behavior. Managers tend to focus on rules and metrics.[10]

Inspiring others and giving vision are very important qualities, but there are line managers who inspire their employees and CEOs who fail to do so. Thus, we will use the terms leader and manager broadly and synonymously.

Conceptualizing communicative leadership

Communicative leadership as a concept emerged in Sweden in the late 1990s.[11] Ever since, organizations have been using it to embrace a number of

[6] Barge & Hirokawa (1989, p. 172)

[7] Barrett (2006)

[8] Mintzberg (1973); Johansson (1997); Tengblad (2006)

[9] Simonsson (2002); Johansson (2003); Johansson & Heide (2008)

[10] Lewicki (2005, p. 241)

[11] Eriksen (1997); Högström, Bark, Bernstrup, Heide, & Skoog (1999)

interaction-based activities between organizational leaders and their employees which are linked with organizational results and change: dialogue, goal-setting and explanation of purposes, involvement in decision-making, creation of energy and commitment, performance evaluation and feedback, knowledge sharing, establishment of collaboration, and implementation of decisions.[12] The Volvo Group has been analyzing, evaluating, and developing managers' communicative leadership since 2002, for the purpose of enabling leaders to foster employee engagement and business excellence.

Swedish consulting agencies also use the term and offer leader training and advice in communication. For example, Nordisk Kommunikation has been offering courses in Communicative leadership for almost a decade, and it has been claimed that the founder, communication professor Sven Windahl invented the concept.[13]

Usage of the concept carries the underlying assumption that *communicative leaders are better than or outperform non-communicative leaders* in accomplishing organizational goals and motivating employees. This is the rationale for programs and resources allocated in organizations for evaluating and developing leaders' communication skills. According to the dictionary of the Swedish Academy, being "communicative" signifies persons who readily inform others of their thoughts, are openhearted, willing to talk, and share information.[14]

In the scientific literature, the concept of communicative leadership has not yet been fully conceptualized and developed. It has been used to discuss the role of communication departments within organizations, and how communication professionals contribute to the external effectiveness by participating in leadership.[15] We recognize that communication departments' strategic mission can be enhanced by viewing their organizational purpose more broadly. However, this report focuses on the communicative behaviors leaders address in their day-to-day responsibilities. The role of communication departments in evaluating and supporting leaders' communication will be discussed in a subsequent report.

Aspects of communicative leadership

Although a fully developed conceptualization of "communicative leadership" has yet to be presented in the scientific literature, researchers posit several elements:

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[12] Nordblom & Hamrefors (2007)
[13] www.wikipedia.org
[14] Svenska Akademiens ordbok, SAOB, http://g3.spraakdata.gu.se/saob/
[15] Hamrefors (2010)

A communicative leader promotes a positive climate in the group

Leader behavior has "a major influence on the development of a positive or negative process."[16] The organization does not treat anyone good or bad; the leader does. Employees evaluate leaders' behavior as an indicator of how they are treated and appreciated by the organization.

A communicative leader practices reflexivity

Communicative leaders act in an invitational manner by promoting discussions, creating safe spaces for all employees to express themselves and be listened to. Reflexivity "represents a form of relationally responsive communication that emphasizes managers inviting and fostering connection with others in conversations."[17]

A communicative leader involves employees in decision-making

The benefits of employee participation have been well known since Rensis Likert's time.[18] Involvement in decision-making improves the understanding of the issues involved – and involvement strengthens employee commitment. When working on joint goals, people are less competitive and more collaborative. When people make decisions together, the social commitment to one another is greater and thus increases their commitment to the decision.[19]

A communicative leader encourages employees and invests in their development

Communicative leaders have transformational characteristics, that is, show respect for individual employees, and encourage them to act to strengthen the work group.[20] Strong emotional attachment to the members, a collective commitment along with articulating a vision, serving as an example for employees, and intellectual stimulation are also characteristics of transformational leadership.[21]

A communicative leader uses inter-organizational networks

Successful networking with others in the organization enables leaders to "collect valuable information about the problems confronting the organization and the actions that may be taken to solve them."[22] Networking thus encourages leaders to expand their knowledge of the organizational environment, the needs of various units, and the capabilities of their members.

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[16] Cunha et al. (2009, p. 95)
[17] Barge (2004, p.71)
[18] Likert (1961)
[19] Miller & Monge (1986); (Kanji, 2008)
[20] DeRue et al. (2011); Tengblad (2006)
[21] Diaz-Saenz (2011)
[22] Barge (1994, p. 19)

A communicative leader gives and seeks feedback

Feedback can have a powerful influence on employee attitudes and productivity.[23] Communicative leaders are credible and give feedback that is specific, balanced, address recent events, delivered within an appropriate period of time, and is not connected to pay or financial reward per se.[24] Communicative leaders are also perceived to be receptive to feedback, approachable, and willing to listen. They also seek out negative feedback from their peers and their employees to learn how they can improve their leadership.

A communicative leader listens, chats, and engages in conversation

Important leadership behaviors consist of everyday activities such as listening, and informal talk.[25] These elements are seldom acknowledged in the academic literature or popular press because they do not conveniently fit the image of leadership as consisting of exercising strong influence and directing people. Communicative leaders may also be charismatic and visionary, but the opposite is not always the case.

Defining communicative leadership

The above aspects highlight "communicative" behaviors of leaders previously recognized in the literature. In summary, we tentatively state that:

> A communicative leader is one who engages employees in dialogue, actively shares and seeks feedback, practices participative decision making, and is perceived as open and involved.

This definition is based on our literature review of research on leadership, which we will summarize in the next section of the report.

Any set of leadership principles is driven by organizational needs in the era in which they are developed and by the current state of the art research knowledge. However, we note that our definition evokes Redding's almost four decade-old summary of research on "effective versus ineffective supervisors":

> The better supervisors tend to be more "communication-minded", e.g., they enjoy talking and speaking up in meetings; they are able to explain instructions and policies; they enjoy conversing with subordinates.

> The better supervisors tend to be willing, empathic listeners; they respond understandingly to so-called "silly" questions from employees; they are approachable; they will listen to suggestions and complaints, with an attitude of fair consideration and willingness to take appropriate action.

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[23] Gordon & Miller (2011); Jablin (1979)
[24] Cusella (1980, 1987)
[25] Alvesson & Sveningsson (2003).

> The better supervisors tend (with some notable exceptions) to "ask" or "persuade," in preference to "telling" or "demanding."
>
> The better supervisors tend to be sensitive to the feelings and ego-defense needs of their subordinates; e.g., they are careful to reprimand in private rather than in public.
>
> The better supervisors tend to be more open in their passing along of information; they are in favor of giving advance notice of impending changes, and of explaining the reasons "why" behind policies and regulations.[26]

These threshold communication principles are the basics of what is expected of all leaders, starting at the lowest levels to the highest levels, no matter how good information systems or corporate strategies are.

The above set of principles may be accused of being leader centric and treat employees as passive followers.[27] However, we recognize that employees are active communicators, and that the enactment of communicative leadership is related to the relationship with and characteristics of employees, as well as the organizational context.

