

AU-26

# Developing Your Full Range of Leadership

Leveraging a Transformational Approach



Dr. Fil J. Arenas, Air University  
Dr. Daniel A. Connelly, Air University  
Maj Michael D. Williams, USAF

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DR. FIL J. ARENAS, AIR UNIVERSITY

DR. DANIEL A. CONNELLY, AIR UNIVERSITY

MAJ MICHAEL D. WILLIAMS, USAF

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*Project Editor*  
Sandi Davis

*Cover Art, Book Design and Illustrations*  
Daniel Armstrong  
L. Susan Fair

*Composition and Prepress Production*  
Nedra O. Looney

*Print Preparation and Distribution*  
Diane Clark

---

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## Foreword

The scholarship on leading can appear quite complex, even unmanageable—an endless supply of questions with very few solid answers. Yet history reveals many brilliant, effective, and generous leaders from our past. Something seems missing from the analysis. The explanation may be that for as much as we've learned about leadership, we may have also lost some lessons we used to know. Is leadership a moving target that somehow eludes clarification or definitive solutions?

Social organization has changed as well. Leaders need followers, and followers—along with their expectations and needs—arguably have evolved with the cultures to which they belong, and today's cultures often appear quite different from those of the past. Perhaps part of the scramble to produce new and relevant theories of leadership stems from the chasing of prevailing social currents—the newly dominant needing to erase its rivals lock, stock, and barrel in order to declare its reign.

Ancient thinkers had a different view, rooted in enduring topographical features of human nature, and the secrets this landscape can reveal via study, reflection, and experience. These scholars emphasized *character*—the direction of one's bent toward the practice of good and avoidance of evil—and *living the virtues*, both of these being qualities that President Adams, in the early modern period, took for granted when he defined leadership.

Today's scholars have an additional task—sifting through the mountains of contemporary data and analysis to uncover valid conclusions and enduring truths capable of surviving the intellectual, moral, and cultural climate of the moment, ideas leaders can consider and work on across a lifetime of leading others. I offer you a book that, remarkably, has synthesized both these essential lines of effort: reminding us of the past's treasure of thinking on human leadership and linking it to the best of the last several decades of leadership research and providing readers within these pages a sense of recency, the validation that comes from years of intensive empirical investigation and the condensed fruit of centuries of philosophical wisdom.

I commend the authors, Dr. Arenas and Dr. Connelly, both veteran Air University faculty, and Major Williams, once a top-rated PME instructor at the Squadron Officer College and a superior Air Force officer and leader, on this readable, timely, and actionable guide to



building better, more honorable, and more *human* leaders. Some say that leaders “are born and can’t be made,” and let the matter rest there. Others offer emotional and latently dehumanizing lists and slogans, under which resides an assumption that other people can’t be trusted and must be controlled and acclimatized to accept that control. These three men, who have all served as leaders in our great country’s military, instead point to an attainable and worthy summit—the summit of excellence in leadership—and ask us to climb. That is a journey I can—and have—committed to. Join me.

Gerald V. Goodfellow  
Brigadier General, USAF

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## Abstract

*Leadership* is a daunting subject for most developing leaders, but eventually all followers will be called upon to lead. Where do we start? What model or theory do we utilize? The choices become overwhelming for anyone attempting online searches. Everywhere you look are leadership books, programs, degrees, workshops, seminars, boot camps, and even mobile apps! Many organizations at Air University are utilizing the full range of leadership approach. Initially introduced by James MacGregor Burns in 1978 and Bernard Bass in 1985, these transformational and transactional leadership styles have sustained nearly four decades. Through (1) *idealized* transformational leader behaviors, one may raise the levels of his or her ethical and moral values while committing to “doing the right thing” for himself or herself and his or her followers; (2) by using *inspirational motivation*, leaders learn to articulate a vision to energize followers to accomplish more than they ever thought possible; (3) by *intellectually stimulating* followers, leaders will challenge followers to create and innovate as they reframe problems with renewed visions; and by providing *individualized consideration*, leaders may learn to incorporate each member’s distinct gifts and talents as individual contributors to the organizational team. These transformational behaviors can offer connections to reaching (4) *authentic transformational leadership* by incorporating not only ethics and values but also, according to John Sosik, *virtues and character strengths* to refine one’s leadership acumen, ameliorating leader-follower dynamics.



## Introduction

Why has the concept of *leadership* become so elusive to so many? Leadership is a topic that has evolved over the course of humanity. Why are there so many theories? What is the best leadership model? So many choices, so little time. Air Force leaders typically have a limited window to hone their leadership acumen apart from all of the other requisite professional education and qualifications. Where do we begin? Our first section, “Leadership Theory Evolution,” will provide a theoretical background for your leadership foundation to help you synthesize leadership attributes over the last century. Next, the main focus of this primer will center on the “Full-Range Leadership Model (FRLM)” section followed by “FRLM in Teams,” which will examine team leadership through the use of FRLM behaviors. The “Bringing Humanity to Leadership” section concentrates on a leader’s ethical obligations and concludes with the final section, “Virtues and Character Strengths”; both key ingredients are missing in most leadership programs today.

### Leadership Theory Evolution

*He who loves practice without theory is like the sailor who boards ship without a rudder and a compass and never knows where he may cast.*

—Leonardo da Vinci

Why theories? In order for developing leaders to fully understand the relevance of today’s leadership evolution, it is essential that they are familiar with the past theories to ground their leadership growth. Because there are more individual leadership theories than we wish to cover at this point, we will highlight only eight major leadership categories of theories and associated models that have evolved since the early twentieth century: great man, trait, behavior, participative, situational, contingency, transactional, and transformational theories. This leadership theory background will provide a relevant foundation for the main focus of full-range leadership.

## Great Man Theory

You've heard the phrase he/she is a *born leader*? In the early 1900s, individual personal traits were studied to determine what made certain people *great* leaders as opposed to ordinary leaders. The theories that were developed as a result of these studies were referred to as "great man" theories, which focused on analyzing specific innate qualities and characteristics present in great social, political, and military leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, and Napoléon Bonaparte.<sup>1</sup> The term *great man* was used because, at the time, leadership was thought of primarily as a male quality, especially in terms of military leadership. During this period, health, physique, and energy levels were recognized as important factors in the emergence of leadership skills. For many of these theorists, history was shaped by leadership of great men. For instance, without Moses the Jews would have remained in Egypt; if it were not for Winston Churchill, the British would have given up, and Microsoft would never have appeared without the leadership of Bill Gates.<sup>2</sup>

The Great Man Theory of leadership was created to demonstrate how failing organizations could be rejuvenated by business executives like Lee Iacocca, military leaders like Gen Douglas MacArthur, and political figures like former British prime minister Winston Churchill. Earlier theorist William James (1880) believed that certain changes in society were due to great men who initiated certain movements taking society in new directions of growth and prosperity. Further, he felt that the history of the world was created by the accomplishments of great men. A variant of the Great Man Theory was referred to as the warrior model of leadership, which appeared in several classics such as Sun Tzu's *Art of War*, Aristotle's *Politics*, Machiavelli's *Prince*, Gratian's *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*, and Clausewitz's *On War*.<sup>3</sup> Gen George S. Patton exemplified the warrior model during his military career. Further, wars are won or lost according to the basis of the following theory: taking into account the leadership of the opposition.<sup>4</sup>

## Trait Theories

Following the extensive studies of great leaders throughout history under the original leadership approach, the trait theory was the next evolution of study. Hundreds of trait studies were conducted in the

1930s and 1940s to seek the essential qualities needed for leadership success. Typically, this approach examined leaders' attributes such as personality, motives, values, and skills. Unfortunately, this massive effort failed to find absolute traits to guarantee successful leadership. One of the reasons for this unsuccessful approach was the lack of attention of intervening variables in the causation area that explained the relationships between traits and delayed outcomes such as group performance or leader advancement. The primary research method attempted to examine significant correlations between individual leadership traits and a criterion for leader success. Moreover, as research design improved, researchers progressed in discovering how leader attributes were related to leadership behavior and effectiveness.<sup>5</sup>

Ralph Stogdill became the first leadership researcher to summarize conclusions from these trait studies, eventually he came to two major conclusions. The first conclusion was that leaders and followers were not qualitatively different. Many followers in these studies were identified as just as tall, smart, outgoing, and ambitious as their leaders. Next, characteristics such as intelligence, initiative, stress tolerance, responsibility, friendliness, and dominance had a limited impact on leadership success. Further, personnel who were smart, hardworking, conscientious, friendly, and willing to take charge were typically more successful at influencing a group. Personnel who were less smart, lazy, impulsive, grumpy, or did not prefer to be in charge were less likely to impact any group accomplishments. Moreover, having the right traits did not always guarantee leadership success but improved the probability of influencing a group toward goal achievement.<sup>6</sup>

## Behavioral Theories

By the late 1940s to early 1950s, leadership researchers began to shift their focus from trait theory to examining specifically what workers *did* on the job or their *behaviors*. Once again researchers were interested in determining which leadership style was best by studying differences in behavior between effective and ineffective leaders. Additionally, a subcategory of this theory focused on the management of the work. The goal of behavioral research was to search for methods to classify behaviors that would facilitate our understanding of the study of leadership. Further, hundreds of studies



sought to find relationships between leadership behavior and factors of leadership effectiveness.<sup>7</sup>

The University of Michigan's Survey Research Center created the "Survey of Organizations" questionnaire under the guidance of Rensis Likert. This survey attempted to classify effective and ineffective leaders by comparing the behaviors of leaders of high-producing units against leaders of low-producing units. This research resulted in the University of Michigan Leadership Model, which identified two types of leadership styles: job-centered and employee-centered leaders. The model was illustrated by a one-dimensional continuum between these two leadership styles. The job-centered leadership style included scales measuring two job-oriented behaviors of goal emphasis and work facilitation. The focus of the job-centered leadership style measured the extent to which the leader directs job completion. The leader in this instance monitors the subordinates closely, letting them know their roles and guiding them to goal achievement (a transactional approach). The employee-centered leadership style measures two employee-oriented behaviors: supportive leadership and interaction facilitation. This style of leadership places emphasis on meeting the human needs of the employees while fostering relationships. In this case, the leader builds trust with followers by showing concern, sensitivity, support, and respect through effective communication (a transformational approach).<sup>8</sup>

Under the direction of Stogdill, the Ohio State University Personnel Research Board facilitated its own study to determine effective leadership styles during this period. This team created an instrument known as the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ).<sup>9</sup> The LBDQ truncated 1,800 leadership functions into 150 leadership behaviors centered around two leadership dimensions: initiating structure and consideration. The behavior relative to the *initiating structure* dimension is synonymous with the job-centered leadership style, which focuses on completing the job, while behavior of the *consideration* dimension concentrates on developing relationships and meeting human needs as in employee-centered leadership. A leader may score high or low on initiating structure and/or consideration. In this regard, the Ohio State University Leadership Model identifies four leadership styles: low structure and high consideration, high structure and high consideration, low structure and low consideration, and high structure and low consideration. Leaders with high structure and low consideration behavior are usually one-way commu-

nicators as opposed to leaders with high consideration and low structure behavior who tend to be more personable two-way communicators.<sup>9</sup>

Building on the Ohio State and University of Michigan studies, management theorists Robert Blake and Jane Mouton developed and published *The Managerial Grid* in 1964 (updated in 1978, 1985), and in 1991 it became known as *Leadership Dilemmas—Grid Solutions* when Anne McCauley replaced Mouton following her death. *Leadership Dilemmas—Grid Solutions* was based on the same two previous dimensions, which were renamed “concern for production” and “concern for people.” *Leadership Dilemmas—Grid Solutions* labels five leadership styles: impoverished; authority compliance; country club; middle of the road; and team leader. The impoverished leader displays low concern for both production and people. The authority-compliance leader has a high concern for production and a low concern for people. Whereas, the country-club leader has a high concern for people and a low concern for production. The middle-of-the-road leader has a balanced medium concern for both people and production. Finally, the team leader thrives for maximum performance and employee satisfaction with a high concern for both people and production.<sup>10</sup>

These behavior models help to define our journey through leadership analyses and make relevant connections to future leadership models. Behavioral leadership theories “attempt to explain distinctive styles used by effective leaders, or to define the nature of their work.”<sup>11</sup> The next section describes fundamental differences between directive and participative leadership attributes.

## Directive versus Participative Leadership

Typically, most leaders, managers, and supervisors are described as both *directive* and *participative*, depending on the specific circumstances. According to Robert Tannenbaum and Warren H. Schmidt, “Direction and participation are on opposite ends of a leadership continuum with many levels in between each style of leadership.”<sup>12</sup> This model—the leadership continuum model—will be discussed in more detail in the “Contingency Leadership” section. Directive leadership is focused on defining roles and clarifying follower expectations in order to achieve specific performance goals. These tasks require leaders to guide and structure followers’ activities; define

roles and communication patterns; clarify expectations, goals, and work methods; plan, schedule, and assign responsibilities; monitor and follow-up on assignments; and motivate and convey expertise.<sup>13</sup> Directive leadership helps to guide followers through active problem solving and decision-making approaches. Typically, directive leaders may make decisions, give orders, or make announcements regarding their decisions without follower's consensus.<sup>14</sup>

Participative leadership includes the use of various decision-making approaches that allow followers or relevant others to have some level of influence over the leader's final position or decision. Leadership theorists have proposed multiple decision taxonomies, but to date there is no agreement on the optimal method. George Strauss points out that we must make a distinction between open procedures and actual influence. For instance, a manager may solicit ideas from followers but choose not to incorporate them in the final decision process.<sup>15</sup> Participative leadership offers a variety of benefits, but these advantages are dependent upon who the participants are, their level of influence, and other aspects of the specific decision. Multiple studies have indicated that four potential benefits are derived from participative leadership. First, participative leadership leads to higher decision quality. Multiple participants would increase the quality of the decision by offering unknown information to the leader. Second, this type of leadership facilitates higher decision acceptance by participants. People are more likely to accept a decision that they helped influence. Third, there is more satisfaction with the decision process. Most people feel satisfied that they are treated with respect when they are allowed to express opinions or preferences regarding decisions that may affect them. Last, participative leadership encourages more development of the decision-making skills. The experience of participating in decision-making complexities develops participants.<sup>16</sup> Participative leaders utilize group processes to increase follower inclusion, ownership, involvement, consensus, cooperation, and free and informed choice while avoiding unilateral control, hidden agendas, and inhibition of expression. Participative leadership encourages group members to feel free to participate actively in discussions, problem solving, and decision making.<sup>17</sup> Next, we will briefly examine several contingency theories.

