

A photograph of three people walking away from the camera on a dirt path in a forest. The person on the left is wearing a red jacket and green pants, with their right arm raised. The person in the middle is wearing a patterned shawl and a white skirt. The person on the right is wearing a grey and black long-sleeved shirt and black shorts, carrying a bag. The forest floor is covered in dry pine needles, and the trees are tall and thin.

# LEADERSHIP in LEISURE SERVICES

*Making a Difference*  
*Fourth Edition*

**Debra J. Jordan**  
**Ronald Ramsing**

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# **LEADERSHIP** **in** **LEISURE** **SERVICES**

Making a Difference

*Fourth Edition*

**Debra J. Jordan**

East Carolina University

**Ronald Ramsing**

Western Kentucky University

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*For Teo and Pax – who express the joy of living in the moment every day.*

–Deb Jordan–

*For Lisa and “Bean” – leaders whose passion makes a difference in the lives of others every day.*

–Ron Ramsing–



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# Preface

We all recognize exemplary leaders when we see them. They tend to be kind yet assertive, organized yet flexible, skilled and highly ethical, and distinctly self-aware. The process of developing into such a leader takes aspiration, knowledge, skills, and the ability to understand people. This text is designed to provide a basic understanding of leadership, what it is, and how to use it in parks and recreation settings.

There are many facets of the leadership construct and we address many of them in this text. The chapters are written in a way to facilitate knowledge acquisition about leadership and leaders and to encourage discussion and dialogue. We also hope that the information will be intriguing enough to encourage ongoing learning and engagement.

The text begins with information that we consider to be the foundation on which other information is built. Thus, early chapters set the stage to understand the concept of leadership as well as the complexities of people. And, because leadership is about human relationships, the early chapters focus on development across the lifespan and diversity among, between, and within people. Knowing about ourselves and others as we grow and evolve is an important underpinning for becoming an exemplary leader.

Parks, recreation, tourism, and related professions are hands-on types of occupations; thus, several chapters in the text focus on skill-based material. Topics such as communication, group dynamics, behavior management, conflict resolution, and risk management provide introductory knowledge for expertise that leaders use on a regular basis. Readers are encouraged to continue to explore these con-

structs and what they mean to them as individual leaders-in-development.

Finally, later chapters address topics that affect the profession on many levels. Values, ethics, and a range of professional issues speak to who we are as individuals as well as professionals. People rely on parks and recreation practitioners to have integrity and be highly principled—this is how they come to trust us and what we do in enhancing quality of life. And, as the business of parks, recreation, and tourism is a microcosm of society, we face the same issues as citizens across the globe—issues such as the need for increased health and wellness, bullying and violence, and child and elder abuse.

Finally, parks and recreation leaders define the profession; thus, gaining an understanding of credentialing, mentorship, and possibilities for roles in professional associations is important. Accordingly, we offer introductory information that can serve as a “jump start” to a leader-in-development.

Leadership is best developed and refined through experience. Thus, during the studying process associated with this text, readers are encouraged to seek out as many opportunities for leadership practice as possible. Practice public communication skills, conflict resolution skills, and expand self-awareness. Learn about and stay current on social issues and how they affect the profession. And, as much as possible, practice, reflect on personal experiences, seek out mentors, and practice some more. Leadership is a never-ending journey.

—DJJ, 2017





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Leadership is not something any one of us can develop in a vacuum and we owe a debt of gratitude to the many teachers in our lives for what they have shared intentionally and through living their lives. Because it is impossible to fully recognize the contributions of each person who has influenced our leadership development over the course of time, we ask forgiveness from those individuals we have not named. Please know that you have had an impact and are greatly appreciated.

Deb wishes to specifically acknowledge several individuals who have contributed to the writing and editing process in various ways: Geof Godbey (who has also served as an inspiration for my leadership development), Amy Dagit, Misti Gilles, and Peter Bannon (another individual who models the type of leadership to which I aspire). On a personal level, colleagues to whom I owe a good deal of appreciation include Lowell Caneday, Michal Anne Lord, Don

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# About the Authors

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## Exploring and Discovering Meanings



Photo courtesy of Savanna Elkins.