We also contend that four important individual prerequisites influence the communication behavior of leaders: communication *awareness*, *acquaintance*, *attitude* and *ability*.[28] Leaders that possess communication awareness are consciously planning and adapting their communication to individuals and teams. Communication acquaintance may be acquired through formal training and/or exercises in different types of communication courses, seminars and workshops. Leaders' attitudes to communication also influence their communication behavior. For example, individuals that regard communication as important, also devote time and resources to meetings and conversations. Communication ability is both related to individuals' communication competence and the enactment of communication in a certain environment, which may enable or constrain communication.

LEADERSHIP THEORIES

The research field of leadership is extensive. A large number of theories have evolved over the years and shaped our current knowledge of leadership. Although these theories do not see communication as constitutive of leadership, which is the position we take, we will provide a short summary of the most important theories, which have a prominent influence on leadership research and practice – for example courses for leaders.[29]

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[26] Redding (1972, pp. 436-446)
[27] Heide & Simonsson (2011)
[28] Fairhurst (2005; Simonsson (2002); Johansson (2003)
[29] Northouse (2010); Yukl (2010)

The *trait approach* to leadership proposes that individuals have certain personality traits that make them effective leaders. The notion that some are "born to be leaders" represent this theory. This approach has been criticized since it is difficult to establish which traits should be identified as permanent and make an individual a leader.

The *style approach* concentrates on what leaders do and how they act. Leaders' behaviors toward their employees in various contexts are studied, and two overall styles, task-oriented and relation-oriented, have been discerned. One popular model of communication styles compares authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire styles of leadership, and evaluates their effectiveness. A second popular model examines sets of specific interpersonal supervisory actions.

Contingency theory and *path-goal theory* changed the research focus from individual traits and styles of leaders to employees and context. Fiedler's contingency theory from the early 1950s attempts to match styles of leaders to situations. Path-Goal theory is about motivating employees to accomplish designated goals. According to this theory, leaders influence employees' perceptions of tasks and goals.

Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) conceptualizes leadership as a process that is centered on the social interactions and quality of relationship between an individual leader and an employee. Research has shown that employees in a high-quality relationship are more satisfied and more productive. According to LMX, leaders have different types of relationships with followers, which cause differentiation between in-groups and out-groups.[30] Some employees have closer relationships with the leader and get a special status, which may inflate employee performance ratings.[31]

Transformational leadership is currently a popular approach to leadership. It has been employed since the 1980s. It harbors the view that transformational leaders inspire and empower employees with their visions and coaching.

The most recent concept is *Authentic leadership*, which include positive leadership, values, leader self-awareness, and a trusting relationship with followers. Authentic leaders espouse positive values such as honesty, altruism, kindness, accountability, and optimism. Important themes in leadership research also embody *influence* and *power*; the role of leaders in *self-directed teams* and *virtual teams*.[32]

The overview illustrates that traditional leadership theory to a large extent has overlooked communication aspects and neglected to study and theorize

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[30] Fairhurst (2002, 2007)
[31] Duarte et al. (1994)
[32] Hackman & Johnson (2009); Northouse (2010); Yukl (2010); Druskat & Wheeler (2003); Hambley et al. (2007)

leaders' communication. In the next section we will turn to theories on leaders' communication.

COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Turning to communication research, we find that two approaches to communication have been very influential: one approach focusing on transmission of information and the other focusing on the formation of meaning.[33]

Traditionally, communication was viewed as a simple linear process, in which a sender transmitted a message to a receiver, who then understood and acted on the message. In this vein, leadership communication has been defined as the: "controlled, purposeful transfer of meaning by which leaders influence a single person, a group, an organization, or a community".[34]

This view, called the transmission view of communication, has been guiding studies on leader-member exchange, for example studies on relationship maintenance and upward influence tactics,[35] and feedback. Feedback has implications for communication satisfaction in the workplace and includes two perspectives: feedback sending and receiving and feedback seeking. Feedback is commonly seen as a mere response. In this case, the context surrounding giving and receiving feedback is neglected. However, feedback can also be seen as a conversational practice. Not only employees may expect feedback from their leaders, but leaders also may seek feedback from their employees. Feedback on the understanding of specific messages is advocated.[36] Leaders may help followers "make sense" of dialogue and see the relationship between what the leader communicates and what she or he is trying to achieve.

From transmission to sensemaking

From the 1980s onwards there has been a paradigm shift in communication research. Although researchers still recognize that communication involves information transmission, the study of communication increasingly explores the dynamic co-construction of meaning between organizational actors. In communication processes many components interact together and interactions do not have a beginning or an end. Communication in leadership processes is perceived as a circular and dynamic interaction where both leaders and employees actively participate. Traditional approaches that places accent on leadership behavior, persuasion, and managing impressions and backgrounds

[33] Fairhurst (2001)
[34] Barrett (2006)
[35] Fairhurst (2002)
[36] Barge et al. (1989)

have been contrasted with the way individuals make sense of unfolding conversations by constructing meaning.[37]

When studying the literature in the field we see that the research still follow these two directions – the study of leaders' behaviors is much influenced by the transmission view of communication, while the study of leaders' discourse is influenced by social constructionism and sensemaking. Methodological approaches that researchers used in these two paradigms also differ. Leaders' behaviors have been studied using quantitative methods for the purpose of relating behaviors to organizational outcomes and effects, in the search for leader effectiveness. Leaders' discourse and the sensemaking processes of leaders and members have been studied using qualitative methods such as observations, recordings and analyses of meetings and interviews, and analyses of written texts in order to understand the enactment of leadership.

Leaders' discourse

During the last two decades, studies have increasingly focused on leaders and members' discourse; framing/sensegiving and sensemaking. Discourse is a concept that involves talk and texts, their production processes and the social context in which they are produced – simply put: talk and written texts in context. Discursive approaches place emphasis on exploring connections among language, language use, and meaning making. Conversations reflect these meaning making processes and this emphasis makes it possible to explore the ongoing social construction of activities within unfolding situations. For example, how leaders' talk about strategic initiatives and how employees understand them.[38]

Researchers in this approach study language in use and interaction processes – as compared to researchers that study communication, which is a broader construct also encompassing networks and information systems.[39] Discursive leadership is a concept that has been proposed in order to highlight communication aspects of leadership.[40] Leaders' discourse, such as stories, and their reproduction by other organizational actors have been analyzed in several studies.[41] Most of these studies are case studies, in which researchers closely analyze real events and situations in organizations.

The basic assumption in this tradition is that organizational leaders and employees act according to their understanding of events. This understanding is collectively constructed in dialogue and interaction. Researchers have thus

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[37] Barge, Lee, Maddux, Nabring, & Townsend (2008, p. 507)
[38] Fairhurst (1993)
[39] Fairhurst & Putnam (2004, p. 7)
[40] Fairhurst (2007)
[41] Doolin (2003); Beech & Johnson (2005); Johansson (2003)

studied how leaders frame and give sense to organizational events, how they use stories and narratives, and how organizational members make sense of these accounts.