## Contingency Leadership

Contingency theories were based on the idea that in order for leaders to become effective, they must exercise their ability to align their leadership styles or behaviors with a specific setting or context. Sometimes called leader-match theory, leaders attempt to match their leadership behaviors to specific circumstances.<sup>18</sup> Although closely connected to situational models, contingency theories explain leadership effectiveness using situational moderator variables. These variables help to examine why the effect of behavior differs across situations.<sup>19</sup> The next section will describe a contingency scale and two noted contingency models: Fred Fiedler's Least Preferred Coworker Scale, Victor Vroom and Philip Yetton's Normative Decision Model, and Tannenbaum and Schmidt's Leadership Continuum Model.

### Least Preferred Coworker Scale

The first researcher who began adopting a contingency approach to leadership was Fiedler in 1967. His Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) Scale has been declared not only the earliest but also the most researched contingency approach in the leadership field.<sup>20</sup> The LPC scale determines whether members have an affinity toward accomplishing a task or fostering relationships. Accordingly, members generating low LPC scores rate their least-preferred coworker as incompetent, cold, or untrustworthy, and they are considered *task motivated*. The task-motivated leader is motivated by task accomplishment activities and may be considered highly punitive when task performance is substandard. Conversely, members achieving high LPC scores positively rate their least-preferred coworkers as loyal, sincere, or warm, and they are considered relationship motivated. In this instance, the relationship-motivated leader would utilize an interpersonal relations approach to foster good relationships with followers.<sup>21</sup>

The relationship between the LPC score and leader effectiveness is dependent on *situational vulnerability*, sometimes called situational control, which determines how much control the leader has over followers in a given situation. Three factors are weighted for favorability when considering this control: (1) leader-member relations describes the extent of subordinate relations as loyal, friendly, and cooperative; (2) position power refers to the leader's authority to evaluate, reward, and punish followers; and (3) task structure measures

the use of task standard operating procedures, descriptions, and performance indicators.<sup>22</sup> Leader-member relations are assumed to be more important than task structure, which is assumed to rate higher than position power. Although a number of studies over the years have declared the LPC model as overall positive, Gary Yukl posited that the LPC scores were more complex than assumed and may not be stable over time.<sup>23</sup> Interestingly, factors such as relationships, rewards, punishments, and standards have become recurring themes to this point in leadership theory evolution. The next two models will turn to the decision-making process.

### **Normative Decision Model**

When should the leader take charge? When should the leader allow followers to make decisions? These questions were addressed by Vroom and Yetton when they developed their first version of the Normative Decision Making Model in 1973. This model subsequently expanded into four models in 1988 by Vroom and Arthur Jago.<sup>24</sup> The new models were based on two factors: individual or group decisions and time-driven or developmental-driven decisions for consideration. Finally, in 1988 Vroom revised once more and published the *Leadership and the Decision Making Process* where he outlined the current normative leadership model. This model is a time-driven and developmental-driven decision tree that allows the user to choose between five leadership styles (decide, consult individually, consult group, facilitate, and delegate) based on a series of sequential questions. These seven questions are answered either high or low in significance (based on the problem statement) as the user moves through the model from left to right concluding in a selected leadership style.<sup>25</sup> Overall, this model has received considerable support from leadership researchers. One study analyzed battlefield behavior of 10 commanding generals in six major American Civil War battles and found that commanders who acted in accordance with the prescriptions of this model had more successful campaigns than those who did not. Other critiques of this model focused on complexities, assumptions about leader's decision-making skills, and abilities to execute leadership styles.<sup>26</sup>

### **Leadership Continuum Model**

Tannenbaum and Schmidt's Leadership Continuum Model is a seven-level continuum that describes leaders as both directive and

participative based on specific circumstances. Directive leaders fall on one extreme end of the continuum (first level) and make the final decisions for their followers. At this level, they provide directions and orders to their subordinates without explanation. At the second level, leaders *sell* their decisions. A leader's persuasive approach is supported by providing either an explanation or justification with their follower expectations. At the third level, leaders actually consult with followers before deciding on a course of action, typically soliciting feedback from subordinates. Participation by both leaders and followers occurs at the fourth level. Leaders define limits and request consensus from followers on final decisions. Leaders actually delegate responsibilities to followers at the fifth level of the leadership continuum model, minimizing their involvement. The sixth level requires the leaders to establish limits and constraints, but the followers make the final decision upon leadership review. The opposite, extreme end (seventh level) of the leadership continuum generally empowers followers to make ongoing decisions within defined limitations.<sup>27</sup>

Contingency theories assume that leaders are most effective when their behavior is contingent on situational forces, including follower characteristics. The aforementioned contingency models have described how both internal and external settings impact leader effectiveness.<sup>28</sup> As noted earlier, these models are closely related to the situational models discussed in the next section.

## Situational Leadership

Situational theorists believe that leadership is a matter of situational demands or circumstances that would determine the emergence of a leader, which was in direct opposition to trait theorists. As Stogdill noted in his earlier work, in *situationalism* the leader is the product of a particular situation or circumstance, unlike a self-made leader characterized by personality, drive, or unique ability. The controversy surrounding this debate has been documented since ancient times as described in Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* (c. AD 100), whereby connections were drawn between leader emergence in Greece versus Rome, while comparing Alexander the Great with Julius Caesar parallels.<sup>29</sup> The following sections will briefly describe two of the most popular situational leadership models during this period: Robert House's

path-goal theory of leadership and Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model.

### **Path-Goal Theory of Leadership**

The intent of the path-goal theory of leadership was to explain how a leader's behavior could influence a subordinate's performance. House decided to ameliorate the earlier work of Martin G. Evans, including additional situational variables for consideration.<sup>30</sup> According to House, "The motivational function of the leader consists of increasing personal payoffs to subordinates for work-goal attainment and making the path to these payoffs easier to travel by clarifying it, reducing roadblocks and pitfalls, and increasing the opportunities for personal satisfaction en route."<sup>31</sup> Choosing a leadership style that considers the characteristics of the group members as well as the demands of the assigned task is the leader's challenge during path-goal theory. In situations with a low degree of subordinate task structure, it becomes necessary for leadership to initiate more structure to clear up any task ambiguity for followers. In a situation with highly structured tasks, leadership guidance introducing more structure would be ineffective and may be interpreted as a form of micromanagement. Further, in order for leaders to be most effective, they should utilize behaviors that will complement their subordinates' environments in addition to their own personal abilities.<sup>32</sup>

### **Situational Leadership Theory**

The situational leadership theory model developed by Hersey and Blanchard in the 1970s was originally referred to as the *life cycle theory*.<sup>33</sup> Despite criticism for weak theoretical foundations and limited research support, this model has been widely used in leadership training within the corporate environment as well as many military settings. In fact, this leadership model was utilized at the Squadron Officer School (from the 1970s through 2008) and across Air University. The basis of this model helped popularize the concept of contingency leadership during this period. Consideration that different leaders' behaviors would be warranted depending on the work circumstances formed the argument that leadership was situational. Further, this model proposes that leaders are required to change their leadership behaviors based on the followers' abilities and willingness to accomplish the particular task. Various levels of employee maturity were derived

from this combination of ability and willingness. As discussed with previous models, the key behaviors tracked in this model were task and relationship. Additionally, these behaviors were combined to create four behaviors: telling (high task, low relationship); selling (high task, high relationship); participating (low task, high relationship), and delegating (low task, low relationship). Moreover, determining which of these behaviors to employ would be based on the follower's maturity level. For instance, if the subordinate was willing and able (mature), the leader could utilize *delegation*. Alternately, if the follower was immature (not willing and not able), the leader would have to *tell* the subordinate how to accomplish the task.<sup>34</sup> In 1985 Blanchard developed Situational Leadership II, which was a revised version of the original model with new categories. The leader behaviors were updated and categorized into situational leadership levels (S1-directing, S2-coaching, S3-supporting, and S4-delegating), while the combination of the follower's commitment and competence levels was depicted by developmental levels (D1, D2, D3, and D4).<sup>35</sup>

To become an effective leader, and *still* relevant for today's leadership toolbox, is the capacity to recognize your followers' needs and adapt your leadership style to meet their concerns. In order to truly understand leadership development, it is imperative that we have a foundational background of former theoretical constructs and recognize relevant components that are applied today. The goal of this section is to provide developing leaders with such a framework to foster connections between the evolutions of past theories from the great man archetype to the present full-range leadership approach used throughout Air University since 2010. Many original components of these models are still utilized today in various forms, as we draw on seminal concepts to develop our followers. The challenge for leaders is to learn when to incorporate various leadership styles and behaviors to remain effective, thus employing a *full range of leadership* approach. Next, we will turn to our main focus: transactional and transformational leadership theories.

## The Full-Range Leadership Model

When we speak of the "full range of leadership," we are actually referring to transformational and transactional leadership theories to include *laissez faire*, the nontransactional approach to leadership. As



depicted in figure 1, these three styles of leadership and associated behaviors comprise the Full-Range Leadership Model.

Laissez Faire	Transactional		Transformational				
Hands-off Leadership	Management by Exception (MBE)		Contingent Reward (CR)	Individual Consideration (IC)	Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	Inspirational Motivation (IM)	Idealized Influence (II)
	Passive	Active					

**Figure 1. The full-range leadership model**

Originally, transformational leadership was first described in 1973 by James Downton; however, it was James MacGregor Burns that introduced this significant leadership approach in his classic text *Leadership* in 1978.<sup>36</sup> Burns attempted to link leadership and followership roles while making a distinction between transformational and transactional properties. Transactional leadership behaviors focused on exchanges between leaders and followers as described in many earlier leadership models. For instance, leaders would offer incentives for performance to drive productivity; teachers would offer grades for completed assignments; or managers would reward employees for exceeding work goals. In contrast, a transformational approach seeks to engage a follower to not only foster a leader-follower relationship but also raise the level of motivation and morality. A transformational leader is attentive to the needs and concerns of followers and strives to help them reach their fullest potential.<sup>37</sup> According to Bernard and Ruth Bass, transformational and transactional leadership approaches were not mutually exclusive and empirically proven to be positively correlated.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, the transformational model is one of the current and increasingly popular approaches to leadership today, which gained momentum in the early 1980s. In their 2001 study of articles published in *Leadership Quarterly*, Kevin Lowe and William Gardner discovered that one-third of leadership research focused on the transformational or charismatic perspective.<sup>39</sup> Over the last few decades, considerable interest has focused on transformational and transactional leadership growth. Bernard Bass emphasized a “full-range leadership” approach that not only included these two styles but also incorporated an avoidant laissez-faire (LF) style as well.<sup>40</sup> In addition to these three styles of leadership, Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass identified relevant behaviors associated with each leadership style.<sup>41</sup>

## Laissez-Faire Leadership

The French phrase *laissez-faire* (or “hands-off” leadership in this case) describes a leader that abdicates responsibility, delays decisions, lacks interest in follower’s needs or providing feedback, and does not develop followers.<sup>42</sup> Typically, when leaders exhibit LF behavior, they do not care if their followers maintain standards much less reach any performance goals! This type of leader is not engaged with subordinates and avoids taking a stand on any organizational issues. Further, the LF leader is often absent from work meetings and other related obligations and may avoid the daily work responsibilities altogether.<sup>43</sup> To call LF a leadership style or behavior is actually an oxymoron; it is actually an approach to nonleadership. Do we exhibit any of the LF characteristics listed in figure 2? Absolutely, there are times when we do not want to deal with our subordinates, bosses, spouses, or significant others! There are days that we choose to avoid meetings, tasks, or deadlines; these are normal behaviors. Our point here is *not* to choose this approach as your style of leadership!

Characteristics	Example
Near avoidance or absence of leadership	Supervisor is never available for followers.
Avoids making decisions	Major continually delays decision to hire contractor.
Abdicates responsibilities	Supervisor ignores duties.
Avoids taking a stand on issues	Boss does not support follower issues.
Does not develop followers	Flight commander ignores subordinate’s PME requirements

**Figure 2. Laissez-faire characteristics**

The effects of LF leadership have been most pronounced in military commands throughout history. One of the most egregious cases of nonleadership was illustrated during the Crimean War (see Example in History insert) whereby Lord Raglan, the British commander in chief, surrounded by his staff (mostly blood relatives) displayed total disregard for his men. Not only was his incompetence matched by his leader inactivity but he also actually lost 35 percent of his army strength due to exposure, malnutrition, and cholera because he made no plans to house or supply his troops.<sup>44</sup> Research has indicated

that LF leadership has been linked to the lowest levels of subordinate, team, and organizational performance. Conflicts often occur between workers and leaders since role confusion is usually prevalent within organizations under this approach to nonleadership. Eventually, followers become detached from their leaders and begin substituting their own knowledge, skills, and abilities to make up for the lack of guidance, often seeking support from others. Eventually, these followers become frustrated, leading to dissatisfaction with their leader, job, and organization.<sup>45</sup> In the military environment, this dissatisfaction could manifest into a variety of reactions ranging from substandard performance to separation.