We know it when we see it, but it is hard to define. That is because leadership is a complex process. Leaders and followers are people who fill roles within the leadership process; to understand the people and process, we must keep in mind that culture influences the ways leadership is enacted. Different people see and expect leadership to look, sound, and feel a certain way. The same holds true for how we view leaders and followers. Depending on a person's cultural background, expectations for who fills which roles when, for what, and how may be distinctly different.

Recreation services professionals participate in leadership with diverse people: women and men, older adults and children, those with disabilities and those without, people with low incomes and people with high incomes, people who are members of diverse racioethnic backgrounds—people with rich and complex demographic traits. They do this when they provide recreation experiences and services in the out-of-doors, hospitals, resorts, recreation centers, elder-care facilities, tourist destinations, schools, mil-

itary bases, and other settings. As one might imagine, being a leader of recreation and parks is often a demanding yet highly enjoyable task. It is all about connecting with people.

Those who work in the field of parks, recreation, and tourism services directly affect the health, well-being, and quality of life of the people they serve in many ways. People engage in formal and informal recreation activities and enjoy open spaces; they might want to learn new skills, relax and rejuvenate, and/or be in fellowship with friends and family. For most people, recreation experiences are important elements of their lives. As such, at some time or another everyone engages in self-initiated activities as well as those provided by recreation experience practitioners.

In the delivery of recreation experiences, professionals interact with participants in ways that may enhance or detract from their experience of leisure. A quality recreation experience results in positive feelings and a variety of physical, social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual benefits. On the other hand, a poor recreation experience may leave a participant with discouraging feelings that negatively affect her or his quality of life and engender a desire to avoid similar events and encounters.

**“Being a leader of recreation and parks is often a demanding yet highly enjoyable task. It is all about connecting with people.”**

The difference between quality and poor recreation experiences can be traced back to the people involved. In particular, the leadership provided at an event has a tremendous influence on its success or failure; clearly parks, recreation, and tourism services professionals strive for the former. Because leadership is an inherent factor in structured recreation experiences, all professionals should be well skilled in its practice. Examples of leadership in recreation services are everywhere: a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) facilitating a leisure education session, a lifeguard providing informal feedback about a swimmer's stroke, an executive director making a presentation to a board, and an event coordinator giving out assignments to volunteers. In each of these settings, someone engages in particular behaviors and exudes certain qualities that result in others identifying her or him as a leader.

### What's Coming

In this chapter, we will explore many basic ideas and practices related to the construct of leadership. As you will quickly learn, leadership comprises many concepts, theories, knowledge, and practical skills. We will start by looking at leadership competencies that researchers have found to be necessary for success in the parks and recreation business. Because of the breadth of the parks, recreation, and tourism services profession, we will identify examples of settings where recreation experience leaders work. Finally, because a person cannot be a leader without followers, we will present ideas about leaders, followers, and the leadership relationship to help you understand this complex phenomenon.

### Professional Leadership Competencies

Leadership positions might be different within an agency or organization, but the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful at all levels are similar; someone working in a frontline position needs the same skills as someone at the very top of the organizational chart. Typically, frontline staff have direct contact with participants, guests, customers, clients, and/or patients in providing recreation experiences. Those in mid-management or supervisory leadership positions typically have responsibility for staff, programs, facilities, and other aspects of entire units within an agency or organization. And those at the top have re-

sponsibility for the operation of an entire recreation business. At this level, organizational leaders work with supervisory staff, board members, city or county officials, and CEOs of other related agencies. In all cases, achieving proficiency in a wide range of skills is necessary to be a successful leader. Knowing and having the ability to work with people, understanding processes, and anticipating outcomes are some of the needed leadership skills no matter a person's position on the organizational chart.



All leaders need to develop professional competencies. Photo courtesy of Deb Jordan.

Other common competencies for recreation experience professionals relate to being able to understand people, effective communication, teamwork, conflict resolution and mediation, risk management; ethics, knowledge, and understanding the profession; and the ability to respond to a range of ever changing professional issues. In addition to these knowledge and skill areas, researchers have identified specific leader competencies for those working in the parks, recreation, and tourism services professions: planning and evaluation, professionalism, knowledge of the field and constituent groups, and public relations (Barcelona, Hurd, & Bruggeman, 2011). Suh, West, and Shin (2012) added to the list of required leadership competencies identifying problem solving, emo-

tional intelligence, tolerance for change, knowledge of cultural differences, and personal integrity as necessary competencies.