Leaders often want to reinforce a common understanding of organizational goals among organizational members, but research findings clearly illustrate that members interpret messages and events differently, depending on their position in the hierarchy, their affiliation to a work unit, their professional background and individual experiences and attitudes.[42] Different discourses and competing interpretations challenge existing power relations and may become sites of struggle where different groups compete to shape the social reality.[43]

A story told by a leader may function as an "ordering narrative," and be reproduced by other actors in the organization – given that other organizational members accept the role and legitimacy of the leader. Such stories reinforce a new understanding of organizational reality. However, stories and messages that are concealed or changed may contribute to the failure of discursive events.[44] This is an important reason to why change initiatives fail.[45]

Framing

Framing (sometimes also *sense-giving* is used) and *sensemaking* are discursive processes that are interrelated. A central assumption of leadership has been that it is realized in the process were one or more individuals frame and shape others' actions:

> "The actions and utterances of leaders frame and shape the context of action in such a way that the members of that context are able to use the meaning thus created as a point of reference for their own action and understanding of the situation."[46]

Framing is a way of defining what is going on in a situation.[47] Leaders' framing of events, issues and actions helps shaping perspectives through which employees see the world, and is important to their sensemaking.[48] The activity of framing involves processes of *inclusion*, *exclusion* and *emphasis* – in other words, framing essentially involves *selection* and *salience*.[49] A common question that leaders' address through framing activities is: "What's in it for us?"

Leaders' framing of strategic objectives during organizational meetings influence consecutive dialogue among organizational members.[50] Framing is

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[42] Ericson (1998); Taylor (1999)
[43] Francis (2007)
[44] Harrison & Young (2005)
[45] Johansson & Heide (2008)
[46] Smircich & Morgan (1982, p. 258)
[47] Brummans et al. (2008); Goffman (1974)
[48] Corley & Gioia (2004)
[49] Hallahan (1999, p. 207); Entman (1993)
[50] Johansson (2003, p. 336)

sometimes unconscious, and sometimes planned in advance and used on purpose. The training of leaders' in the skill of framing has engendered two quite distinct reactions: either leaders embraced the concept, or seemed to struggle with it.[51] Leaders' moral framework, their attitudes to communication, and commitment to developing their communication explain these differences. Even though it is possible to learn the skill of framing, some leaders may more easily learn framing than others.

Sensemaking

Sensemaking occurs when individuals retrospectively develop plausible meanings of events that guide further action.[52] Sensemaking can be individual, but when articulated in words, it becomes social and renders collective sensemaking and coordinated action possible.[53] In organizations, leaders' and employees engage in attempts to influence each other's understandings of an issue, and the nature of interaction may result in different forms of sensemaking, such as: guided, fragmented, restricted, and minimal.[54] Depending on the degree to which leaders and employees engage in the sensegiving-sensemaking process, different outcomes in the form of accounts and actions are generated.

In some situations, special forms of sensemaking may be particularly valuable. For example, guided sensemaking results in a rich, multifaceted account that can be used as a resource for actions. This form may be valuable when establishing an organization's core values. Another example is fragmented sensemaking, which may prove fruitful when an organization would benefit from a wide range of disparate accounts – as in complex issues like innovation where individual experimentation is needed.[55]

Sensemaking processes are triggered by perceptions of a knowledge gap. The ability of a leader to articulate accounts and facilitate routines, practices and structures that give organizational actors time and opportunity to engage, enables sensegiving and sensemaking.[56]

Communication of CEOs

For organizational leaders, a core responsibility is to direct organizations towards achieving strategic objectives. Thus, articulating the organization's mission, vision, strategy and goals, is important for CEOs and organizational

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[51] Fairhurst (2005; 2010)

[52] Weick (1995); Weick et al. (2005); Maitlis & Sonenshein (2010)

[53] Bean and Eisenberg (2006); Stensaker & Falkenberg (2007)

[54] Maitlis (2005)

[55] Maitlis (2005, p. 47)

[56] Maitlis & Lawrence (2007, p. 80)

leaders in top management teams.[57] Leaders at all levels are responsible for communicating and ensuring implementation of the strategic objectives. The effectiveness of implementation depends on "how well leaders in an organization perceive and clarify the goals, translate them into more specific goals tied to respective units, and then encourage an open learning environment to facilitate the pursuit and successful completion of the goals".[58]

To this end, it is argued that the challenge for top-level managers is to engage the knowledge and skills of each person in the organization. Particularly, coaching of management teams is important. Communication systems, no matter how sophisticated, can never replace the richness of close personal communication and contact between top-level and frontline managers.[59] Trust is difficult to build at a distance.[60] Employee awareness of strategic goals is related to leaders' openness, listening, and careful articulation of strategic messages.[61] In boardroom communication, emotions were seen to work as power and status energizers and allowed members to influence processes in the board when emotional energies were in line with board task expectations.[62]

The communication of CEOs external communication is also important. Research has focused on leaders' discourse and rhetoric in letters to shareholders, and during crises.[63] Also topics discussed in CEO blogs have been studied.[64] In this report we focus on the internal communication role of leaders, and conclude that studies of CEOs roles in internal communication are virtually non-existent.

Communication of middle managers

Middle managers have an important communication role in organizations. They link hierarchical levels, actively engage downward and upward communication processes and also communicate laterally with their peers. The impact of middle managers on outcomes of organizational strategy processes is considerable.[65] They make sense of messages in different ways, based on their position, individual experience and motivation, and also impact on each other's sense-making processes.[66] Middle managers may encourage divergence in

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[57] Johansson (2003)
[58] Berson & Avolio (2004, p. 626)
[59] Bartlett & Ghoshal (1995)
[60] Smith & Blanck (2002)
[61] Berson & Avolio (2004)
[62] Brundin & Nordqvist (2008)
[63] Bligh & Hess (2007); Craig & Amernic (2011); Seeger et al. (2005); Seeger & Ulmer (2003)
[64] Esteves & Bohorquez (2008)
[65] Balogun & Johnson (2004, 2005); Balogun (2006)
[66] Beech & Johnson (2005); Johansson (2003); Taylor (1999)

interpretations across hierarchical levels[67] – or develop a shared understanding in dialogue.[68]

Middle managers' actions are both enabled and constrained by organizational conditions and relations to top managers. A key enabling condition is top management narrating the thought processes that have led to the formulation of the goals to be implemented. This is instrumental in helping middle managers make sense of how the present objectives are linked to past ones.[69] Also, when top managers do not evaluate and reward ideas, motivation to promote one's ideas is undermined.