*Example in History*

**Laissez-Faire and the Charge of the Light Brigade**

*All in the valley of death, rode the six hundred. "Forward, the Light Brigade! 'Charge for the guns!' he said: 'Into the valley of death rode the six hundred.'"* Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem summed up the charge of the Light Brigade: it was suicide. The order came directly from the commander of British forces in Crimea, Lord Raglan. It was 1854; the Battle of Balaclava raged around them, and Lt Gen George Bingham, Earl of Lucan, commander of the British cavalry, sat in stunned silence. *Charge straight through the valley ahead at entrenched enemy cannons; I can't see? Madness!* The upstart captain who brought the message, Louis Nolan, was shouting at him, doing little to help the situation. He directed Nolan to pass the order to the Light Brigade commander, major general James Thomas Brudenell, Earl of Cardigan.<sup>46</sup> Cardigan was equally stunned when Nolan arrived at his position, shouting orders again. Gritting his teeth in disbelief and anger, Cardigan raised his sword and spurred his 661 men forward, straight at 50 cannons and 20 infantry battalions. *Cannon to right of them, wrote Tennyson, Cannon to left of them . . . volley'd and thunder'd. . . . Boldly they rode and well, into the jaws of death, into the mouth of hell.* Seconds later, a shell tore through Nolan's chest killing him instantly, the first of more than 290 casualties the Light Brigade would suffer that day.<sup>47</sup> Nolan remained atop his horse for the mile long charge at the incredulous Russian gunners: *What are the British doing? Are they drunk?* Only after the charge had stopped did Nolan finally fall to the ground, a grisly reminder of

the disastrous leadership the British had suffered under Raglan since the *start of the Crimean campaign*. British troops didn't know why they were being deployed or even headed to Crimea.<sup>48</sup> Just getting everything off the ships took five days; their allies needed one. They even forgot to unload food or water. Earlier, at the battle of Alma, he directed his men to lie down for an *hour and a half under direct artillery fire* as he patiently waited for his allies to seize an objective.<sup>49</sup> He was all over the battlefield, too far away to see or so close that his own staff wanted to abandon him.<sup>50</sup> Raglan's all too common lack of initiative allowed the Russians to secure the very positions the Light Brigade was now charging. Raglan's effect on his officers was no better; insubordination was rife. Cardigan and Lucan, despite being brothers-in-law, had detested each other for the last 30 years. Nolan's insubordination and, according to Lucan, "most disrespectful" manner heightened the tension. The hostility Raglan allowed to fester ensured the three men would never discuss the ill-fated order or even collaborate on a way to circumvent it.<sup>51</sup> By the time the Light Brigade began its infamous charge, the British were losing more men from Raglan's incompetence than from the enemy. Tennyson would write an appropriate epithet for the men of the Light Brigade and their misfortune at the hands of Raglan: *Someone had blunder'd: Theirs not to make reply, theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die.*<sup>52</sup>

While it is imperative leaders recognize that productivity, cohesiveness, and work satisfaction suffer under LF leadership, *knowing* that an active leadership approach can transform followers into viable productive members once again is equally important. Often confused with delegation or empowerment, LF leadership does not seek to develop followers. Conversely, empowerment or granting autonomy to organizational members is a transformational approach to developing followers into leaders.<sup>53</sup> The next section describes a necessary style of leadership for our dynamic military environment: transactional leadership.

### **Transactional Leadership**

Transactional leadership seeks to maintain organizational stability through regular social exchanges leading to goal achievement for both leaders and their followers. Typically, the leader enters into an

agreement with their followers to reach performance goals.<sup>54</sup> For example, in a military environment, a supervisor may offer various incentives to employees to meet scheduled maintenance deadlines. In a corporate setting, bonuses or other compensation may be awarded to employees for meeting performance expectations. Additionally, this approach may focus on monitoring followers' performance and taking corrective actions as necessary. Burns described transactional leadership as an exchange relationship between leader and followers to satisfy self-interests. Building on this previous work, Bass included two relevant components: contingent reward and management by exception. Further, he divided management by exception into active and passive approaches and included *laissez faire* (discussed previously) as an avoidant leadership behavior.<sup>55</sup> The following subsections will describe these behaviors in more detail.

**Contingent reward (CR).** Contingent reward is a *constructive transaction* between leaders and followers. What does this mean? It is constructive because the leader actually sets expectations for followers that describe what must be achieved to meet expected standards of performance. This action is also constructive since it utilizes rewards to reinforce positive performance. The CR approach has been called an effective and powerful method to motivate followers because this approach creates consistent expectations between leaders and followers. Further, CR is based on an implied agreement or contract that defines the expectations between all parties. In a constructive transaction, the leader sets performance goals, provides guidance for meeting these expectations, and rewards or supports followers for meeting desired outcomes. The follower must meet all performance expectations to achieve these mutual goals in order to receive the contingent reward.<sup>56</sup>

For the followers, CR also provides direction or guidance defining how to achieve targeted performance goals. When leaders clarify such organizational goals and values, members are empowered to accomplish more meaningful outcomes. Additionally, the establishment of such mutual expectations helps to create an increased level of trust and commitment from followers. Transactional leaders can further practice behaviors that guide and reward followers using CR by honing four key actions: (1) set goals for and with followers—by allowing followers to help set performance goals, they can align their own efforts with organizational expectations; (2) suggest pathways to meet performance expectations—providing followers with guidance

on how to achieve their performance goals is an excellent display of constructive transaction and ensures success; (3) monitor followers' progress actively and provide supportive feedback—it is critical for leaders to proactively monitor their subordinate's progress in order to provide timely feedback, support, and necessary resources; and (4) provide rewards when goals are attained—exchanging extrinsic rewards and recognition for attaining performance outcomes is the key to contingent reward behavior.<sup>57</sup>

What happens when followers do not meet goals? A relevant example of this “agreement” can be seen in the Air Force fitness program. If members achieve a composite score equal to or greater than 90 on their fitness test, they receive an “excellent” rating and are only required to test annually. What a reward! If members achieve a “satisfactory” rating or a 75–89.99 composite score, they must test semi-annually. No reward, but they pass! Receiving a composite score of less than 75 results in an “unsatisfactory” rating and will require *corrective* action that is associated with management by exception, described in the next section.<sup>58</sup>

The idea of utilizing CR for motivation is based on a tenet from educational psychology that posits people tend to repeat behaviors that are rewarded. However, a critical issue involving this approach is *consistency*. In other words, provide the agreed-upon reward in a timely manner. Likewise, rewarding for no good reason will confuse followers, and they will fail to make the connection between performance and reward. Research has indicated that timing of the reinforcement affects the followers' learning speed and performance as well. Additionally, there are advantages and disadvantages associated with CRs. Consider that some people are motivated by money more than others, so any extrinsic rewards associated with promotions or pay increases may have mixed results. In many industries, monetary rewards may motivate performance quantity but not necessarily quality. Further, extrinsic rewards may interfere with or possibly lower intrinsic motivation, affecting potential creativity and innovation. Extrinsic rewards may also have a temporary effect on motivating followers who may feel a sense of entitlement toward future reward incentives. The use of CR assumes that followers are driven by lower-order needs like food, money, and safety. However, many followers are actually motivated by higher-order needs like socialization, achievement, and self-actualization. Moreover, CR leadership may inhibit teamwork when placing too much emphasis

on individual extrinsic gratification.<sup>59</sup> It is imperative that leaders understand what resources are available relative to offering potential extrinsic rewards. Typically, CR is transactional when the reward is extrinsic or material (e.g., a bonus or promotion). When the reward is psychological (intrinsic) such as praise, this becomes more of a transformational approach.<sup>60</sup>

### *Example in History*

#### **Contingent Reward and the Flying Tigers**

Sandy Sandell was running for his life. The Japanese pilot above was in a *jibaku*, or suicide dive, and headed right for him. Just missing him, the Zero crashed into his parked P-40 Tomahawk in a giant fireball. Life in 1941 Burma was hell—awful food, diarrhea, and malaria—and now the Japanese were throwing aircraft at them. Luckily, they were paid well, around the equivalent of \$11,000 a month in today's purchasing power. Sandy couldn't help but chuckle: I still don't think it's enough for all of . . . this. He, like many of his friends, had joined the American Volunteer Group (AVG) on promises of combat with lucrative pay. In 1939 Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt agreed to send private contractors to assist China's Chiang Kai-Shek against the Japanese. Leading the effort was Claire Chennault, a prior US Army Air Corps captain. Roosevelt had been moved by the last line of A. E. Housman's poem "Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries:" [they] *saved the sum of things for pay*.<sup>64</sup> "Smart man," thought Sandy as he crawled out of the ditch. That \$500 bounty the recruiter offered him had sealed the deal.<sup>65</sup> But reality was harsh; most were ready to quit their first day in Burma until they met Chennault. "Here was a man we could follow," wrote one.<sup>66</sup> Chennault had been fighting the Japanese since 1939. His advice was blunt: use his tactics and live, don't and "we'll be picking up pieces of you all over the jungle."<sup>67</sup> Chennault was also blunt about their contract: "perform or go home."<sup>68</sup> Perform they did; 12 days after Pearl Harbor, the AVG vengefully killed 14 Japanese crews. The US Army Air Corps, who balked at the idea of paid mercenaries, took notice. Chennault knew AVG life required strong incentives unavailable to "regulars." For him, raw ability was all that mattered. Men who performed well were rewarded and respected, left alone to do what they did best—fight. Granted, they did other things pretty well, too; but the Air Corps didn't seem to take too kindly *those* skills.<sup>69</sup>

Chennault didn't seem to mind anyway; he was gone most of the time, but the men knew he had their backs.<sup>70</sup> He saw that families of fallen pilots received their pay for the rest of their contract.<sup>71</sup> When stress and poor living conditions took their toll, he granted desk duty with no cut in pay.<sup>72</sup> Still, Chennault was a patriot and took the men to task when things came to a head during the "pilots' revolt." *Fight*, he demanded, *or go home as deserters and face the draft board*. The men retreated, and the matter was never mentioned again. Eventually, the AF moved toward converting the AVG into a regular unit. Chennault fought to keep their contract pay and the commissions they resigned to join the AVG, and he even secured a few promotions. The rest went home with a \$500 bonus. By the time the AVG became the 23rd Fighter Group, America loved the wild antics of the AVG as much as its impressive combat record. Inspired, Walt Disney got involved, penning the name and caricature the unit would carry through history, *The Flying Tigers*.<sup>76</sup>

**Management by exception (MBE).** Unlike CR, this behavior is labeled as a *corrective transaction* and is usually not as effective as CR or transformational behaviors but necessary in high-risk or life-threatening situations,<sup>77</sup> as in the military. Further, MBE may take two forms: active (MBE-A) or passive (MBE-P). During the active approach, leaders *actively* monitor followers for deviations from standards in the form of mistakes or errors and take corrective action as necessary. Utilizing an active approach may become necessary and effective in some situations, particularly when safety is a factor. During MBE-P or the passive approach, leaders *passively* take corrective action only when they feel they must get involved, which is usually too late. Unfortunately, when leaders are supervising large numbers of followers, it may be difficult for them to actively monitor all members.<sup>78</sup> However, when leaders deliberately wait until a situation is out of control before intervening, this is a passive approach. See figure 3 for characteristics and examples of these behaviors.



Behavior/Component	Characteristic	Example
Contingent reward	Reward for performance	A supervisor rewards Airmen with an afternoon off for task completions.
Management by exception (Active)	Responds to deviations in standards as soon as possible	A master sergeant corrects an Airmen for not saluting an officer.
Management by exception (Passive)	Responds to deviations in standards only when necessary	A captain finally intervenes when two of his careless Airmen actually cause an accident.

**Figure 3. Transactional leadership behaviors/components**

In MBE-A followers are monitored and controlled through enforced compliance of rules and regulations along with performance expectations. This management philosophy was actually based on Frederick Winslow Taylor's scientific management school. Taylor believed that the use of careful observation, detailed instruction, and active supervision would improve organizational efficiency. A key tenet from this school of thought suggested that leaders should focus on noncompliance, mistakes, and poor performance that deviate from normal operations. MBE-A utilizes this practice by actively seeking and eliminating any such deviations prior to or immediately following noncompliance.<sup>79</sup> Is this realistic in the AF environment? It's possible, but there are exceptions. Let us look at one example in the maintenance field: a typical maintenance officer may supervise hundreds of Airmen, making MBE-A challenging. How much time do we have before active turns into passive? If the maintenance officer responds as soon as he or she can, then it is active; if he or she delays corrective action until something goes awry, this is obviously a passive approach.