Creating one more list of mandatory skills for successful leadership in parks, recreation, and tourism services professions, Fulthorp and D'Eloia (2015) noted the top 10 competencies needed for successful leadership:

1. ability to make ethical decisions,
2. ability to act professionally,
3. ability to work well with people,
4. ability to communicate clearly with customers,
5. ability to deal with the public,
6. ability to listen to staff and customers,
7. enthusiasm and a positive attitude,
8. ability to communicate clearly with staff,
9. demonstrate openness to serving all members of the community, and
10. ability to work in team environments.

In these lists of leader competencies, we draw your attention to the need for a leader to *know* about something as well as have the *ability* to perform that skill. Knowledge without demonstrated abilities is insufficient for leadership success. Activities such as reading, observing, listening, and studying facilitate a person's learning about a concept; practice is necessary to attain proficiency in implementing that knowledge. Thus, being able to demonstrate knowledge of professional competencies as well as the ability to engage in related tasks is an important trait for a professional.

One avenue open to parks, recreation, and tourism services professionals to do so is through obtaining and maintaining professional certifications. These credentials do not guarantee a particular level of knowledge, skills, or abilities (KSAs), but they do serve as an external validation of a particular level of proficiency. Some of the more common professional certifications include Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS), Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE), Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), Certified Special Events Professional (CSEP), Accredited Hospitality Professional (AHP), and Certified Tour Guide (CTG). Leaders in specific fields within the parks, recreation, and tourism services professions also have opportunities to earn skill-based certifications such as Wilderness First Responder (WFR), Water Safety Instructor (WSI), aquatic therapy instructor, health and fitness

specialist, Special Olympics Certified Coach, Certified Military Fitness Specialist, and others.

## Professional Leadership Settings

Everyone who works in the recreation services profession, which includes related disciplines such as tourism, therapeutic recreation, parks management, sports management, athletics, and special event management, needs to be knowledgeable and experienced with leadership to be effective. Across the breadth of the recreation experience profession, leaders have a myriad of opportunities in which to practice leadership. Several types of settings in which recreation experience professionals serve as leaders are described below.

### Community (Municipal, County, State, Federal Government)

Many parks and recreation professionals work in some type of community-based parks and recreation setting. Most towns and cities have parks and recreation departments in which recreation professionals work. In regions where local populations are small, a county parks and recreation department might serve the area. At the state level, recreation experience leaders might work in state parks, at statewide recreation resource centers, in a zoo, or for a statewide community-based sports league. The federal level of community-based recreation offers leadership positions at national parks, seashores, monuments, and memorials as well as on military installations, in museums, and in federal prisons.

In all levels of community-based parks, recreation, and tourism services settings, professionals may serve as leaders and instructors in areas such as the arts, music, fitness, playground leadership, cheerleading, water-based activities, inclusive recreation services, youth and adult sports, special events, nature activities, library and museum services, and gardening programs. Common leader positions in park settings include environmental educator, interpreter, maintenance staff, docent, and park ranger. If serving as a civilian employee on a military installation, a recreation experience professional might work with families, reservists, and/or active duty personnel. An often overlooked yet important opportunity for recreation experience leaders is providing and leading recreation services for youth in detention centers and adults in prison.



## Nonprofit Agencies

A common arena through which parks, recreation, and tourism services professionals provide leadership is nonprofit agencies and organizations. These include agencies that provide programs and services for a diverse clientele as well as those that specialize in serving specific elements of the population. Some of the well-known nonprofit agencies that provide recreation services and experiences include the YMCA and YWCA, Scouting (girls and boys), Jewish Community Centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, Camp Fire for Boys and Girls, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and community aging and senior centers. Some nonprofit agencies specialize in providing recreation services for people with disabilities such as Paralyzed Veterans of America, The Arc (for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities), Easter Seals, and Special Olympics. The opportunities for recreation experience leadership provided in nonprofit settings are similar to those offered in community-based recreation programs.