Two interlinked discursive activities of middle managers contribute to sensemaking: "setting the scene" and "performing the conversation".[70] In these activities, middle managers draw on contextually relevant words, symbols, and values to engage organizational members in their day-to-day work. Thus, they actively engage in shaping how employees view the organization and its values.[71] Networking, i.e. using the knowledge of the organizational political context and the motivation of others also enables individual managers to pursue their objectives.[72]

Leaders' communication behavior with teams and individuals

Leaders provide employees with a sense of purpose, direction, and identity. They are responding to evolving work settings, employee needs, and actions of other leaders – all of which are explicit communication acts.[73] The quality and timeliness of these communicative behaviors lead employees, managers, and outsiders to judge leaders as "effective" or "ineffective." It is readily apparent that no one person is capable of excellence in every dimension of communicative behaviors.[74] We are composed of mixture of strengths and weaknesses across many dimensions. Individuals perceived as effective leaders enact sets of communicatively competent behaviors that are consistent and appropriate to their settings.[75]

Before introducing key communication behaviors of leaders and associated indicators of effectiveness, three points must be emphasized. First, the appropriateness of any typology or categorical list of behaviors largely depends

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[67] Beck & Plowman (2009)
[68] Johansson (2003), Thomas et al. (2011)
[69] Mantere (2008, p. 305)
[70] Rouleau & Balogun (2011)
[71] Smith & Plowman (2010)
[72] Balogun & Gleadle (2005)
[73] Poole (2011)
[74] Jablin & Sias (2001)
[75] Jablin, Cude, House, Lee, & Roth (1994)

upon the context to which they are applied.[76] For our purposes here, the context will be expressed in terms of interactions between leader – employee and leader – team or unit.

Second, the appropriateness of any list of behaviors depends upon employee qualifications and the nature of work. To lead a unit of seasoned, high performing employees requires very different communication skills than leading a unit of inexperienced and newly hired employees.[77] Work environments also vary greatly in their physical, cognitive, and emotional demands. While certain communication behaviors such as interacting in a respectful manner are consistently necessary across all contexts, the sets of behaviors required for leaders to excel can vary from one context to another. For example, some leader communication behaviors such as coaching may take on even greater importance depending upon the context.

Third, leaders' communicative behaviors are entwined with their personality traits. Yet, research shows that leader personality traits do not directly influence others' judgments of the leader's effectiveness and group performance. Rather, the leader's communication-related behaviors directly influence others' judgments of leader effectiveness and group performance and mediate the relationship between personality traits and judgments of effectiveness.[78]

Leader – employee and leader – team communication behavior

We present four categories of leader communication behaviors that apply across a range of organizational contexts: initiating structure; facilitating work; relational dynamics; and representing the unit. (See Figure 1) In keeping with research addressing organizational communication competencies, we present sets of communication behaviors that appear most relevant at the manager-employee level and then at the work unit or team level.[79] The behaviors presented here should be applied with consideration of the manager-employee and unit context to which they are applied. Certainly, interactions at the unit level influence those at the manager-employee level and vice versa.
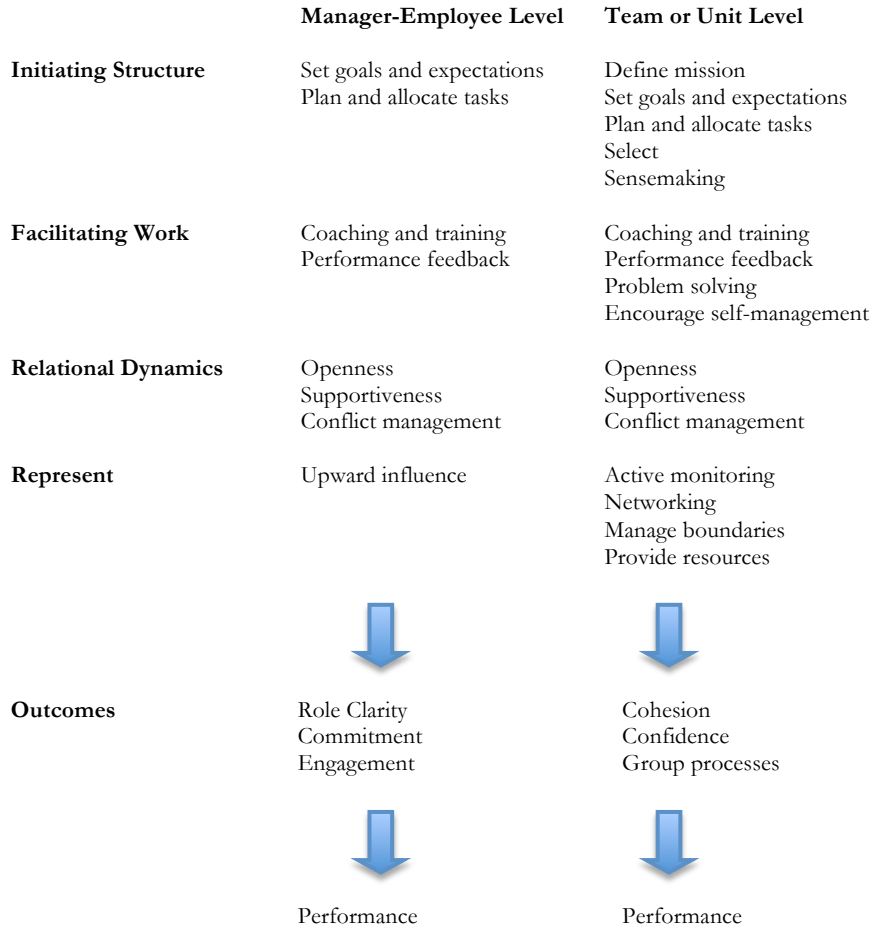
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[76] Chen, Kirkman, Kanfer, Allen, & Rosen (2008); Jablin et al. (1994); Jablin & Sias (2001)

[77] Jablin & Sias (2001); Morgeson et al. (2010)

[78] DeRue et al. (2011)

[79] Jablin et al. (1994)

Figure 1. Profile of Central Communicative Behaviors

	Manager-Employee Level	**Team or Unit Level**
Initiating Structure	Set goals and expectations Plan and allocate tasks	Define mission Set goals and expectations Plan and allocate tasks Select Sensemaking
Facilitating Work	Coaching and training Performance feedback	Coaching and training Performance feedback Problem solving Encourage self-management
Relational Dynamics	Openness Supportiveness Conflict management	Openness Supportiveness Conflict management
Represent	Upward influence	Active monitoring Networking Manage boundaries Provide resources
Outcomes	Role Clarity Commitment Engagement	Cohesion Confidence Group processes
	Performance	Performance

See Appendix for explanations of these central communicative behaviors.