Further, MBE-A incorporates a corrective transaction between the leader and follower as previously mentioned. This behavior is corrective in nature since the leader focuses on the specific deviation from pre-defined standards. Using MBE-A occasionally or in a critical setting would be acceptable, but overuse of this transactional behavior could create disharmony. Some leaders may misuse this leadership behavior as a means to micromanage or aggressively find fault with their followers, an overall negative approach.<sup>80</sup>

For MBE-P, the leader typically chooses to wait for problems to occur before getting involved and taking any corrective action. When leaders choose to intervene only when standards are not met, all focus is on negative performance, rarely on positive accomplishments. Followers exposed to this approach typically have low trust in their leader since they are only confronted for errors or mistakes. For organizations in high-risk settings, such as the military, this approach could become a dangerous choice; an active approach would be safer and more effective. The leader that espouses this passive approach usually ascribes to the cliché “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Followers typically react to this behavior with low commitment, identity, and trust for their leaders. Additionally, this behavior often promotes fear and complacency among followers.<sup>81</sup>

#### *Example in History*

### **Management by Exception and the Great Escape**

They should have shot him before he hit the ground; it would have saved the awful headache he was going to give them over the next four years. Roger Bushell was ambushed by five German Messerschmitt fighters on 23 May 1940. He brought down two before ejecting right into the hands of a waiting German patrol.<sup>82</sup> His first interrogation was amusing since he was also a trained lawyer. “Suavely belligerent,” his friends called him. Two escape attempts later, the Germans were done with him. Five thousand troops had searched for him, and the Luftwaffe, who oversaw Allied airmen, grew tired of saving him from the many attempts by the Gestapo (Nazi Germany’s secret police force) to kill him. Apparently, his skills as a lawyer did not amuse them either. He was moved to Stalag Luft III, a maximum security compound. Undeterred, he set about building an escape, or “X” crew. He planned four tunnels code-named *Tom, Dick, Harry, and George*. As *Big X*, he controlled everything: recruitment, construction, and most importantly, security.<sup>85</sup> He restricted operations to a dozen of the 800 prisoners at the camp.<sup>86</sup> Bushell issued a warning: “If any bastard utters the word *tunnel* . . . I’ll have him court-martialed.” Secrecy aside, the sheer magnitude of the project—engineering, forging documents, and hiding evidence—required detailed planning and ingenuity. Obviously, discussions could go off the rails at times. Once, a heated

debate started on how to exit Tom—ramp or ladder? Bushell stepped in. He didn't usually engage in technical arguments, but he would definitely end them; the ramp was out. Documents required such "engagements" as well. One of his forgers spoke up in defense of a German sympathizer who had balked at procuring them a camera. "We can't ask him . . . he's liable to be shot." Bushell was unmoved: "Tell him he's liable to be shot if he doesn't." Another forger complained about handwriting 200 forged passes. "Jesus!" the man protested. "Maybe he'll help you," replied Bushell, "get it done." Stress was high, then the 4th of July hit. Every Yank in camp pulled out bottles of moonshine—hell brew they called it—and paraded through camp dressed as Paul Revere. Americans! He still made everyone work. Finally, on 25 March 1944, their time came. As expected, they were eventually discovered, but 76 had made it out.<sup>92</sup> Over the next several weeks, 70,000 German troops hunted down the men. Hitler was furious and after pleas from Hermann Goring, acquiesced to shooting "only" half of the escapees.<sup>93</sup> Back at Stalag Luft III, the men waited anxiously for news. Their sympathetic Luftwaffe guards quietly leaked that most were recaptured and sent to other camps. They also provided a list of 50 men who were executed; Bushell's name was among them.<sup>94</sup> Undeterred, they remembered his words: "The only reason that God allowed us this extra ration of life is so we can make their [the Germans] life hell."<sup>95</sup> True to their leader, and the Germans irritation, the men kept escaping, branching out even, to concentration camps.

In the military setting, it is critical that we employ positive forms of transactional leadership in order to monitor and meet all standards as well as meet all critical performance goals to enable mission accomplishment. However, utilizing a purely transactional approach would not fully develop, challenge, or instill the highest moral or ethical behaviors within our followers.<sup>96</sup> Transactional leaders are vital to the military mission, but as we will learn in the next section, transformational leadership has been empirically proven as the most effective form of leadership at organizational levels.

## Transformational Leadership

In contrast with transactional leadership, transformational leadership involves creating personal relationships with followers that raise their level of motivation and morality. A transformational leader is attentive to followers' needs and strives to help them reach their fullest potential. Raising the level of morality in others was a key tenet in this style of leadership according to Burns. However, this may become complex when defining leaders such as Adolf Hitler or Saddam Hussein, who were negatively transforming followers. Bass referred to this type of transformation as pseudo transformational leadership. Leaders who are self-consumed, exploitive, and power-oriented with a distorted sense of morality fit this classification of leadership. When leaders are focused on their own self-interests over the interests of others, this is considered a personalized leadership approach.<sup>97</sup>

Another key component to the transformational approach is addressing the follower's sense of self-worth. The challenge for all transformational leaders is to motivate their followers to accomplish more than they originally intended, realizing their fullest potential. This is accomplished by creating challenging expectations, allowing followers to achieve higher standards of performance.<sup>98</sup> However, transformational leaders go beyond simple exchanges and agreements with followers by employing one or more of the behaviors or components identified in the transformational leadership concept. To some extent, these four behaviors have evolved through conceptualization and measurement of transformational leadership over time. Conceptually, leadership is *idealized* or charismatic whereby followers identify and want to emulate their leader. Effective leaders *inspire* their followers with persuasion and challenging goals, providing meaning and understanding. Leaders intellectually stimulate their members to expand their skills and abilities. Finally, leaders are individually considerate as they coach and mentor their followers.<sup>99</sup> The following four transformational behaviors are discussed in the next sections: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. See figure 4 for characteristics and examples of each behavior.

Behavior/Component	Characteristic	Example
Idealized Influence	Role model Respected Admired High ethical standards	A junior officer volunteers off-duty time to support a local charity event to raise money for a local food bank.
Inspirational Motivation	Motivating Inspiring Articulating a vision	A colonel inspires an organization to re-group and overcome adversity.
Intellectual Stimulation	Thinking “outside the box” Reframing old problems Innovative	An Airman finds innovative solutions to common maintenance issues.
Individual Consideration	Coaching Mentoring Active listening Valuing diversity	A captain takes an extra hour after the normal duty day to assist a follower with a college course.

**Figure 4. Transformational leadership behaviors/components**

**Idealized influence (II).** Transformational leaders exhibiting II behavior project themselves as positive role models for followers to emulate. Typically, these leaders are respected, admired, and trusted completely. When followers are asked to recall past exemplars of leadership, they generally select from this category of leader. Followers identify with not only the leaders but also their mission or cause, often emulating behaviors and actions. In true idealized fashion, this type of leader addresses the needs of followers over personal needs. Principles and high standards of ethical and moral conduct are upheld by this leader, who is consistently counted on to “do the right thing.”<sup>100</sup> Mahatma Gandhi is probably the most celebrated II example in history. The reason for this is that he practiced what he preached to his followers; his genuine positive approach to leadership while advocating high ethical standards for all gained him the respect of followers and admirers. This idea of becoming a role model or leading by example is often referred to “walking the talk.”<sup>101</sup>

Where does charismatic leadership fit into this model? James G. Hunt, Orlando Behling, James M. McFillan, and Robert J. House believe that charismatic and transformational leadership are one in the same,

often citing this area of study as “charismatic/transformational leadership.”<sup>102</sup> Additionally, II is measured on two components: behaviors and attributes. We can observe a leader’s behaviors or actions based on what they say or demonstrate, whereas attributes are characteristics that followers perceive of their leaders.<sup>103</sup> (For example, trust could be a characteristic that a follower may believe his or her leaders personify.) How can a leader earn the trust, respect, and admiration of his or her followers? Just as John F. Kennedy, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. have depicted throughout history, successful transformational leaders place the group’s interests ahead of their own personal interests.

In the Air Force, we have core values that fit into this II behavior very neatly: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do. Relating to character, integrity has been described as the willingness to do what is right even when no one is watching you—often called the “moral compass” or the inner voice of reason.<sup>104</sup> Accordingly, *integrity* is related to several other moral traits imperative to today’s leader:

- Courage—allows members to do whatever is right, regardless of the cost
- Honesty—the hallmark of military professionalism, as in “our word is our bond”
- Responsibility—acknowledging one’s duties and executing accordingly
- Accountability—owning up to our mistakes and taking the credit for our own work
- Justice—practicing justice toward the right and the wrong
- Openness—promoting a free flow of information and feedback
- Self-respect—learning to respect oneself as a professional
- Humility—the expectation that the practicing of integrity may require one to become grounded or humble at times.<sup>105</sup>

The “service before self” core value describes a work ethic that maintains our military duties take precedence over any personal issues. This area is based on following rules for good order and discipline, respecting others regardless of rank, maintaining self-control (anger, appetites, and religious tolerance), and having faith in the

system to not only support your leaders but also develop your followers. The core value “excellence in all we do” ensures that we sustain our highest standards of performance and continuous search for a better way to do business, to innovate. We may accomplish this goal by integrating excellence in other areas of our daily duties (i.e., by employing product and service excellence, personal excellence, community excellence, and resource excellence).<sup>106</sup> Incorporating the II approach embraces the tenets of the Air Force core values creating a paragon for ethical leadership.

*Example in History*

**Idealized Influence and a Secretary at War**

*What the hell am I doing here? I have just walked into a category-five S\*# storm!*<sup>107</sup> Secretary of Defense Robert Gates smiled as he reminisced over his confirmation hearing five years ago.<sup>108</sup> The drive was a welcome respite from the long day on Capitol Hill. He’d come a long way from his days as a CIA-sponsored Air Force intelligence officer 40 years ago.<sup>108</sup> It seemed like even longer when he sat down for his confirmation hearing, carefully explaining his plan to manage the massive military enterprise and America’s two wars. Although overwhelmingly approved, Gates uttered a warning as the hearing concluded. He would serve with all his heart, but what was happening in the Middle East would affect generations to come, and he believed only collective and collaborative effort would get the job done.<sup>109</sup> He reminded them that as president of Texas A&M University, he had lost 12 graduates and that he was committed to doing what he thought best for the country and its men and women in uniform.<sup>110</sup> He continued this refrain to the senior levels of the Pentagon. Characterized by his rhetoric on Pentagon bureaucracy, in reality he was out to mend fences and build a cohesive team. He was candid with senior military leaders; he needed their insight and wisdom: “I’m a good listener, and I prize candor above all. I also will respect [your] experience and views.”<sup>111</sup> He favored sharp disagreements over consensus and informality and tried in vain to mount a coup on the ever-present parade of PowerPoint presentations.<sup>112</sup> Most importantly, he reiterated that they were a team and when the time came, they would speak with one voice. At times this mantra was tested, especially after the infamous *Rolling*

*Stone* article incident that detailed negative comments toward the president from the staff of his top commander in Afghanistan, Gen Stanley McChrystal. Gates stuck by his general, even though he knew he was doomed.<sup>113</sup> His commitment to the troops was also unwavering, fighting to get them equipment they needed despite leaders who said they did not need it.<sup>114</sup> Gates wanted every man and woman in uniform to know just how committed he was to them and their mission. He was a visible leader, visiting countless bases, writing handwritten notes to families of the fallen, and sitting patiently to hear from the lowest ranks. He took the time to hear from family members, like when a 15-year-old girl detailed the impact the Army's new 15-month deployment was having on her family.<sup>115</sup> Ironically, Gates admitted privately he detested his job. The strain and faces of the dead weighed heavily on him. But he admitted, "I will do my duty, but I can't wait to lay down this burden."<sup>116</sup> His last visit to Afghanistan was met with hundreds of well wishers. The troops he served thanked him for his efforts, detailing their accomplishments and the lives saved because of him. In a tearful goodbye, he stated a simple "thank you."<sup>117</sup>

**Inspirational motivation (IM).** There are times when leaders are required to enhance team spirit, provide meaning, and challenge their followers' work. Through the use of enthusiasm and optimism, leaders inspire and motivate their followers to achieve what they never thought was possible. Using this component of transformational leadership, they can energize followers to seek or envision attractive future states or alternatives not normally considered. A powerful inspirational leader motivates followers by what they say and how they act.<sup>118</sup> Various famous speeches in history have inspired ordinary people to accomplish seemingly impossible tasks like Henry V of England's famous speech prior to the Battle of Agincourt, whereby an outnumbered army of Englishmen defeated a superior French opposition;<sup>119</sup> Gen George S. Patton's speech to the Third Army in 1944, motivating hundreds of young soldiers;<sup>120</sup> or Martin Luther King Jr's inspiring "I Have a Dream" speech during the greatest demonstration for freedom in America's history from Washington, DC, in 1963, which greatly impacted the civil rights movement.<sup>121</sup> Air Force leaders will inevitably find opportunities that require inspiring followers to accomplish challenging goals, a vital leadership skill.



Further, IM is typically demonstrated in leaders who share high expectations with followers, using inspiration to garner commitment for a shared vision for the organization. Often leaders promoting IM use symbols or emotional appeals to focus group synergy beyond original objectives. Team spirit is often associated with this transformational behavior.<sup>122</sup> Leaders often describe an optimistic vision for followers often “raising the bar,” setting the stage to exceed normal expectations. Status quo is not acceptable to most transformational leaders; their vision typically raises performance expectations. Additionally, by using IM leaders express confidence in their followers and their shared vision. Through this synergy of vision and behavior, inspirational leaders energize their followers to exert extra effort during future challenges.<sup>123</sup> A squadron commander who holds commander’s call to motivate the organization prior to an upcoming inspection or a flight commander who articulates a vision that inspires followers to perform beyond their limits are both great examples of IMs in the Air Force. A key ingredient to leadership development is the notion that leaders must elevate their followers’ expectations by inspiring collaboration and team efforts toward a challenging vision. In order to reach this stage, leaders must appeal to the idealistic drives within each follower to release the dormant “greatness” in each follower, employing IM. Transformational leaders exemplifying IM trigger inspiration through three main concepts:

- Motivation—Inspiration provides energy and direction that fuels the action of followers.
- Evocation—You cannot force inspiration on someone through an act of will; instead, inspiration is evoked from within or through significant others (e.g., flight commanders, squadron commanders, directors, etc.) and the environment.
- Transcendence—Inspiration moves followers through an appreciation of beauty and excellence that allows them to rise above ordinary preoccupations or limitations.<sup>124</sup>

Today we see such feelings and attitudes typically associated with visionary leaders like Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff Bezos, chairmen, chief executive officers, and founders of Facebook and Amazon.com, respectively. Obviously these are extreme leadership exemplars; the takeaway point here is that Air Force leaders may adapt these concepts with surprisingly similar results. As a visionary leader, one may

see a brighter future than most, expressing dissatisfaction with the status quo and challenging followers. Using effective communication, creative metaphors, and colorful rhetoric, a visionary inspires associates, teams, and followers to seek new levels of organizational success.<sup>125</sup> Both IM and II elicit powerful emotional bonds, trust, and commitment between leaders and followers. Based on this point, IM tends to increase followers' willingness to excel.<sup>126</sup>