## Universities and Colleges

Two- and 4-year colleges and universities offer multiple opportunities for leadership development in the recreation experience professions. Student activities, the Panhellenic system (sororities and fraternities), alumni activities and events, campus recreation, residential life, first year experiences, and volunteer services are common on-campus opportunities to practice recreation leadership. Activities that parks, recreation, and tourism services professionals might facilitate include off-campus trips, movie programs, leadership development programs, conference and event planning, officiating recreational sports, instructing personal fitness programs, and facilitating challenge course experiences.

## For-Profit Recreation and Tourism Businesses

For-profit recreation (commercial recreation) agencies and organizations include leadership opportunities in employee morale and recreation services, outdoor adventure outfitters, sports clubs, resorts, theme parks, fitness centers, concert promotion, and hospitality settings such as corporate hotel guest services and resorts. Tourism-based leadership opportunities include providing a wide range of recreation experiences on cruise ships, guiding sustainable tourism trips, hosting festivals and special events, leading

volunteer tourism programs, and providing a variety of guest services. These types of leadership opportunities are found in the U.S. and abroad.

## Clinical/Therapeutic Settings

Clinical settings are sites where people who have short- or long-term disabilities are located as they strive to restore their health, increase functional abilities, and improve their quality of living in all life domains (e.g., physical, psychological, intellectual, emotional, spiritual). Common clinical settings in which qualified (certified, licensed) leaders use recreation experiences as a medium for healing include hospitals, substance abuse centers, mental health facilities, and long-term care facilities, among others. Working in a clinical or therapeutic setting typically requires the leader to hold the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) credential; a license to practice is also required in several states. CTRSs design specific activities and programs to facilitate improved functional abilities of clients through recreation experiences; the aim is to enhance physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and leisure abilities of participants. Participants who achieve a level of functionality that enables them to transition from the clinical setting into a community setting often participate in inclusive or adapted recreation experiences when in their home community.



Leaders who work in clinical settings might work with therapy dogs. Photo courtesy of David Loy.

Community-based recreation experience professionals (often called inclusion specialists) may provide leadership to people with disabilities or physical and psychological challenges in settings such as community centers, schools, senior centers, adult day care programs, fine arts programs, and public

parks and recreation departments. In addition to community-based settings, many commercial, non-profit, university, and commercial recreation experience providers offer specialized and inclusion programs to those with disabling conditions. Program focus is varied and includes sports, outdoor recreation, travel and tourism, drama and the arts, personal fitness, and others. Although not required in every state or community, inclusion specialists who hold national certification as a CTRS are highly desired as employees in these types of settings.

## Professional Leadership Skills

Clearly, those in the recreation experience business have many opportunities to lead others in pursuit of enhanced quality of life. To do so, it is most important for recreation experience professionals to continue to develop leadership skills. Leadership scholars have identified three categories of leadership skills—all of which are necessary for successful leadership: conceptual, interpersonal, and technical.

*Conceptual skills* include the ability to see the big picture, analyze, anticipate, and use sound judgment. When activating conceptual skills, a leader scans, observes, makes note of subtleties, compares what is understood with prior knowledge and experience, and uses her or his judgment to act proactively and reactively. Skilled leaders have long-range vision and continually look for what is best to ensure success for others and the organization. Critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and being able to handle ambiguity are also considered conceptual skills. Being able to articulate a philosophy of recreation and how it guides the use of leadership styles, actively contributing to meet follower and agency goals, and striving to better society are other competencies that fit within this skill group. In addition, conceptual skills comprise following the organizational mission through actions and decisions, adhering to internal values, and understanding their role in promoting the parks, recreation, and tourism services profession. Without conceptual skills, it would be difficult to integrate interpersonal and technical skills into leadership processes and relationships.

*Interpersonal skills* are those skills and leadership techniques that involve relationships with people. Understanding group dynamics, facilitating cooperation and trust building among participants, and being a good communicator all fit within the interpersonal domain of leadership. Understanding and being able

to resolve conflicts and helping people to feel welcomed, valued, and respected also fit within the interpersonal component. Success in parks, recreation, and tourism services requires strong interpersonal skills. Recreation experience leaders relate to others in roles as leader to participant, peer to colleague, employee to supervisor, and leader to the broader organization and the profession. Thus, these skills must become well honed for successful leadership in parks, recreation, and tourism services. In addition to conceptual and interpersonal competencies, being able to “do the work” is another important skill set for successful leadership.