Initiating Structure

Initiating structure at the manager-employee level consists of the manager's planning and allocating tasks as well as setting goals and expectations for individual employees. When applied to a team or work unit, then initiating structure involves defining the mission of the unit, planning and allocating tasks to maximize coordination efficiencies, setting goals and expectations for the unit, selecting appropriate team members, and providing sensemaking or interpretations of events for members.[80]

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[80] DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey (2011); Morgeson et al. (2010)

Facilitating Work

At the manager-employee level, facilitating work involves coaching and training employees so that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed. Performance feedback is an essential aspect of facilitating employees' work so that they can improve.[81] At the work unit level, effective leaders coach and train employees to operate in teams and units.[82] The effective manager also provides timely and relevant feedback to the unit so that they can modify their actions, if necessary. Effective managers also engage employees in problem solving, often in a participatory decision making fashion. They encourage independence and team self-management on appropriate matters.[83]

Relational Dynamics

In keeping with a healthy communication climate, leaders at the manager-employee and unit levels are perceived to be "open," that is, approachable for asking questions, good listeners, giving positive *or* negative feedback, and trustworthy.[84] They also demonstrate supportive behaviors and approach conflictful issues in a constructive, respectful, even-handed manner. Leaders enacting these behaviors are viewed as considerate by individual employees and the unit as a whole.

Representing Employees and the Unit

At the manager-employee level, it is important that managers are able to exert upward influence and be seen as capable of obtaining resources (e.g., supplies, rewards, leeway) from upper management.[85] Exceptions always arise and it is important for employees to believe that their manager is willing and capable of influencing others in the organization. At the unit level, effective managers are perceived as actively monitoring the external environment for opportunities and threats.[86] Managers or team leaders are apt information seekers and have a balance of sources from which to again new knowledge as well as understand organizational operations and outcomes. Networking enables managers to develop information links and cooperative ties.[87] Effective managers also manage their boundaries by leading the unit to cooperate with other units in a professional manner and protect the unit's mission. Perhaps, as a result of their monitoring internal and external environments and their networking actions, effective managers at the team level actively seek to provide resources (versus passively wait for resources) for their units.

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[81] Gordon & Miller (in press); Jablin (2001); Morgeson et al. (2010)
[82] Kozlowski & Bell (2003)
[83] Druskat & Wheeler (2003)
[84] DeRue et al. (2011); Jablin (1979); Morgeson et al. (2010)
[85] Jablin (1979)
[86] Druskat & Wheeler (2003); Tompkins (1993)
[87] Poole (2011)

Relevant Outcomes of Leader Communication Behaviors

There is no shortage of outcomes studied as associated with leader communication behaviors.[88] The summations presented here are largely drawn from systematic reviews and meta-analyses.[89] Meta-analyses offer the most conclusive findings to date as they are based on weighted effect sizes from multiple studies with thousands of participants.

At the manager-employee level, effective leader communication is associated with employees having role clarity, commitment to the organization, and acting in an engaged manner toward their work assignments.[90] At the unit level, effective leader communication is associated with work unit cohesion, the unit's belief in their abilities or confidence, and effective internal group operating processes.

As a result of role clarity, employee commitment, and engagement; communicative leadership leads to higher levels of individual performance.[91] As a result of unit cohesion, confidence, and effective group processes; communicative leadership leads to higher levels of performance at the unit level.[92]

What is less clear are the situational constraints in which these and other communicative behaviors are enacted. What "works" in one division or organization may be considerably different from another division or organization. The relevance of certain communicative leader behaviors is contingent upon the work setting – upon the demands for coordination within the unit and with other units, established patterns for production or task accomplishment, and unit or organizational culture to name a few.[93] Moreover, this set of key concepts or the behaviors presented from research is not a list to which one simply adds an appropriate dosage of water, financial incentives, and stirs for optimal results.

Communication is an interactive phenomenon, where both parties approach the interaction with expectations and can derive separate meanings, where both parties' efforts contribute to constructive discussions and understanding, and where both parties are responsible for acting on their understanding from the interaction.

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[88] Hiller, DeChurch, Murase, & Doty (2011)

[89] Hunter & Schmidt (1990)

[90] DeRue et al. (2011); Jablin (1979)

[91] DeRue et al. (2011); Kozlowski & Bell (2003); Morgeson et al. (2010)

[92] DeRue et al. (2011); Morgeson et al. (2010)

[93] Jablin (1979); Fairhurst (2001); Redding (1972)

Communication Environments in Organization

The interactions between leaders of all levels and those who follow or report to them shape, and in turn are shaped by, the communication environment in which they work.[94] Research on organizational communication environments illustrate that environments enable, but also can easily constrain, the exchange of information between individuals and units and their interpretation of messages.[95]

As pictured in Figure 2, the organizational communication environment is composed of patterns of information sharing and feedback systems through which the organization operates. The extent to which these systems provide timely, accurate, and sufficient information to relevant parties influences individuals' attitudes toward the overall organizational leadership and their immediate managers.[96]

Organizational performance feedback systems, including feedback to divisions and units as well as annual or semi-annual individual employee feedback systems, contribute to an environment where information from management is perceived as rich and mutual understanding is enhanced.

The larger organizational communication environment is also shaped by its actors and characteristics of messages. The perceived communication climate influences employees' willingness to initiate suggestions, offers feedback, and interacts with their managers and coworkers. The communication climate is also associated with employee job satisfaction and commitment to the organization.[97]

Climate is a molar concept in the sense that is foundational to organizational operations, can be identified often times by consensus, and is ever present but changing in keeping with organizational actors and events.[98] Communication climate also operates at organizational, unit, and interpersonal levels, with sometimes the healthiness of the climate in sync across all levels. At other times, the climate at the unit level differs dramatically from the organizational climate as in the case where there exists distrust and suspicion of intent of top management's messages but an openness or receptivity to the unit manager's messages.
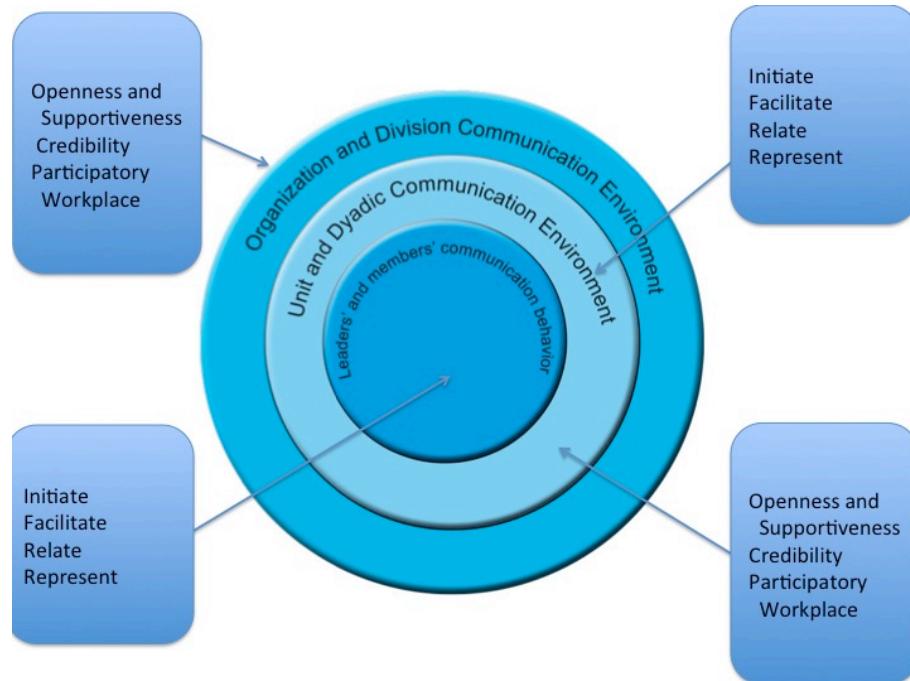
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[94] Redding (1972)

[95] Falcione, Sussman, & Herden (1987); Jablin (1990)

[96] Poole (2011)

[97] Falcione et al. (1987)

[98] Redding (1972)

Figure 2. Communication Environments

The organizational and unit environments shape individuals' interactions, leading employees to be more (or less) willing to share feedback, engage in earnest problem solving, and pass along information. In turn, interactions between managers and employees and among employees shape the perception of the unit communication climate and organizational climate.[99] In this respect, it is vital that organizations attend to their communication systems, communication climates at the organizational and unit level, and quality of interactions between all employees.