### *Example in History*

#### **Inspirational Motivation and the Green Hornet**

*We're all dead. . .* That was the last thought to run through 1st Lt Louis "Louie" Zamperini's mind as their 24,000 pound B-24 Liberator, *The Green Hornet*, crashed into the crystal blue waters of the Pacific Ocean.<sup>127</sup> It was 27 May 1943, and three of the 11 Airmen onboard fought their way to the surface. Louie broke the surface of the water, grabbed a nearby life raft, and located two other crewmen, their pilot, Capt Russell "Phil" Phillips, and tail gunner Francis "Mac" McNamara.<sup>128</sup> Louie took stock of their injuries and supplies; the situation was grim. Mac was in shock; Phil had a severe head wound, and small fins were knifing their way through the water in their direction.<sup>129</sup> Louie reassured everyone that they were going to make it; their squadron would find them; *heck*, they would be home by nightfall.<sup>130</sup> Yet days passed, and the trio drifted aimlessly. Mac grew more depressed and, in a delirium-induced nighttime binge, ate most of their survival rations.<sup>131</sup> Louie remained supportive, repeating over and over, "We're going to make it." Later Louie managed to catch a sea gull and use it for bait. The food gave the men hope. He showed them that if they were persistent and resourceful, they could make it.<sup>132</sup> Days turned into weeks, and Louie worked to keep their spirits up. He started peppering Phil and Mac with questions to keep their minds—if not their bodies—engaged and healthy.<sup>133</sup> A nonstop quiz show emerged, and Louie encouraged everyone to share stories and retell the hilarious practical jokes they played on their friends back home. They never discussed the crash though; it was still too raw for Phil. Louie knew he needed reassurance not blame.<sup>134</sup> Louie also started a "meal-time" ritual whereby he meticulously described every ingredient in his mother's cooking, walking them through each stage of the cooking process.<sup>135</sup>

His vivid imagery fooled their empty stomachs, even if only for a brief time. On day 27 they were sighted by a lone fighter in the sky. They were ecstatic, until it turned out to be a Japanese Zero. The pilot dived at the helpless men, mercilessly strafing their tiny craft. Louie was upbeat, declaring that such ineptitude meant America was sure to win the war.<sup>136</sup> The humor would not last as the sharks became bolder, frustrated at the men's amazing luck. One day they began leaping into the raft, and Mac and Louie furiously fought back. As the water settled, Louie looked at Mac and told him how grateful and proud he was of his efforts that day.<sup>137</sup> Mac's redemption was short lived. On day 33 he passed away, Louie and Phil were on their own. The two men held a quiet ceremony for Mac. Louie repeated all the good things they knew about Mac, laughing at his love of mess hall pie.<sup>138</sup> Mac was gone, but they still had a chance. On day 46, the salvation they so eagerly sought came upon them in the shape of a Japanese patrol boat. In a cruel twist of fate, they were safe and now prisoners of war.<sup>139</sup>

**Intellectual stimulation (IS).** Leaders that foster creativity and innovation for their followers while supporting new approaches to organizational challenges exemplify IS behavior. This critical-thinking approach encourages followers to develop unique ways to carefully solve problems or complex issues within the organization.<sup>140</sup> Further, leaders employing IS inspire members to become more creative by questioning assumptions and reframing problems, while approaching old situations or problems with new methodologies. Followers are encouraged to try new approaches; they are not criticized for taking risks or disagreeing with leadership. Encouraging this type of stimulation coupled with leadership support is not only a powerful transformational tool but also leads to unexpected innovations such as "Scotch Tape" or "Post-it Notes" created by 3M employees who were given 15 percent of their work time to pursue any projects that interested them.<sup>141</sup>

How do we encourage our followers to generate good ideas? Leaders should support creativity as a risk-free norm without repercussions (within reason, of course). There are multiple methods for generating good ideas: brainstorming, nominal group techniques, ad hoc committees, and so forth. In order for leaders to cultivate an innovative environment, they must not only solicit ideas from all levels of

the organization but also be willing to support those members regardless of success or failure. Further, the transformational leader should concentrate on the “what” pertaining to problems as opposed to the “who,” when blame is the focus.<sup>142</sup> As leaders create a culture of creativity and innovation, followers are less inhibited and more likely to exchange a free flow of ideas. Great thinkers throughout history such as Albert Einstein, Thomas Aquinas, and Maria Sklodowska-Curie were advocates of considering opposing views, rational thinking, and analysis to achieve creative problem solving. When followers seek different perspectives, reexamine assumptions, look at problems in new ways, and encourage nontraditional thinking, they are employing IS behaviors. Eventually, these behaviors will instill creativity and innovation within followers that lead to changes in people, processes, products, and services for the better.<sup>143</sup> John Sosik and Don Jung suggest six key transformational leadership actions that promote IS within organizations:

- Reexamine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate.
- Seek different perspectives when solving problems.
- Get others to look at problems from many different angles.
- Suggest new ways of looking at how to complete assignments.
- Encourage nontraditional thinking to deal with traditional problems.
- Encourage rethinking those ideas that have never been questioned before.<sup>144</sup>

A final area for consideration when leveraging IS behaviors is the removal of roadblocks. Using a strategic approach, leaders must consider potential barriers while building trust to prevent negative effects on group creativity. The anticipation of these impediments is critical to the success of ensuring a productive climate. The sources of resistance are the following: organization, leader, followers, problem orientation, and yourself. It is imperative that leaders are aware of these barriers to IS and understand how to manage or reduce these obstacles for followers. *Your organization* may include the structure, policies, procedures, regulations, instructions, and other guidelines

that determine its culture. If it is determined that some of these areas are inhibiting IS growth within the organization, collaboration among colleagues and peers must be achieved to promote innovation by recruiting creative personnel, including innovation within strategic planning and offering rewards for creative solutions. *Your leader* may include anyone in the chain of command from the immediate supervisor to the commander. If any one of these leaders impedes the climate of creativity, others must be involved to help champion innovation by generating support for solving organizational problems, testing new ideas, and educating leadership on the risks of inhibiting creativity and innovation. *Your followers* may be too reliant on the leader's abilities to seek new ideas and solutions; they may also be introverted or feel they lack creativity. Whatever the case, leaders must ensure that followers receive relevant education and training in solving problems, developing creativity, and exploring new methods to generate ideas. *Your problem orientation* involves the way that you perceive problem solving or arriving at solutions. If you feel that creative people are born—not made—or that there is only one right answer to any problem, you may need to become more open-minded. Again, courses in creativity and problem solving can help one overcome these tendencies. Most universities offer professional development, continuing education courses, and credited courses in many of these topics. *Yourself* may address your own blinders to creativity. Many people feel that they're not creative people or that sitting around thinking of good ideas is a waste of time and cling to old existing solutions for convenience. You may solve this dilemma by becoming more flexible and accepting other ideas and solutions from all levels of the organization.<sup>145</sup> You may need to collaborate with colleagues or peers for assistance and take courses in creativity or innovation; do whatever is necessary to remove these obstacles for your followers.

#### *Example in History*

### **Intellectual Stimulation and the Man Who Never Was**

Royal Navy lieutenant Ewen Montagu was watching a dead man being loaded into a submarine and wondered if this wild plan would work. It was 1943 and Montagu had to somehow mask the impending invasion of Sicily. His answer came from Royal Air Force lieutenant Charles Cholmondeley. Cholmondeley had once proposed dropping a

dead man right into occupied France with a radio to feed misinformation about Allied invasion plans into the eager ears of listening Germans. Cholmondeley, a man described politely as “eccentric,” was ultimately told his plan was unworkable and unrealistic.<sup>146</sup> Montagu, however, saw an opportunity and quickly set about building the ground work for Operation Mincemeat: depositing a body on the Spanish coast to throw German eyes off the Allies invasion plans for Sicily.<sup>147</sup> Montagu recruited a colorful team to adapt Cholmondeley’s plan, explaining that lives were at stake and that he needed their expertise and ingenuity for the project. Montagu enlisted the services of famed pathologist Sir Bernard Spilsbury to secure an appropriate body for their task.<sup>148</sup> Spilsbury’s contacts led them to Glyndwr Michael, a Welsh homeless man with no next of kin who died after ingesting rat poison.<sup>149</sup> Spilsbury knew Michael’s manner of death was critical; coroners in devoutly Catholic Spain were unlikely to autopsy a man with such a benign cause of death.<sup>150</sup> Montagu next charged his team to create an elaborate yet believable tale about the life of a man who never was. Cholmondeley proposed the name Maj William Martin; it was relatively common and easily checked by the Germans against public navy records. The team eagerly worked to sell the ruse down to the smallest detail; Cholmondeley wore the dead man’s uniform to give it a well-worn appearance. Montagu encouraged his team to humanize Major Martin. They all decided to make him a mildly careless yet trustworthy courier. They asked London’s Lloyd’s Bank general manager to draft an angry letter about a small account overdraft and added a temporary identification in his wallet to stand in for some lost credentials.<sup>151</sup> They included several personal letters with cryptic references to Greece and Sardinia, long believed by the Germans to be the Allies’ main target.<sup>152</sup> Keeping Major Martin “fresh” for his mission led them to British intelligence’s chief inventor, Charles Fraser-Smith, the inspiration for James Bonds’ master of spy toys, Q.<sup>153</sup> Montagu charged Cholmondeley to engage Fraser-Smith for assistance. Fraser-Smith was ecstatic and worked closely with Cholmondeley, building a capsule filled with dry ice that, as it evaporated, released carbon dioxide, forcing out oxygen to ward off decomposition.<sup>154</sup> On 19 April Operation Mincemeat was ready, and Major Martin was quietly deposited on the Spanish coast. His discovery set history in motion, no part in thanks to the man who never was and an unconventional leader with an equally unconventional team.<sup>155</sup>

**Individualized consideration (IC).** Probably the most personal leadership behavior that you can offer a follower day to day is *individual consideration*. On Monday morning when you ask one of your followers how his or her weekend went, you are using a form of IC. The mistake that many leaders make in disconnecting with their members is using the words without meaning or action. Take, for example, the time when your supervisor asked the following series of questions without even breaking his stride down the hallway or looking up from his smart phone: How are you doing? How's the family? Can you meet today's deadlines? This type of interaction is not considered genuine. Does this actually happen in our work environment? Unfortunately, this has become the norm in today's dynamic military workplace with short-suspense tasks, limited resources, and information overload! A typical military leader *is* distracted, but utilizing the IC behavior is not only a powerful transformational instrument but also a reminder to all of us what it is to be human! Try this experiment over the next eight hours: actually attempt to give your followers 100 percent of your attention during any interaction. This means to ignore all distractions and other communication barriers: vibrating cell phones, ringing office phones, being interrupted by others, watching aircraft fly by, checking your watch, reading your texts, and answering your emails. Believe it or not, this will be tougher than it sounds. One reason for such distractions is due to the different rates at which we think and speak. The average person is capable of thinking five times faster than the rate at which most of us can speak. This difference creates what is referred to as a "physiological barrier" to active listening. Although the average person can speak at a rate of 125 to 150 words per minute, the brain can comprehend between 500 and 1,000 words per minute, creating an opportunity for our minds to wander or lose focus on the current speaker.<sup>156</sup> The key to managing this "mental noise" is to stay focused on your speaker and block out any interruptions, ensuring a two-way exchange in communication.

In addition to active listening and two-way communication, a leader leveraging IC considers each individual's needs for growth and achievement by assuming the role of teacher, coach, mentor, facilitator, confidant, and counselor. Further, creating new learning opportunities along with a supportive climate for learning is critical. Leaders must not only recognize individual differences to foster creativity and innovation as described in IS but also understand that each follower is motivated by different needs and desires; some may

require more encouragement, more autonomy, or in some cases, firmer standards.<sup>157</sup> Moreover, the end goal of transformational leaders is to develop followers into effective leaders, so reflect on your own development and recall who mentored your career. Utilizing IC means being empathetic toward your followers and understanding their backgrounds, needs, and aspirations. Using this approach allows followers to feel valued, encouraging not only professional but also personal growth. Sosik and Jung suggest six actions to enhance individual consideration for your followers:

- Consider individuals as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.
- Treat others as individuals rather than a member of a group.
- Listen attentively to others' concerns.
- Help others develop their strengths.
- Spend time teaching and coaching.
- Promote self-development.<sup>158</sup>

When leaders display these actions with followers, members become more amenable to personal development, expressing individuality as they learn to embrace the concept of continuous personal improvement, ultimately transforming them into leaders.