*Technical skills* relate specifically to accomplishing tasks; they enable a person to do a particular assignment or task. Among other duties in the recreation experience professions, leaders plan, implement, and evaluate programs and services. Leaders also develop logistics, engage in risk management activities, and complete office tasks. Other technical skills used by parks and recreation practitioners in direct leadership positions include leading songs, games, and activities in a variety of settings. Technical skills are readily taught to most leaders-to-be. It should be noted that a person who is successful at technical tasks may be an excellent technician, yet a poor leader. Successful leaders are able to integrate strong interpersonal and conceptual skills into their technical skill domain.

**Leadership is an active relational process that leaders and followers create together.**

In addition to being able to articulate these general skill sets, successful leaders demonstrate the knowledge and understanding of a situation as well as an ability to do, analyze, evaluate, and create needed actions and responses to that situation. Effective leadership clearly requires much more than simply being able to talk about successful leadership—this is one reason that thriving leaders participate in lifelong learning and ongoing personal development.

## Making Sense of Leadership

Making sense of any new concept generally begins with a definition. The challenge with defining

leadership is that there is no one universally accepted definition. Early on, leadership was defined as “getting people to do something.” Others believed a leader to be a person who filled a leadership role or who looked and acted like a leader. Leadership also has been defined as a process whereby a leader motivates and influences other people; others have described the leadership process as a system of authority in which the leader has a responsibility and the power to move a group of people toward a particular goal. Some have used the terms *leadership* and *power* interchangeably, and others have done the same with *leadership* and *management*.

At this time, most researchers have come to agree that *leadership is an active relational process that leaders and followers create together* (Hudea, 2014; Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). Leaders and followers are entwined—one does not exist without the other. Thus, after a brief introduction to the concept of followership, the two constructs will be discussed conjointly throughout the text.

## Making Sense of Followership

As one might suspect, defining followership is no easier a task than explaining leadership. Some have tried to distinguish the two by simply saying that leaders engage in leader behaviors and followers engage in follower behaviors—a somewhat unsatisfactory explanation because there is no agreement about the nature of these behaviors. Others have characterized followership as being the opposite of leadership, a direct or indirect influential activity, or as a role or group noun for those influenced by a leader (Oc & Bashshur, 2013; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Recall that the definition of leadership highlights a *relational* process. This means that leaders and followers are active partners who work together through a mutually satisfying process to reach an agreed upon goal. For many, the distinguishing factor between leaders and followers is that leaders enact leadership thoughts, words, and deeds—they take on an influencing role. Likewise, followers enact followership thoughts, words, and deeds—they allow themselves to be influenced by another.

Followership and leadership have much in common—they are dynamic, require give-and-take, and demand commitment from those involved. And because the relationship is between people, the leadership–followership process can be enhanced by

effective behaviors and hindered by unproductive behaviors. People who are effective in the leader role have the vision to set broad goals and strategies, interpersonal skills to achieve consensus, verbal capacity to communicate enthusiasm to large and diverse groups of individuals, organizational talent to coordinate disparate efforts, and the desire to lead. As partners in the relationship, ideal followers demonstrate initiative and work cooperatively with the leader and other followers; through their efforts, they strive to achieve a shared goal.

Scholars who study followership have reported that effective and desirable followers are independent—they do not follow a leader blindly, rather they think for themselves and use their judgment and skills to enhance progress. In addition, followers manage themselves well by actively participating and contributing their strengths as appropriate. Successful followers commit to the leader, organization, and overall purpose of the group effort. Furthermore, effective followers know and build upon their own competencies and apply their talents for the good of the group or organization. Effective followers make conscious contributions to the central purpose and good of the organization (Blom & Alvesson, 2014; Oc & Bashshur, 2013). Clearly, if a group consists of one or more effective leaders and one or more effective followers, together they can have a tremendous effect and really make a difference.

**Followership and leadership have much in common—they are dynamic, require give-and-take, and demand commitment from those involved.**

Over the years, many authors have characterized effective and ineffective followers into distinct types, which differentiated between preferred (activist) and undesirable (sheep) follower. Some of these typologies have been instructive, but we prefer the succinct listing of positive follower behaviors presented by Chaleff (1995), who characterized the most capable follower as a *courageous follower*. Courageous followers...