Three elements contribute to communication climate at the organizational, unit, and interpersonal level: openness and supportiveness, credibility, and participatory workplaces. Each has parallels in interactions between manager-employee and in work units, but operate independently at the organization- and division levels.

Openness and Supportiveness
At the work unit level, employees are more likely to be receptive to feedback messages when on-going interpersonal interactions between individuals are

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[99] Poole (2011); Poole & McPhee (2004)

open and supportive. When employees believe that they can discuss their opinions and relay feedback to their managers without fear of punishment, and when they believe that their managers do not withhold their opinions on relevant matters, communications are said to be open.[100] Where managers maintain open channels of communication, employees are significantly more satisfied with their jobs and managers.

Open and supportive communication climates at the organization level exist when employees of all ranks and area believe that top management is receptive to listening to their concerns and is willing to work toward solutions that address these concerns.[101] It is not sufficient to have feedback systems for the purpose of providing top management with employee concerns, suggestions, observations, and complaints. Employees must perceive that top management takes their feedback or innovative ideas seriously and takes action on their upward feedback.[102] Moreover, an emphasis on openness and supportiveness does not promote an environment where performance standards are lowered.[103] Rather, openness and supportiveness convey respect for the employees and their potential.

Credibility

Credibility (or ethos) is central to all long lasting, functional relationships.[104] Managers have credibility to the extent that their employees perceive them as trustworthy, competent, and supportive.[105] Numerous factors contribute to attributions of credibility such as an earned reputation for being fair, not having favorites based on personal interests, and having an ability to influence upper management on behalf of the unit. In addition, being a willing and empathic listener, being sensitive to employees' feelings, and passing along relevant information are some steps that will go a long way toward enhancing manager credibility.[106]

Employees are perceived as credible when they also follow through on their promises, speak honestly about their perceptions of organizational and unit practices (i.e., they tell their manager what they think instead of what they believe the manager wants to hear), and evidence competence in the work.

Messages from corporate leaders on organization-wide issues are likely to be perceived as credible when the messages acknowledge pressing issues and do not sugarcoat challenges.[107] Cynicism develops when organizational and

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[100] Jablin (1979); Morgeson et al. (2010)
[101] Falcione et al. (1987); Jablin (1990)
[102] Miller, Johnson, Grau (1994)
[103] Tompkins, 1993
[104] Redding (1972); Tompkins (1993)
[105] Jablin (1990)
[106] Jablin (1979)
[107] Peters & Waterman (1982); Reichers, Wanous, & Austin (1997)

division leaders lose credibility. Cynicism is reflected in employee beliefs and comments to the effect that top management does not care, they lack competence to deal with pressing issues, and no action by top management will make meaningful changes.[108] Organizations are well-served by periodic inquiries and checks of their upward feedback and innovative idea systems in case lower-level employees' concerns or ideas are diluted or blocked from reaching appropriate personnel who can act on such messages.[109]

Participatory Workplaces

It has been long established that work systems where employees collaborate with their managers to set goals and adjust their work processes outperform those operating in a command mode.[110] Participation in decision making is consistently linked with employee job satisfaction.[111] Links between employee participation in decision making and unit performance are more complicated.[112] While participatory systems are related to performance improvements, the overall participatory climate is the critical factor. For instance, there is a marked difference between asking employees for their comments after the manager has announced a plan versus seeking employee comments or assigning them planning responsibilities from the beginning of the project.[113]

Participatory workplaces consist of two interrelated processes, inviting participation where possible and information richness. In terms of inviting participation, work settings vary from those where employees share similar skill levels and expertise and have much autonomy to those where employees follow their managers' instructions on tasks and for production schedules. The key point is that effective leaders seek employee input as much as possible in keeping their work design.[114]

With regard to information richness, employees in participatory work settings should experience low levels of NETMA, that is, No one Ever Tells Me Anything.[115] Employees in information rich environments report receiving adequate information about organizational goals, operations, and successes as well as news pertinent to their unit's performance so they can make informed choices and contributions. Certainly, few organizational members will be privy to strategic moves and marketing secrets. Yet, the overall aim is to avoid what Tompkins' refers to as the mushroom problem, where employees are kept in

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[108] Reichers et al. (1997)
[109] Poole (2011); Tompkins (1993)
[110] Likert (1961)
[111] Miller & Monge (1986); Wagner & Gooding (1987)
[112] Morgeson et al. (2010)
[113] Redding (1972)
[114] Miller & Monge (1986); Redding (1972)
[115] Miller et al. (1994)

the dark and on occasion are covered with bevy of irrelevant information or policy manure.[116]

In sum, the manner in which managers communicate to their units and in one-on-one interactions with their employee can undermine employee engagement and productivity in many ways. These communication elements operate equally at the organizational, unit, and individual level. Consider the performance appraisal interview system. Reports indicate that managers at all organizational levels often limit employees' communication role by precluding their meaningful involvement in the appraisal discussion. In contrast, participatory processes in the form of open interactions, high quality feedback, and the discussion of issues enable managers and employees to set goals together. In turn, these communicative actions lead to greater employee work motivation, confidence in continuing to work with managers, acceptance of the appraisal process, and intentions to work with peers in a cooperative manner.[117]

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"Communicative leadership" is a concept that has emerged in Swedish organizations that value communication as an important means to fulfill organizational objectives and create individual and organizational performance. A communicative leader is one who engages employees in dialogue, actively shares and seeks feedback, practices participative decision making and is perceived as open and involved.

Leadership in organizations is enacted in communication between leaders and employees, and these interactions shape relationships and contribute to team-building, organizational coherence, and organizational performance. Research on leadership and communication highlights the important communication roles of top, middle and team managers.

Findings on discourse, framing and sensemaking illustrate how leadership is enacted in and through communication. Leaders' framing of messages and events influence sensemaking processes and actions of other leaders and employees. Key communication behaviors of leaders are to initiate structure, facilitate, relate and represent. Together, these behaviors lead to important features that drive organizational performance: employee role clarity, commitment and engagement as well as team cohesion and confidence.