#### *Example in History*

### **Individualized Consideration and the Red Baron**

“How the hell did this happen,” thought British lieutenant Wilfred May. My first combat mission and I wind up being chased by the Red Baron himself! On his tail was a bright red plane piloted by none other than Baron Manfred Albrecht von Richthofen. “I’m dead,” thought May as Richthofen began shooting with icy precision. Suddenly, as they crested a ridge, the world erupted around Richthofen in a shower of bullets.<sup>159</sup> Although wounded before, Richthofen knew this time was different. As he watched May make his escape, his world grew darker. Enjoying the sudden quiet, he let his mind wander back to 1916, the peak of German air superiority over the battlefields of World War I. He had watched in horror as his mentor and Germany’s celebrated fighter ace, Oswald Boelcke, died in a



mid-air collision during training.<sup>160</sup> As Germany's second best fighter ace, Boelcke's legacy and German pride lay squarely on his shoulders. The task was daunting, even the Allies admired Boelcke, so much so that they dropped memorial wreaths in his honor.<sup>161</sup> Adding to the pressure, Richthofen was now in command of Jasta 11, an experienced but unbloodied squadron.<sup>162</sup> Undaunted, Richthofen charged headlong into his new command, meeting individually with each pilot to learn all he could about his men. Richthofen was a keen judge of ability, yet the two men he selected as having the most potential, lieutenants Kurt Wolff and Karl Schäfer, hardly fit the bill of an ideal aviator. Wolff was rail thin and suffered from a permanently dislocated shoulder, and Schäfer had a crippled leg.<sup>163</sup> In time, under Richthofen's coaching, they would become two of Germany's top aces. Wolff, Schäfer, and the rest of Jasta 11 were relentlessly schooled in the tactics or "dicta" Richthofen had learned under Boelcke.<sup>164</sup> For their graduation, Richthofen led them straight into their first engagement. On 23 January, Jasta 11 attacked a formation of British bombers and secured its first aerial victory.<sup>165</sup> As their combat record grew, Richthofen's next target lay squarely on their so-called advanced fighter, the Albatros. It was a death trap; design flaws had caused the deaths of two of his men, prompting him into action. Richthofen engaged with Germany's top engineers and together developed the infamous Albatros D III and Fokker Driekker I.<sup>166</sup> German fighters were now killing machines, feared by Allied aviators and the icons still associated with Richthofen today.<sup>167</sup> To keep up morale, Richthofen rewarded his best pilots with leadership roles and sponsored parties to celebrate their victories.<sup>168</sup> Richthofen's leadership culminated in 1917 during "Bloody April" in which Jasta 11 killed 81 Allied airmen.<sup>169</sup> Allied airmen ominously dubbed themselves the "Suicide Club," most survived less than 12 days after flight school. Yet April would prove to be an ominous month for Richthofen. On 17 April 1918, his world went completely black as he crashed behind enemy lines. The Allies he had fought for more than four years laid him to rest with full military honors.<sup>170</sup>

### **FRLM in Teams**

Research has indicated that groups and teams typically enter various stages of development, and during these transitions, leadership by

members may differ at each stage. Additionally, these stages of development are also characterized by different levels of performance as described in figure 5. Bruce Tuckman, social psychologist, provided the five classic stages of group development: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. In the final column of figure 5, Avolio correlated FRLM behaviors with each of these development stages.<sup>171</sup> The following section will describe each of these stages of team development as it relates to the FRLM behaviors.

Stage of Development/ Performance Level	Tuckman's Five Stages of Development	Correlated FRLM Behaviors
Early in group's life Lowest level of performance	Forming	Unstructured Group (LF)
Deadline approaching Low level of performance	Storming	Semistructured Group (MBE-P)
Deadline is imminent Mediocre performance	Norming	Structured Group (MBE-A and CR)
Due date for team's task Performance is high	Performing	Team (IC and IS)
Due date and beyond Excellent performance	Excelling and Adjourning	Highly Developed Team (II and IM)

**Figure 5. Levels of team development.** (John J. Sosik and Don I. Junk, *Full Range Leadership Development: Pathways for People, Profit, and Planet* [New York: Psychology Press, 2010], 310.)

At the earliest group life stage, group and/or team members assume an unstructured “form,” generally experience confusion, excitement, and anticipation, mixed with fear and anxiety. They typically ask the following or similar questions: Why am I here? Do I want to be part of this group? At this point, members cling to their individuality. They normally take an LF approach to leadership of the group, exhibiting poor performance. As the team's inevitable deadline approaches for completing a specific task, members begin to “storm” through confrontations, particularly over roles and expectations. Members at this stage begin to assert their individuality by asking other members of the team or group questions relative to their status and position: Who are you? Who is in charge? Further, at this stage, members begin posturing for positions or roles in the group by arguing among

themselves, taking sides, and becoming defensive. Since the team is considered semistructured at this point, they assume an MBE-P behavior role with a typically low performance level. As the team task deadline becomes imminent, group members become structured by establishing “norms” (roles within the group) and rewarding performance. Members ask questions regarding work efficiency: How well we will get the work done? The need for interdependence begins to outweigh the need for independence, and members begin to integrate knowledge, skills, and abilities. Additionally, they begin to compliment and reward each other for meeting performance goals. They not only become more cohesive and communicate more effectively but also may become prone to *groupthink* in this stage.<sup>172</sup>

Groupthink, as defined by Irving L. Janis, describes a group that maintains internal harmony by avoiding open discussion or disagreement; members develop an illusion of invulnerability and are likely to overestimate the probability of success for a risky course of action.<sup>173</sup> At this stage, members utilize MBE-A and CR behaviors to add structure to their team development. Upon arrival of the task deadline, the team takes on the synergy of a “performing” team, exuding confidence and cohesion as members interact with effective communication and collaboration skills. At this stage, they are using IC and IS transformational behaviors as they are considerate of each member’s contributions and individual creativity. Finally, at the “adjourning” stage, members are exceeding performance expectations and are driven by a mutual vision and are implementing high moral and ethical standards along with other idealized choices. At this final stage, team members are exemplifying II and IM transformational behaviors.<sup>174</sup> Accepting Avolio’s correlation, teams develop through the following stages of FRLM behaviors: unstructured group (LF), semistructured group (MBE-P), structured group (MBE-A and CR), and team (IC and IS), culminating into a highly developed team (II and IM). Incorporating the FRLM behaviors beyond an individual approach can lead to effective team building. How can leaders inculcate this shared leadership concept and create high-performing teams? Sosik and Jung suggest four effective actions:

- Instill pride in team members for being associated with the team.
- Go beyond self-interest for the good of the team.

- Emphasize the importance of having a collective sense of mission.
- Help team members to develop their strengths.

Traditionally, research has focused on individual leadership capabilities determining team performance. However, as employees receive more autonomy and become more empowered and as self-managed teams become more prevalent, it is critical that we understand distributed or shared leadership within teams or by teams as opposed to leadership “of” teams.<sup>175</sup> The next and final section will incorporate an area of leadership that we collectively feel has diminished over the years in most leadership programs—the human side of leadership development.

## Bringing Humanity to Leadership

Are we discussing ethics adequately in the Air Force? Before you answer, consider which topic gets more daily emphasis in your professional lives—ethics or results? Both are important, but multiple experts testify that an unhealthy results-oriented focus—one which ignores or minimizes ethics—encourages unethical behavior at the personal and organizational level.<sup>176</sup> Lt Gen Stephen W. Wilson, speaking at a press briefing in March 2014 concerning the Malmstrom Air Force Base missileer cheating scandal, pointed to this kind of unhealthy focus—which he described as “perfection is the standard culture”—as a pivotal encouragement to cheat.<sup>177</sup>

A way to approach the right context for understanding ethics is to ask ourselves some questions: Are you actively discussing the rightness or wrongness of actions with your leaders, peers, or followers on a day-to-day basis? Have you made a conscious decision to approach ethics as a topic worthy of study? Do you expect or demand results from your subordinates without explaining and reinforcing to them the difference between right and wrong behavior to produce the results? Learning to behave ethically requires study, reflection, discussion, and formation of a community that inspires continual growth in personal and professional ethics. Experts agree that building a solid intellectual foundation for making ethically sound decisions is a continual, lifelong pursuit.<sup>178</sup> How often do we attend to it? It is tempting to sidestep this responsibility—are we too busy? If we do, we remain guilty of Gen Omar Bradley’s charge that for all of our

scientific advancement, “Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants.”<sup>179</sup> Indeed, the key missing ingredient in Air Force leadership culture may be that we do not teach, reinforce, and model the consistent daily cultivation of ethical soundness in our decisions. In short, we, as a force, can afford to clarify our approach to ethics so that the daily practice of ethically sound thinking is common to Air Force life.

What do we do? There are many steps to take toward gaining clarity on ethics. First, it is imperative that we realize and emphasize that a perfect military record is not the same thing as having perfect personal ethics—we are all accountable, and we all can fail in the absence of constant self-vigilance. Second, we must recognize that the goal of a perfect military record can—if not balanced against other goods such as truthfulness, justice, and our core values—lead us to commit unethical behavior and that these temptations are present from the lowest to the highest ranks. Acknowledging these realities will help us to respond with something more productive than shock when we receive news of fellow Airmen, many with perfect records, who pierced themselves on the point of an ethical failure. Third, we need awareness that the success of other leadership behaviors hinges on the continual practice of ethical soundness—you have to humbly live this one every day. If you get it wrong, you will weaken the impact of anything else you do as a leader.<sup>180</sup> Moreover, the damage often extends far beyond the circumstances that nudged you into wrongdoing. It is unfortunate that one of the biggest challenges in hierarchical organizations is that, as evidence suggests,<sup>181</sup> the higher you climb the more narcissistic (dominant, self-absorbed, low empathy)<sup>182</sup> you are likely to be and the more inclined you may be to commit ethical failures.<sup>183</sup> As we rise in rank and responsibility, our calling, then, is to become even more humble and more educated on how to behave ethically. How do we develop our ability to practice ethical soundness every day? Put simply, we learn to bring our full humanity into every act: “A righteous man, a man attached to humanity does not seek life at the expense of his humanity.”<sup>184</sup> Figure 6 depicts US Air Force, Marine Corps, and Army service members participating in humanitarian assistance efforts in a civil-military operation initiative in Papua New Guinea to strengthen partnerships with US allies in the Pacific.

Bring our humanity? What? What does this mean exactly? This phrase may become clearer if we first reflect on a very personal example from our own lives. Consider the difference you have experienced between spending time with people who invest themselves in



**Figure 6. Operation Pacific Angel participants help improve Papua New Guinean school.** Courtesy of US Air Force.

the interaction with you (IC) or spending time with others who are preoccupied, withdrawn, and cold to you, clearly focused elsewhere. Which treatment do you prefer? Similarly, the act of learning to behave ethically requires our entire humanity, not merely our intellect. Logical thinking alone is not sufficient grounds. If the use of intellect, of our reasoning capacity, alone were enough to guide us to a foundation of ethical soundness, it is worth reflecting that prior to the rise of the Nazis, the democratic Weimar government of Germany headed the most literate country in Europe.<sup>185</sup> In 1920, 12 years before the Nazi Party's democratically elected rise to power, highly respected German professionals Judge Karl Binding and medical doctor Alfred Hoche, of their own volition, wrote and published their rationally conceived booklet *On Permitting the Destruction of Life Unworthy of Life*.<sup>186</sup> From philosophy, we can get a clearer handle on the term "humanity." Plato viewed the whole human person in terms of his famous tripartite concept:

- Reason (my ability to study knowledge and make plans)
- Will (the decision-making "I"—what do I care about, and how much?)
- Appetites (my bodily desires)

Plato argued that only a cooperation between reason and the will, in which reason guides the will, to desire truth more than the mere fulfillment of desires would lead to a proper control of the appetites and produce just behavior.<sup>187</sup> Clive S. Lewis has a modern take on the Platonic view. He emphasized the necessary combination of reason and trained emotions, warning that “without the aid of trained emotions the intellect is powerless against the animal organism.”<sup>188</sup> Lewis’ updating of Plato, in short, concludes as follows: the head (reason) rules the belly (appetites) through the chest (will). The key is relative to those trained emotions—“emotions organized by trained habit into stable sentiments.”<sup>189</sup> Without trained emotions, we don’t know how to properly weigh our concern for people and things. We can become disordered, such as becoming uncaring thinkers who disregard the pain of others or gluttons who care way too much about fulfilling our own desires. In the end, we may allow our desires to lead us to use logic to achieve unethical goals.<sup>190</sup>

How can one eventually come to use logical thinking to behave unethically? Given the ethical failures of gifted and privileged leaders in history, this is not only a fair question but also an essential question in regard to behaving ethically. Maybe it is “the” question to ask when we consider the phrase “bringing your (entire) humanity into every act.” It may seem odd at first that logical thinking can get us into trouble, but a decent understanding of history can show us the truth about ourselves and the fallibility of using logic in isolation.<sup>191</sup> One can see in the acts of mass brutality littering the last century the consequences of the use of reason without the accompaniment of trained emotions. To facilitate the Holocaust, Nazi leaders had to figure out logically the most efficient means of killing millions of people. This is why literary critic Gilbert K. Chesterton, remarking on the dangers of using unaided reason, wrote that “the madman is not the man who has lost his reason. The madman is the man who has lost everything except his reason.”<sup>192</sup> Philosopher Philippa Foot emphasized that virtuous behavior, especially when the welfare of other people is directly involved, requires more motivation than simply that the behavior is rational.<sup>193</sup> Journalist Leon Wieseltier, speaking at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, in 2005, did not point to irrationality to explain the Holocaust but instead to an abundance of logical thinking, all directed at the achievement of evil desires.<sup>194</sup> Today, we can also review much evidence describing the careful planning behind some of the worst mass murders in recent US history.

How does the power of this connection of reason and trained emotions, as a basis for ethical soundness, contribute to good leadership? Think about this analogy as you ponder the relationship between ethics and leadership. In 2009 a RAND study revealed that Air Force personnel operate more successfully in foreign cultures when they enable their communication by first consciously managing their stress levels in unfamiliar surroundings—a skill that can be taught.<sup>195</sup> In a similar way, sound personal ethics enable the practice of leadership behaviors. The daily demonstration of ethical soundness creates the conditions of trust upon which all leadership influence depends. How can a leader who fails to daily demonstrate solid ethics effectively use FRLM behaviors such as IC or II in ways that improve others' performance? We all want to see integrity in our leaders, and part of what that means is that we want to see an act of IC as more than a momentary fit of concern in an otherwise tyrannical leadership style. We want to see a leader who is not split apart by competing motivations and thus unpredictable. How do we best communicate our wholeness as a leader, our personal integrity? It begins, and ends, with the daily practice of ethical soundness, which reveals your willingness as a leader to act self-sacrificially. If you continually reinforce this, you will enjoy the two crucial resources essential to leadership in the Air Force: (1) you will have established the conditions for trust to grow so that others, for example, will see your use of IC as significant and dependable because *you* are dependable all the time whether it helps you personally or not, and (2) you will have shown that your behavior consistently encompasses the core values themselves, since each one of them depends on your readiness to subordinate your self-interest when required.