Leaders and followers must work together to successfully achieve goals. Photo courtesy of Eddie Hill.

1. *Assume responsibility*—for themselves, the task at hand, and the organization. Courageous followers discover and create opportunities to fulfill their personal potential, initiate action, ask how they can best contribute, and hold themselves accountable for their role in the group efforts.
2. *Serve*—Courageous followers are not afraid of hard work and freely assume hands-on tasks in which they are skilled to best serve the group and the end goal. They have and maintain an awareness of the people or person they are serving; they are humble and emanate a helpful attitude.
3. *Challenge*—Courageous followers speak up (when and as suitable) when something goes against their values and principles. They are willing to stand up, stand out, risk rejection, and initiate conflict when appropriate—they do so with a great deal of professionalism. Courageous followers value and understand the need for group harmony and participate in such, but not at the expense of the common purpose, dignity, and integrity.
4. *Participate in transformation*—Courageous followers recognize the need for change, growth, and progress. They champion the need for transformation and are active participants in the process. They look for opportunities to enhance and positively affect others, tasks, and goals; they make contributions according to their strengths.
5. *Leave*—Courageous followers know when it is time to step back and step out. When leaders are

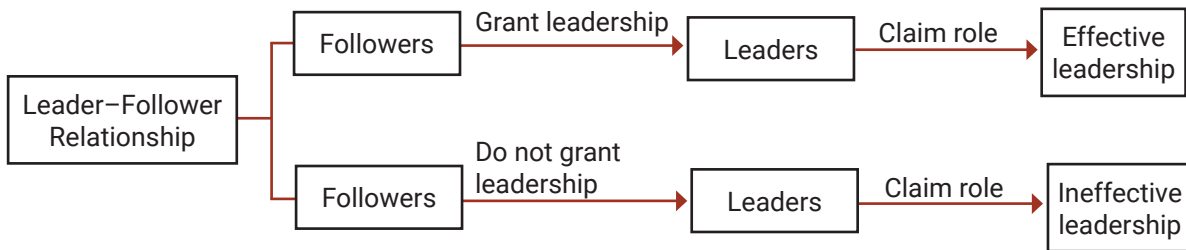
ineffective, followers are destructive, ethics are questionable, or group activities interfere with achieving the common purpose, courageous followers are prepared to withdraw their support and leave the group despite personal risk (e.g., to reputation, opportunities for advancement).

Capable leaders and followers share many traits, skills, and competencies, and each accepts and fills different roles. Leaders typically possess stronger conceptual, relationship-building, and initiative skills than do followers, and these are the ingredients that help groups to function well. Because followers must recognize and accept an individual in a leadership role—grant legitimacy to the individual in that position—it may prove helpful to consider common ways through which groups grant the leader role to a particular individual.

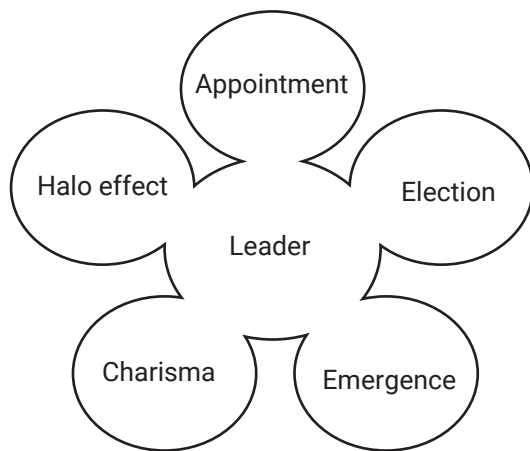
Groups recognize and grant leadership to individuals in several ways.