Communication environments in organizations and units consist of culture, climate and systems for performance appraisal and feedback. Environments are shaped by and influencing leader and employee communication. Leaders'

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[116] Tompkins (1993)
[117] Gordon & Miller (in press)

communication behavior is also related to their communication awareness, acquaintance, attitudes, and ability.

Key principles of Communicative Leadership

Eight key principles emerge from research, which can guide the development of leadership theory and practice within organizations. These principles can also aid in assessments of leaders when matched with requirements of work design and context.

1. Communicative leaders coach and enable employees to be self-managing.
In enacting this first principle, leaders seek to delegate authority over decisions. Some teams or unit are functionally self-managing while others increase their responsibilities.

Communicative leaders a) adopt a coaching persona, b) provide employees with compelling rationales for their job design as well as individuals and unit objectives, and c) seek their input when solving problems and making decisions.

2. Communicative leaders provide structures that facilitate the work.
Communicative leaders a) create workable structures and processes that enable employees to accomplish their work, b) are responsive to feedback on unit structures and operations, and demonstrate a willingness to change.

3. Communicative leaders set clear expectations for quality, productivity, and professionalism.
Communicative leaders convey priorities, ensure understanding of short-term objectives and long-term aims, and follow up to see if assistance is needed. Leaders collaborate with employees to set high performance goals as well as determine how work will be evaluated.

4. Communicative leaders are approachable, respectful, and express concern for employees.
Communicative leaders are willing to listen, receive questions or complaints, and share appropriate information in a truthful and adequate manner. At all times, leaders treat employees with respect. They consider the needs and aspirations of individuals and looks after the unit's welfare.

5. Communicative leaders actively engage in problem solving, follow up on feedback, and advocate for the unit.
Problems concerning personnel, work and strategy are rarely resolved quickly. Yet, communicative leaders pass on information and take on decision

responsibilities. Leaders actively seek and share information with employees and same- and higher level managers to address issues.

The laissez-faire or passive managing is a danger for the unit and organization. There are three warning signs: (a) failure to be in a problem-solving mode; (b) not being responsive to employee' and others' complaints or observations related to productivity, personnel, or customer concerns; and (c) not keeping their employees appraised of actions-in-progress.

6. Communicative leaders convey direction and assist others in achieving their goals.

Communicative leaders understand and convey to employees how their unit contributes to the organization's overall objectives. They often engage their employees in daily conversation, relating unit actions to the larger scheme.

Visionary and charismatic leaders may be inspiring, but research does not yet support these qualities as part of communicative leadership.

7. Communicative leaders actively engage in framing of messages and events.

Communicative leaders are aware that their framing of organizational objectives, processes and events are important to others and influence their sensemaking, communication behaviors and actions. They consciously plan and seek feedback on their framing.

8. Communicative leaders enable and support sensemaking.

Communicative leaders know that communication is an interactive process. They recognize that other organizational actors continuously make sense of information, events and behavior of leaders and employees – both verbal and non-verbal. In keeping with this knowledge, they engage in dialogue, use stories and narratives, and support sensemaking in formal and informal conversations.

Recommendations for practice

The concept of communicative leadership and research findings in this report must be translated and adapted to each and every organizational setting. The report may serve as a basis for further development of communicative leadership through: discussions, evaluations, problem solving and support related to communication between leaders and employees. The following four recommendations may serve as a roadmap for developing communicative leadership in organizations:

1. Determine Values

It is imperative that organizations first determine their values at the organization as well as at unit levels. Organizational culture determines the

overall set of values that are followed on a day-to-day basis. Yet, each division or unit has a unique history, operational demands, and pressures, which determine the values that are held in high regard. The values at lower hierarchical levels or in certain units may be at odds with those held at higher levels. The values in any given unit may or may not be synchrony with this report's principles of communicative leadership. If the espoused values at any level are perceived to be artificial or easily ignored when convenient, then employee cynicism will be the inevitable result.

The organization should next determine what leader communication behaviors are necessary for long-term effectiveness (production / profitability / quality standards) at each level and in each division. The resulting set of communication behaviors should match work design and job analyses and also the values the organization and unit will honor.

2. Assess Leader Communication and Communication Climates

The best assessments generate regular and developmental feedback to those with leadership responsibilities. Organizations sometimes select to measure leaders' behaviors with a few items, picked from established scales or from instruments lacking tests of their dimensionality, that are believed to be illuminating in some way. It is a haphazard practice to select a few items from established instruments without consideration of their validity or reliability. In contrast, we recommend that organizations and their consultants follow conventional psychometric testing standards, where measures are assessed for their concurrent and predictive validity.

In keeping with recommendation 1, the assessment of communicative behaviors should be appropriate to the leaders' position and responsibilities. After receiving feedback, each leader should have insight into their strengths and weaknesses as communicators. Accordingly, the organization's appraisal system may require upgrading.

3. Develop Coaching Systems

It is imperative to develop authentic buy-in to communication values through socialization, coaching and training.

Both leaders and employees are well known to amend any behavior for the purpose of receiving bonuses or find favor with top management. The amending of behaviors for purposes to which organizational members do not believe in leads only to short-term behavior modification. Worse, score inflation can emerge so that leader evaluations reflect what participants believe top management wishes to hear rather than their truthful report of observed behavior. Instead, we advocate the development of authentic buy-in to communication values through socialization, coaching and training.

Managers rarely "go bad" – more likely, if not coached and trained, they continue to manage and communicate in the ways that they have before. They

may also be positioned in an environment that constrains their abilities to be communicative leaders. Where shortcomings exist, there is a need to discover why the manager is communicating in a particular way.

4. Increase collaboration between HR and Communication Units

Leadership development has historically been the responsibility of Human Resources. More recently, communication skills have been introduced as vital in leadership programs. HR and Communication each has a unique mission and knowledge but in order to develop communicative leadership in an organization, collaboration is essential.

Some problems that may arise are turf debates and communication problems including not sharing responsibility and data of the assessment of leadership communication and communication environment.

APPENDIX: LEADER COMMUNICATION BEHAVIORS

Initiating Structure

Manager-Employee Level	Team or Work Unit Level
	Define mission refers to the extent to which the manager develops and articulates a clear team or unit mission. Managers' defining mission behaviors are measured by employee understanding of their unit's purpose or goals or their manager's vision.
Plan and Allocate Tasks refers to the extent to which the manager proactively develops employee assignments and provides clear role definitions. Planning and Allocating are often measured by employee reports of the manager's organizing skills and designing employee roles to work in concert with each other, and defines job tasks and priorities, responsibilities, and authority.	**Plan and Allocate Tasks** refers to the extent to which the manager proactively arranges assignments and standardizes operating procedures. Planning and Allocating Tasks are typically measured by employee or upper management's reports of the unit's standard operating procedures, how various roles are designed to work smoothly together, and the manager's working with the team to develop the best approaches to work.
Set Goals and Expectations refers to the extent to which the manager defines targets for quality and productivity and maintains clear standards of performance. The managers' competence in setting goals and expectations are often measured by employee reports of the manager's setting realistic, challenging goals and communicating what is expected of the individual output.	**Set goals and Expectations** refers to the extent to which the manager defines targets for unit quality and productivity and maintains clear standards of performance throughout the unit. Managerial setting goals and expectations are typically measured by employees' and managers' reports of the manager's setting realistic, challenging goals and communicating what is expected of the unit's output.
	Select refers to the extent to which the manager hires, identifies, or accepts members who are competent, have a mix of skills, and work well together. Selecting unit members is often measured by employees' or upper management's reports of employees' "fit" to the unit and how the composition of the team matches its assigned tasks.
	Sensemaking refers to the extent to which the manager facilitates the team's understanding of internal or external events. Sensemaking is measured by employee reports of their interpretations of ambiguous information or events in and outside the organization.