Finally, without developed personal ethics, internalizing one's organizational ethics is impossible! When the reality of the human being is acknowledged and honored, we see this is a fact, not a suggestion. It makes no difference when an organization says "service before self" if the members have no experience or investment in what that means to them personally. Change or improvement in behavior comes from a significant personal reaction with motive force to a proposed behavioral goal, not the reading or hearing of words.<sup>196</sup> Air Force ethics expert James Toner calls for Air Force professionals to be men and women who have "learned to reason wisely and well. Such people are not produced quickly or easily." He goes on to call ethics training an oxymoron. "Using traditional military training techniques



in ethics instruction will not work. . . . We can speak forever about ‘integrity,’ ‘excellence in all we do,’ and ‘service before self.’ We can put those words on calendars, desks, and walls. When we have to apply them, what do they mean?”<sup>197</sup>

This mistaken faith in the power of slogans by themselves comes from a shortsighted view of the human person. When people are viewed properly as thinking, breathing moral agents capable of integrity in their behavior, rather than as mere parts of a system, we see that there is no actual distinction between one’s off-duty personal ethics and ethics on the job. Toner writes that “the officer who is a personal degenerate either is or will soon become, a professional degenerate.”<sup>198</sup> Your behavior at work is indicative of your personal ethics in your professional setting.

The key for you as a leader, particularly if you aspire to be a transformational leader, is to develop your personal ethics. We describe this development as a process of study and practiced habits that mature your ability to integrate your reason and trained emotions. Do well at this process and you will enable yourself not only to deeply internalize the core values but also be more effective at influencing others to do the same! As discussed earlier, the FRLM behavior of II demands the daily practice of high ethical standards as pivotal to transforming others. Thus, a strong personal ethics is the cornerstone of truly powerful leadership. The following five ethical steps (see figure 7) are proposed to help you gain mastery of the skill of bringing your entire *humanity* into your daily routine and with each decision you make: (1) learn to handle failure; (2) reject the image of perfection as a valid goal; (3) embrace humility over arrogance; (4) relearn what it means to be human; and (5) develop a personal ethics.

Five Ethical Steps	Guidelines
Learn to handle failure	Begin to think more deeply about behaving ethically.
Reject the image of perfection	Strive for excellence in front of your peers versus presenting an image of perfection.
Embrace humility over arrogance	Be humble at all levels—with leaders, peers, and followers.
Relearn what it means to be human	Try journaling and reflection for your introspective development.
Develop your personal ethics	Build your library on ethical behavior, including case studies, hypothetical scenarios, and various lessons learned.

**Figure 7. Five ethical steps**

- **Learn to handle failure.** Many of our lessons purposefully create conditions for conflict and the possibility of failure—these are valuable experiences that also resemble reality. We can begin to think more deeply about behaving ethically when we reflect on how well we react to conflict and failure.
- **Reject the image of perfection as a valid goal.** Our peers have a way of seeing through us. Whether the course is several weeks or several months long, the veil of appearances is too difficult to keep up. As honest relationships grow, striving for excellence in front of your peers gains more importance (and is certainly more tolerable) than presenting an image of perfection.
- **Embrace humility over arrogance.** Arrogance wears thin quickly in the company of peers. Hopefully we learn neither to flaunt it nor applaud it in others. And if our peers help to teach us to be humble, why stop with them? All levels—leaders, peers, and followers—find humility much more attractive and inspiring!
- **Relearn what it means to be human.** None of us lives in a universe of one. Most leadership curricula, for example, require reflection and discussions on self and team performance. During these events, we often hear students experiencing countless epiphanies on the larger significance of human life. They have the opportunity to see they are unique and part of a community and that both of these realities bring obligations, leading to the question, How then should I behave?
- **Develop a personal ethics.** Each program provides a thick suite of lessons on ethical behavior, including dozens of case studies, hypothetical scenarios, and lessons learned. Only the foolish or extremely arrogant remains unaffected by exposure to such content.

This kind of approach to developing a personal ethics plan can help you recognize the inherent dangers in such goals as a “perfect military record” or results at “any” cost and to learn to integrate our reason and trained emotions. The often heavily peer-driven learning environments of Air Force resident professional military education programs present opportune milieus to consider and practice these steps.

## Virtues and Character Strengths

Having a deep understanding of ethical and moral considerations is not only enlightening for our own personal development but also vital to our leadership growth. Further, to exemplify an authentic transformational leadership approach, it is imperative that we continually build on our current signature character strengths while broadening our personal perspectives to include a variety of strengths.<sup>199</sup> The following section describes how we can continue the human leader experience by reflecting on our own virtues and character strengths while considering our followers' proclivities as well.

To help understand how each of us must consider a deeper level of character strength applications, Sosik has connected transformational behaviors with the 24 character strengths and high-six virtues outlined in Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman's breakthrough research. Virtues are the core characteristics universally valued by moral philosophers and religious thinkers as the pillars for good character; they include the following: wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. Character strengths are the positive traits, sometimes called psychological processes for displaying the virtues. For instance, love of learning is a character strength of the virtue wisdom and knowledge.<sup>200</sup> Each of the high-six virtues and associated character strengths is described in the next section and illustrated in figure 8.

<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Courage</b>	<b>Humanity</b>
Creativity Curiosity Open-mindedness Love of Learning Perspective	Bravery Perseverance Honesty Zest	Love Kindness Social Intelligence
<b>Justice</b>	<b>Temperance</b>	<b>Transcendence</b>
Teamwork Fairness Leadership	Forgiveness Humility Prudence Self-Regulation	Appreciation of Beauty or Excellence Gratitude Hope Humor Spirituality

**Figure 8. Virtues and character strengths.** (Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman, *Character Strengths and Virtues: Handbook and Classification* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2004], 56–57; and E. P. Seligman, *Character Strengths and Virtues: Handbook and Classification* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2004], 56–57.)

## Wisdom and Knowledge

When one exercises good judgment and the appropriate use of intelligence, this describes a core virtue referred to as wisdom and knowledge. There are five associated character strengths that fall under this virtue: creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, and perspective. Creativity is typically characterized by someone's original or ingenuous abilities, displayed by the way he or she thinks, talks, or performs. Creativity has often been linked to nonconformity, unconventional behavior, flexibility, and risk-taking behavior. Creativity allows leaders and organizations to challenge the status quo and explore new opportunities and solutions, ensuring inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation for followers.<sup>201</sup> Curiosity describes someone who may have many interests, seeks novel ideas, or is open to new experiences. Often related to general positive feelings and emotions and willingness to challenge stereotypes (or impulsiveness), curiosity is a powerful source of IM and IS for followers, while allowing leaders to become more adaptive.<sup>202</sup> Open-minded individuals consider alternative viewpoints, examine all evidence, and typically do not jump to rash conclusions without weighing all of the facts. This leader's character strength allows followers to develop a sense of ownership within their organizations leveraging not only IM and IS but IC as well.<sup>203</sup> Those of us who are motivated by intrinsic desires to learn new things are exercising our "love of learning." These individuals often experience positive feelings when considering new challenges and high self-efficacy. This character strength allows leaders to seek new ideas and trends within their industries, leading to new approaches and strategies for their organizations while utilizing IM, IS, and IC for follower growth.<sup>204</sup> Perspective describes the ability to consider all facets of a situation and integrate these views into one understandable solution for all to consider. Perspective is one of those key character strengths that can help us empathize with followers' needs. This character strength enables leaders to use multiple lenses to examine organizational challenges, considering both sides of arguments. Utilizing this strength energizes your followers to perform beyond their expectations, allowing leaders to exercise IM, IS, and IC.<sup>205</sup> The strengths of wisdom and knowledge are considered positive traits leading to the use of information in the service for a good life; in psychological language, these are cognitive strengths.<sup>206</sup>

## Courage

Unlike all other virtues, courage has been a fundamental part of the military throughout history. Sometimes referred to as “strengths of the heart,” these emotional strengths are derived from your will in the presence of opposing or dissenting opinions. Peterson and Seligman point out that despite disagreement or even danger, persistence in the face of significant obstacles, makes courage a core virtue. There are four related character strengths that reflect this virtue: bravery, persistence, integrity, and vitality. When someone speaks up for what is right—in conflict with opposition—or acts on convictions, regardless of how unpopular, these are an examples of “bravery.” Bravery has been linked with looking out for, favoring, and feeling connected to others, while sustaining high-quality relationships with yet others. Bravery allows leaders to act consistently upon their values and beliefs. Additionally, leaders can inspire their followers through IM and IS by displaying this strength while acting on their passionate ideas.<sup>207</sup> Courageous people learn to persevere despite challenges, obstacles, or setbacks; this describes their character strength of “persistence.” In the military, we admire our members for “getting things done”; regardless of challenges, we often refer to these skills as execution of strategies. This character strength is also a key ingredient to gaining trust and loyalty from followers. When leaders persist by demonstrating their beliefs and values, they are demonstrating II and IM behaviors to their followers.<sup>208</sup> When one remains true to himself or herself and acts with honesty and authenticity, we are considering an individual’s “integrity.” As described previously under the Air Force core values, this character strength has been inculcated among Airmen as “doing the right thing” since the beginning of their military careers. Further, integrity helps leaders build confidence as they are guided by their strong beliefs and as they strive to do the right thing, which is the foundation of authentic leadership. When leaders use this character strength in this manner, they are displaying II for their followers.<sup>209</sup> When we say that someone has “zest for life” or displays good physical and mental well-being throughout challenges in their lives, we call this “vitality.” Because this strength has two components, physical and mental, there will be times—due to illness, weakness, or fatigue—when we experience lower levels of vitality. This powerful character strength may energize your followers through II and IM.<sup>210</sup> How we bounce back and recharge ourselves during these chal-

lenging times defines our levels of vitality. Military history is fraught with stories of heroes fighting through harsh physical conditions, battle wounds, and mental warfare to meet their missions. The character strength of courage supports the power of “will” to meet goals in the face of opposition or other challenges whether external or internal.<sup>211</sup>

## Humanity

This virtue is one that we consider when we are defining “strengths of others” or, more importantly, interpersonal strengths that we use to protect or befriend others in our work environment or personal lives—what it means to be “human.” There are three character strengths associated with humanity: love, kindness, and social intelligence. Peterson and Seligman refer to love as caring or valuing close relationships with others, particularly when sharing or caring are reciprocated. Since a human need is to love and be loved, leaders should understand and demonstrate this strength to followers in the appropriate context. There are times when compassion and understanding are needed to comfort followers during a crisis (e.g., loss of a family member) or during stressful times in their lives. Clearly, this character strength demonstrates II and IC for followers.<sup>212</sup> Valuing humanity while demonstrating generosity, nurturance, and compassion describes “kindness.” This strength has been linked to a variety of helping behaviors including volunteerism as it correlates to one’s mental and physical health. Displaying genuine kindness to your followers not only sets a positive example for them to emulate but also demonstrates through II and IC that you appreciate their unique contributions.<sup>213</sup> Leadership includes building confidence, wisdom, and camaraderie in followers. When we recognize and control our emotions and engage in positive interactions with others, we are exercising the strength of “social intelligence.” Social and emotional intelligence have been linked with better life decisions, more effective social functioning, and more adaptive outcomes, leading to lower levels of aggression. When leaders are aware of their own emotions, motives, and actions, as well as their followers’ concerns, they are exemplifying II, IM, and IC as they continue to develop followers’ talents.<sup>214</sup> Strengths of humanity include positive traits used typically in one-to-one relationships on an interpersonal level.<sup>215</sup>

## Justice

Fostering a sense of fairness and righteousness describes the virtue of “justice.” There are three character strengths within this virtue: citizenship, fairness, and leadership. When we ensure that we are demonstrating a sense of loyalty, social responsibility, and teamwork, we are exercising “citizenship.” In many military situations, we must work well with other group or team members, display loyalty to our teams, and do our part of the workload to ensure harmony. When leaders value citizenship, they are demonstrating commitment for the common good, ultimately building followers’ trust through II.<sup>216</sup> Ensuring that we treat all others the same without personal biases or preferences describes “fairness.” This strength has been linked to a strong moral identity development fostering trust among others. Leaders must be fair in order to be trusted by followers. Leaders that value fairness, justice, and principled moral reasoning in their relationships with followers become idealized. Moreover, leaders that promote the importance of an individual’s needs, interests, and well-being are displaying IC for their followers.<sup>217</sup> Peterson and Seligman describe a leader as someone that not only encourages a group to accomplish a goal but also maintains good relations among the group. Justice character strengths are considered broadly interpersonal relative to the interaction between the individual and the group. A suggested distinction considers strengths of justice *among* parties; whereas under the virtue of humanity, these interactions would be typically *between* individuals.<sup>218</sup>