### How Leaders Are Recognized

The roles of leader and follower are enacted within groups—to be a leader requires a person to have followers. The process or mechanism of deciding who will fill what role is different for every group, and sometimes it changes each time the group meets. Individuals become recognized and reinforced as leaders by the group in several ways. A leader might be appointed or elected, she or he might emerge from the group, the person's charisma might cause others to follow, or leadership might be attributed to the halo effect. Followers are deeply involved in the process of recognizing leaders within a group—in all cases, followers must in some respect *grant* (accept or allow another to fill the leader role) leadership to one or more individuals. Without follower approval, leadership efforts will be ineffective. In addition to followers granting leadership to an individual, that individual must *claim* that role—agree to be the leader. These granting and claiming behaviors tend to be subconscious rather than intentional; nonetheless, the actions are necessary for a leader–follower relationship to exist (see Figure 1.1). Figure 1.2 depicts ways people identify a leader.



**Figure 1.1.** Leader–follower relationship.



**Figure 1.2.** Leaders are identified in five ways.

### Appointment

Leaders may be appointed to a titled position that identifies them as such. This may occur from the administrative level within an agency or from within a group. The agency director, for instance, may hire (appoint) a person to be a leader in the position of head lifeguard. In another case, the group might appoint a leader (e.g., chairperson) to facilitate completion of a task. Once appointed, that individual will need to fulfill the expected roles and responsibilities of a leader; she or he will also need to use leadership skills and techniques to the best of her or his ability to retain the leadership position. If the leader is ineffective, the appointer may withdraw the appointment and identify someone else to fill the leader role.

### Election

Many groups elect individuals to fill leadership positions—you might think of election as a formal process of appointment, even if it is done in an informal setting. A leader who is appointed is one to whom the group essentially says, “You be the leader.” In an election, an identifiable process is used to select a per-

son to be the leader. In many recreational sport programs, for instance, a team will elect a team captain. Team captains are expected to guide team members, set the tone for the team, and serve as a motivating energy. These are common expectations of all leaders. People may be elected to fill a leader role for a variety of reasons, which can be positive (the individual is the most experienced), neutral (the individual is the most popular), or negative (the individual is the most intimidating).

### Emergence

Groups sometimes develop organically when more than one person shares a goal, for instance, when several people decide they wish to take a trip together. In this type of situation, the group typically does not formally identify a leader. During the course of coming together to make the trip happen, however, an individual emerges as the leader; that person “rises to the top” in terms of leadership. Group members may recognize the individual as the leader because she or he is the most influential, has the most knowledge or skills, can clearly communicate what needs to occur, or for other reasons. A leader who emerges from a group often has the respect of the group members because she or he was first a group member and then became the leader.

### Charisma

Charisma is defined as personal magnetism or charm and is a component of most depictions of an ideal leader. Leaders with charisma easily persuade group members to follow them and have a great deal of influence. Charismatic leaders arouse enthusiasm and loyalty from within the group; they exude an energy that draws others to them. Followers often work hard to be noticed by a charismatic leader and tend to respect such a person out of a sense of loyalty and sometimes, awe. As with elected leaders, people with charisma may be positive role models and leaders

(e.g., Teddy Roosevelt) or individuals who use their personal allure to the detriment of others (e.g., Adolf Hitler). Care must be taken in the accolades given a leader selected based solely on personal charisma.

### The Halo Effect

It is a natural sense-making process that people carry over what they think about a person (through personal experience or others' shared opinions) into multiple situations. For instance, if an individual worked with a particular person on a project and that person did poor quality work and inconsistently attended meetings, the individual might apply the halo effect and assume that this person would continue to do poor quality work and be unreliable in all future group work. The individual's attitudes and behaviors toward that person will reflect that perception until she or he receives consistent information that negates her or his perception. As it relates to leadership, the halo effect is demonstrated when leadership is granted to a person who has been a leader in other situations; others expect and perhaps encourage that person to be the leader in a variety of settings.

No matter how leaders are identified—by position, election, or personal attributes—to be effective, those in leadership roles must continually demonstrate the aptitude and demeanor to be successful. As recreation leaders develop their leadership skills, they become increasingly proficient in working with followers to a desired end. As leaders' competence grows, so too does others' confidence in their abilities, enabling them to enact leadership in positive ways. Having a basic understanding of leadership as a relationship between leaders and followers and how leaders are recognized in groups is helpful to create a generalized picture of the leadership construct. Knowing a bit about how contemporary views of leadership have evolved further enhances a person's understanding of leadership and followership.