Facilitating Work

Manager-Employee Level	Team or Work Unit Level
Coaching and Training refers to the extent to which the manager helps employees develop skills necessary to succeed in their jobs. Coaching and training are often measured by employee reports of managerial helpfulness in learning new tasks, suggestions on new ways for performing tasks, and opportunities provided to improve job skills.	**Coaching and Training** refers to the extent to which the manager assists unit members' skill development and team problem solving capabilities. Coaching and training are often measured by employee and managers' reports of managerial helpfulness in learning new tasks and giving suggestions for improving task performance, the overall assessment of unit skill level, and reports of learning from past experiences.
Performance Feedback refers to the extent to which managers give regular, constructive, timely, clear, and useful appraisal of employees' work. Performance Feedback is often measured by reports of the manager's recognition of their work contributions, balance in giving positive and negative appraisals, and giving evaluations in a professional, respectful tone.	**Performance Feedback** refers to the extent to which managers give unit members regular, constructive, timely, clear, and useful appraisal of their work. Performance Feedback is often measured by members' reports of the manager's review of relevant performance results, recognition of their work contributions, balance in giving positive and negative appraisals, and giving evaluations in a professional, respectful tone.
	Problem Solving refers to the extent to which the manager seeks multiple perspectives and new ways of solving problems or participates with team members in diagnosing and addressing work issues. Problem Solving is measured by employees' or manager's reports of manager creativity, seeking others' perspective, and participatory decision making style.
	Encourage Self-Management refers to the extent to which the manager facilitates team members to become responsible for determining methods, procedures, and scheduling. Encouraging Self-Management can be measured by employees' or managers' reports of the manager making the team responsible for most work-related decisions, assigning tasks, and assessing unit performance.

Relational Dynamics

Manager-Employee Level	Team or Work Unit Level
Openness refers to the extent to which the manager is perceived as being receptive to feedback and employee opinions as well as the extent to which the manager relays adequate and truthful information. Openness is often measured by employee reports of how easy it is to approach the manager and the manager's willingness to listen in a non-defensive manner.	**Openness** refers to the extent to which the manager is perceived as being approachable regarding diverse opinions, welcoming and answering questions, and relaying adequate and truthful information. Openness is often measured by unit members' reports of how easy it is to approach the manager, the manager's willingness to listen in a non-defensive manner, and the veracity of managerial disclosures.
Supportiveness refers to the extent to which the manager acts in a considerate manner toward employees, takes an interest in their well-being, and facilities their work. Supportiveness is often measured by employee reports of the manager's helpfulness, aid in work processes, and being counted upon when needed.	**Supportiveness** refers to the extent to which the manager acts in a considerate manner toward all unit members, takes an interest in their well-being, and facilities their work. Supportiveness is often measured by unit members' reports of managerial helpfulness, aid in work processes, and able to be counted upon when needed.
Conflict management refers to the extent to which managers address personal and performance disagreements and issues in a professional, constructive manner. Conflict Management is often measured by employee reports of the manager's interaction style as forcing, problem solving, or laissez-faire or the display of respectful, open communication and question asking behaviors.	**Conflict Management** refers to the extent to which the manager addresses work unit issues in a professional, constructive manner. Conflict Management is often measured by unit members' reports of: the manager's interaction style as forcing, problem solving, or laissez-faire; the display of respectful, open communication and question asking behaviors; and helping the team develop solutions to task and relationship-related problems.

Representing Employees and the Unit

Manager-Employee Level	Team or Work Unit Level
Upward influence refers to the extent to which the manager is perceived as being able to secure resources for individuals and the unit from upper management. Upward Influence is often measured by employee reports of the manager's ability to deliver resources for the unit and to shape upper management's opinions and actions.	**Active Monitoring** refers to the extent to which the manager vigilantly scans the internal and external environments for information and events that might influence the unit's production or profitability. Active Monitoring is typically measured by managers' and their managers' reports of time demands related to the position and managerial skills in this area.
	Networking refers to the extent to which the manager builds relationships with important constituents inside and outside the organization for the purpose of information gather, coordination of current projects, and future cooperative ventures. Networking is often measured by managers' reports of contact breadth and frequency of interaction.
	Manage Boundaries refers to the extent to which the manager protects the unit from the encroachment of supplies, personnel, and assignments from others as well as the extent to which the manager leads the unit to cooperate with other units in a professional manner. Manage Boundaries is measured by employees' and managers' evaluations of managerial behavior.
	Provide Resources refers to the extent to which the manager is perceived as being able to secure resources for the unit from upper management. Provide Resources is typically measured by employees' and managers' reports of the manager's ability to deliver resources for the unit and to shape upper management's opinions and actions.

Relevant Outcomes of Leader Communication Behaviors

Manager-Employee Level	Team or Work Unit Level
Role Clarity refers to the extent to which employees understand the responsibilities and the parameters of their job. Role clarity is often measured by the absence of role ambiguity and role conflict.	**Cohesion** refers to the extent to which employees act in a coordinated, unified manner. Cohesion is often measured by employees' or the supervisor's report of unanimity, collaboration, harmony, or agreement.
Commitment refers to the extent to which employees care about their organization and its members. Commitment is often measured by affective measures of intent to turnover, organizational identification, and their pride of membership.	**Confidence** refers to the extent to which employees believe they are capable of achieving and will achieve their goals. Measures of Confidence include employees' or supervisors' report of positive work attitudes, "can-do" spirit, morale, or belief in goal achievement.
Engagement refers to the extent to which employees invest energy and their physical, emotional, and cognitive resources in work. Engagement is often measured by employee reports of enthusiasm, pride of work, and feeling challenged.	**Group processes** refer to the extent to which employees' interactions in the unit setting are constructive, timely, and rich in information. Group processes are typically measured by employees' or managers' reports of adequate information sharing, careful decision making, receptivity to member feedback, and member follow through.
Performance refers to judgments of employee work quality, productivity, and contribution. Appropriate measures of performance vary across job assignments and responsibilities and are best constructed from a job analysis and verified.	**Performance** refers to judgments of unit work quality, productivity, and contribution. Appropriate measures of unit performance vary across (and at times even within) units and are best constructed on a unit-by-unit basis.

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