## Temperance

“Tempeance” is the ability to exercise self-control as described in the Air Force core values and ensures that our Airmen consider boundaries and limitations on personal desires and aspirations. There are four character strengths associated with this virtue: forgiveness and mercy, humility/modesty, prudence, and self-regulation/control. One that exercises forgiveness and mercy avoids the human impulse to become vengeful in certain situations. Displaying leniency and compassion for someone who may be in trouble or at a specific disadvantage highlights this character strength. Additionally, utilizing forgiveness at the appropriate times may not only restore positive emotions, moods, and attitudes but may also reduce anxieties, anger, and depression. When leaders show forgiveness, they are restoring

trust (or II) with their followers, a critical element for the leader-follower dyad.<sup>219</sup> Remaining humble during one's achievements and not seeking the spotlight or allowing one's performance to speak for his or her workload describes "humility and modesty." Typically, humble individuals are less likely to take risks or make poor decisions and are usually excellent mentors. Leaders whose ego overpowers their humility are prone to narcissism, usually leading to career derailment, lack of follower trust, and low moral development. Leaders displaying humility typically show more concern for their followers' development and less concern for their own personal agendas, demonstrating II and IC.<sup>220</sup> Logical decision makers who consider careful, thoughtful choices are considered "prudent." They typically avoid taking unnecessary risks and are considered conscientious as they demonstrate positive personality traits (agreeableness, extroversion, and emotional stability). Leaders who utilize this character strength exemplify IM by guiding and leading their followers to higher levels of performance.<sup>221</sup> Self-regulation and control describe the foundation of temperance as it relates to one's discipline and regulate one's appetites and emotions. Those leaders with high self-control typically inspire better relationships and build trust, fairness, and consistency with followers. Leaders who self-regulate their transformational behaviors are attuned to their follower's verbal and nonverbal feedback. When leaders use self-regulation, they are serving as role models, inspiring their followers (IM), exhibiting high moral conduct (II), and using logic (IS) to reach long-term goals.<sup>222</sup> Temperance character strengths protect us from excess. When we consider optimal self-regulation of emotions, we are not suggesting suspending our feelings, good or bad, but taking charge or control of them.<sup>223</sup>

### **Transcendence**

Peterson and Seligman's final virtue, transcendence, sometimes called "strengths of the spirit," can be described as providing meaning to one's life by making connections to the larger universe or looking beyond oneself for relations with others in this world. There are five related character strengths associated with this virtue: appreciation of beauty or excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, and spirituality. Transcendent individuals are often filled with awe, wonder, and elevation of spirit upon recognition of certain extraordinary people or things. These individuals learn to "appreciate beauty, excellence," and the skilled per-



formance of others. Leaders utilizing this character strength support high goals for their followers, often rewarding their followers for achieving increased levels of performance. When leaders appreciate the best in their followers and appreciate the excellence around them, they clarify what is valued by the organization and discover how to sustain excellence through II.<sup>224</sup> Additionally, transcendent individuals are thankful for the good in their lives and take the time to thank those that have had positive influences in their lives, exercising “gratitude.” Gratitude allows leaders the opportunity to recognize that their leadership outcomes are accomplished through their followers, fostering positive leader-follower relationships. Leaders that appreciate, value, and recognize the accomplishments and contributions of their followers are demonstrating this strength through the behavior of IC.<sup>225</sup> Looking to the future with a positive vision or optimistic outlook describes “hope.” Typically, hopeful individuals are high achievers in academics, athletics, politics, and other industries. Followers are attracted to leaders that are positive and optimistic; hope is a catalyst for this approach. Through IM, leaders may shape expectations and help guide their members to success.<sup>226</sup> Transcendent people often use “humor” to not only encourage creativity but also relieve stressful situations. Studies have shown that self-deprecating and positive forms of humor may promote creativity, reduce stress, improve physical health, and promote good moods. When leaders use appropriate forms of humor, they promote morale at work while promoting positive physiological effects on themselves and their followers through the behavior of IS.<sup>227</sup> Possessing faith—having beliefs about a higher purpose and meaning of life—or where one fits in the larger scheme describes “spirituality.” Research has shown that spirituality has positive influences on interpersonal relationships and social values, while promoting psychological and physical health. Spirituality enables leaders to understand their purpose in life and the importance of their work. Further, spirituality helps leaders define a moral code that may guide their behavior through II, IM, and through the use of IC to continually shape and develop their followers.<sup>228</sup> Although transcendence describes character strengths that may seem varied, the common thread that runs through this virtue is the idea that enables individuals to find connections with the larger universe, finding meaning for their lives.<sup>229</sup>

Developing leaders often focus on the leadership styles and behaviors as they relate to accomplishing the mission or meeting specific timelines or goals. In our dynamic and complex military environment, we

often fail to consider the human aspects of leadership as well as followership. Utilizing the profound tenets of Peterson and Seligman's breakthrough research and the transformational applications of Sosik's work, we can make more meaningful human connections with our superiors, peer groups, and followers, resulting in powerful leadership practices.

## **Authentic Transformational Leadership**

Bill George suggested that authentic leaders not only inspire those around them but also empower them. According to George, "the authentic leader brings people together around a shared purpose and empowers them to step up and lead authentically in order to create value for all stakeholders."<sup>230</sup> Further, he describes authentic leaders as being true to themselves with the ability to engender trust and develop genuine connections with others. Additionally, they are more concerned with serving others than they are about their own individual success. George suggests five dimensions for an authentic leader: (1) pursuing a purpose with passion (their passions show the way to their leadership), (2) practicing solid values (shaped by their personal beliefs and developed through study, introspection, and experience), (3) leading with heart (having passion for their work, compassion and empathy for people they serve, and the courage to make difficult decisions), (4) establishing enduring relationships (building trust and commitment with followers), and (5) demonstrating self-discipline (setting high standards for themselves and expecting the same from others).<sup>231</sup> According to Bass, "authentic transformational leaders align their interests with those of others and may sacrifice their own interests for the common good. Their communication can be trusted." Further, this type of leader models high moral standards for followers to emulate and is genuinely concerned for his or her followers' development and overall success.<sup>232</sup> Authenticity and trust have become essential themes in the theory and research of leadership. Leaders connected with deceit, insincerity, and duplicity would make it difficult for followers to trust. A leader seen as one who expresses genuine feelings and thoughts would be considered trustworthy.<sup>233</sup> How important are moral values for transformational leaders? Avolio had concerns that we may be developing transformational leaders who may be missing this key ingredient.

After years of collaboration and research on the necessary qualities of an authentic leader, four critical requirements were consistently found as necessary components for an authentic leader:

- Self-awareness
- Relational transparency
- Balanced processing
- Moral perspective

Self-awareness describes a deep understanding of a leader's self-concept and helps him or her reflect on the following: What are my abilities to derive meaning from my leadership philosophy, and what is my impact on my followers? Relational transparency focuses on the leader-follower dyad, including the leader's thoughts, beliefs, and emotions while considering the level of openness and transparency. Leaders with more open behaviors and interactions with their followers would encourage increased openness leading to a more authentic leader-follower approach. Balanced processing would consider open, outside views that may challenge the leader's perspectives and convictions before committing to final decisions. Moral perspective, the fourth component, ensures leaders are integrating their internal values and beliefs to guide their moral views.<sup>234</sup> According to Sosik, "When what you say is what you do, and you are true to yourself and others, then you are an authentic leader."<sup>235</sup> Further, he states that authentic transformational leaders are virtuous and should possess a collection of "raw material" to include virtues and character strengths, which are essentially the foundation for authentic transformational leadership. Additionally, he asserts that transformational behaviors (II, IM, IS, and IC) may be leveraged daily by leaders to make meaningful connections to relevant character strengths for more effective leader-follower relationships; the mind map in figure 9 illustrates these links.<sup>236</sup>

## Conclusion

What does it mean to be a leader in the US Air Force? It means having a theoretical background to ground current leadership approaches to important leadership models of the past; inculcating a full range of leadership approach within a complex military environment; comprehending vital leadership behaviors for team effectiveness, and incorpo-

rating personal ethics, virtues, and related character strengths within your leadership approach. The concepts underpinning full-range leadership are not particularly complicated. One can learn and promote these behaviors in a relatively short period of time. The true challenge for a leader is to sustain these concepts to strengthen leadership behaviors—both in oneself and within followers—and to discern the conditions whereby these behaviors would be most effective. This constitutes the leadership-development journey that should define your career! Utilizing a full range of leadership approach, you can ameliorate your leadership acumen immediately! As this theoretical construct approaches its fourth decade of existence, multiple empirical studies have shown that leveraging the components of transformational leadership results in the most effective style of leadership. Further, transactional leadership is a necessary style inherent to all military settings and should not be regarded in a negative light. Moreover, the *laissez-faire* or nonleadership approach is not conducive to effective leadership and should be avoided. Finally, the human side of leadership is barely discussed in most leadership programs. Have we forgotten who we are leading? Human leaders, just as their followers, are fallible; we must embrace these shortcomings as opportunities for growth and self-awareness. An authentic transformational leadership approach will not only align your leadership behaviors with your ethics, values, and character strengths but also ensure they are virtuous.

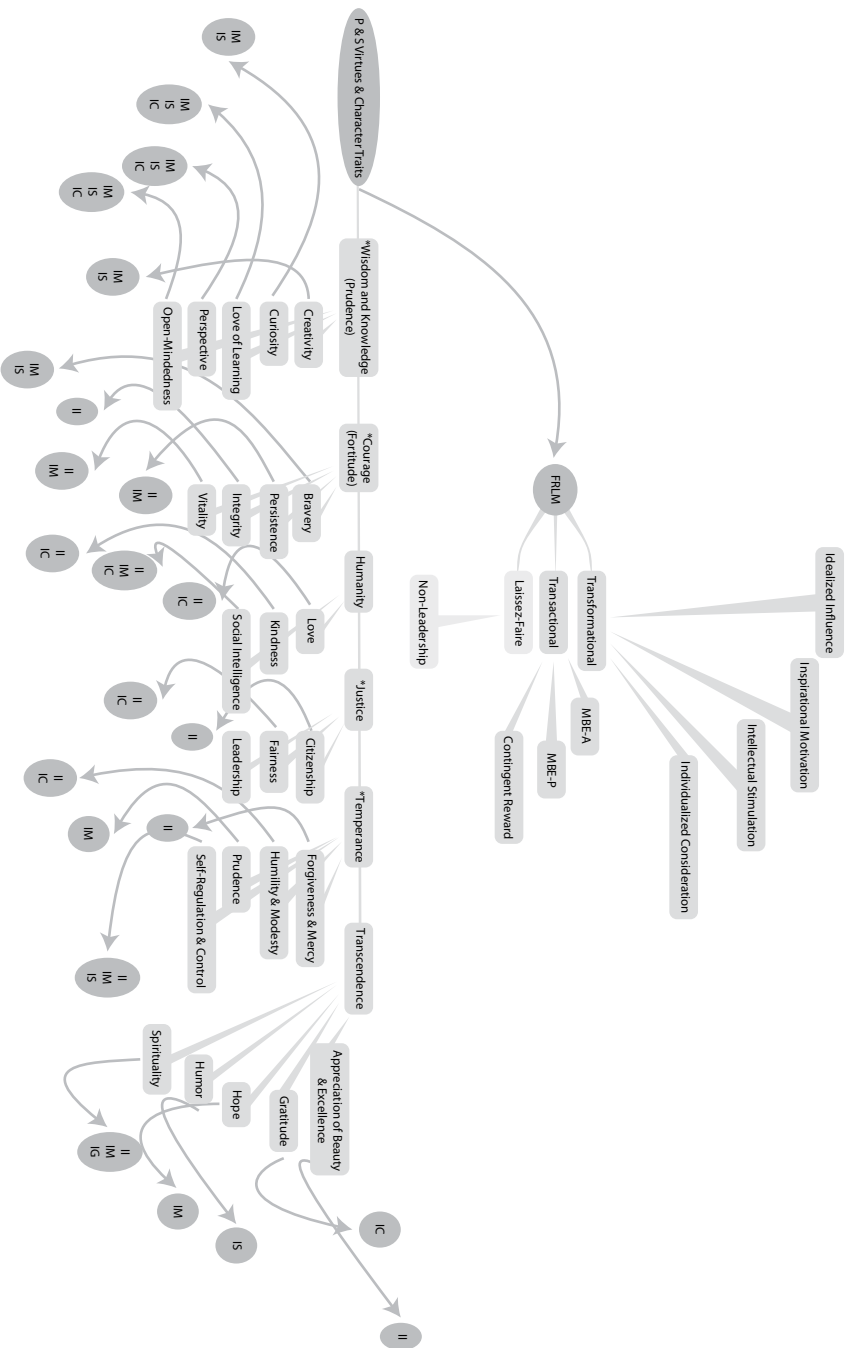


Figure 9. FRLM-character strength mind map. (Created by Fil J. Arenas , (Adapted from John J. Sosik, *Leading with Character*, 243–46.)

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## **Abbreviations**

CR	contingent reward
FRLM	Full Range Leadership Model
IC	individual consideration
II	idealized influence
IM	inspirational motivation
IS	intellectual stimulation
LBDQ	Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire
LF	laissez faire
LPC	Least Preferred Coworker Scale
MBE	management by exception
MBE-A	management by exception active
MBE-P	management by exception passive



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**Dr. Fil J. Arenas** is an associate professor and course director of Leadership Studies at the Air University's Air Command and Staff College. He received his doctorate degree from The George Washington University in higher education administration and is also an adjunct professor with the Air War College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. His current areas of research focus on leadership development, emotional intelligence, integrated learning environments, and virtual immersive learning models. He was an aerospace ground equipment technician and optometry technician in the AF and retired as a medical service corps officer in the Navy. Dr. Arenas retired from the military after 28 years of faithful service (14 USAF & 14 USN) in 2005.



**Dr. Daniel A. Connelly** is an assistant professor in the Department of International Security, at the Air Command and Staff College. He is a retired US Air Force officer whose background includes operational tours at headquarters and flying unit echelons and deployments to Southwest and Far East Asia. He teaches courses in international security, leadership studies, air power theory, the Just War tradition, and Russian studies. He holds a PhD in educational psychology from Auburn University, and master's degrees in strategic intelligence and Russian culture. Previously, Dan served as Dean of Academic Affairs at Squadron Officer College.



**Maj Michael D. Williams** is currently the Deputy Chief, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Division (ISRD) at the 611th Air Operations Center. As deputy chief, Maj Williams leads the 24/7 monitoring of US Northern Command (NORTHCOM), Pacific Command (PACOM), and European Command (EUCOM) to ensure 611th AOC threat awareness. His unit is directly responsible for intelligence analysis and warning for the Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) Region (ANR). Maj Williams earned his commission from Texas State University in 2003 with a degree in political science.



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