### Trying to Capture the Essence of Leadership

When trying to make sense of complex phenomena, people create models or theories and engage in research to verify their ideas. Toward that end, a great number of people have developed theories about what leadership is and how it works. By extension, of course, they have also articulated models about followership. In their observations of how people inter-

act, early investigators noticed that particular individuals seemed to have influence over others. Group members listened to their ideas, deferred to their suggestions, acted as requested and/or expected, and so on. These observations and perceptions led to the development of early theories that tried to explain the nature of leadership.

Initial thoughts suggested that “great men” were born into leadership roles and authority. This early European view suggested that having the right heritage (powerful, high status male relatives such as royalty) set the stage for a (white) man to become a leader as he matured. At that time in history, of course, people of color were deemed to be less than human and girls and women were considered to be property; thus, people who represented these and other demographics were not perceived as leaders regardless of their lineage.

Next, early thinkers explained leadership by suggesting that leaders displayed particular physical and personality traits and characteristics. The various traits attributed to leaders included physical characteristics such as gender (male), height (a few inches taller than most men), attractiveness (based on cultural mores), skin color (white), and the size and shape of one's nose (straight and somewhat elongated). In addition, cognitive and personality traits such as intelligence, emotional control, dominance, and openness helped to define a leader. The valued and leader-identified traits were culturally specific. For instance, if physical traits such as hair or eye color, foot size, handedness (left- or right-handed), or personality traits such as confidence, extraversion, and intuition were deemed valuable to a cultural group, then leaders were those who demonstrated those attributes. A commonly researched contemporary leadership theory reflects this underlying trait theory—the implicit leadership theory (ILT), which we will examine later in this chapter.

At about the same time that people were trying to explain leadership by individual traits, others noted that influential group members, those who were perceived as leaders by their peers, engaged in similar behaviors that caused others to follow them. Thus, a new theory suggested that leaders were those who acted like leaders (as leaders were expected to act). Leaders walked with confidence, told others what to do; they were directive and controlling. As research became more sophisticated, leader behaviors were identified as engaging in planning, organizing, directing, implementing, and evaluating (controlling) peo-

ple and events. Other terms and models that seemed to capture the concept of leadership identified two behavioral factors: *consideration* and *initiation of structure* (Landis, Hill, & Harvey, 2014; Nicholson, 2013).

Consideration refers to interpersonal skills such as communication, trust, and respect between leaders and followers. It also includes follower participation in decision making and other behaviors that enhance and maintain interpersonal relations within a group. These are sometimes called people skills, and leaders who have strengths in this area are often referred to as being people oriented. Initiation of structure refers to leader behaviors focused on a task. These behaviors might include setting rules, assigning tasks, giving directions, being assertive, and setting goals; another term for this factor is *agency*—leaders are expected to be agentic as they take the initiative to act. A leader who is strong in these skills is often called task oriented (Williams & Tiedens, 2016). Thus, initiating structure describes the extent to which a leader shapes and organizes work roles, provides clear channels of communication, and is goal oriented.

“Today, effective leadership requires an individual skilled in consideration and agentic behaviors.”

The idea that leadership consists of these two factors—consideration and agency—continues to be studied. For example, current day researchers have been trying to learn how consideration and agency are related to societal views of gender and leadership. Among many others, Rhee and Sigler (2015) noted that in the dominant U.S. culture women are perceived to be stronger in interpersonal (consideration) skills and men are thought to be stronger in task (agentic) skills. Thus, consideration is considered to be a feminine trait and agency is thought of as a masculine trait. In general, people believe that leaders are task oriented; they make things happen; they are agentic. With this underlying cultural assumption, leadership falls within the masculine domain; it is linked to what is presumed to be male. As you might imagine, this perception can lead to challenges for female leaders. Females are expected to be warm, caring, and helpful, which are perceived as feminine and nonleader traits; thus, when they step outside of the caring realm and demonstrate masculine-linked at-

tributes such as being independent, rational, and decisive, they can face anger or resentment from others (Williams & Tiedens, 2016). Today, effective leadership requires an individual skilled in consideration and agentic behaviors (see Figure 1.3), but the stereotype that leaders exhibit more masculine traits than interpersonal traits continues to permeate society (Crites, Dickson, & Lorenz, 2015).

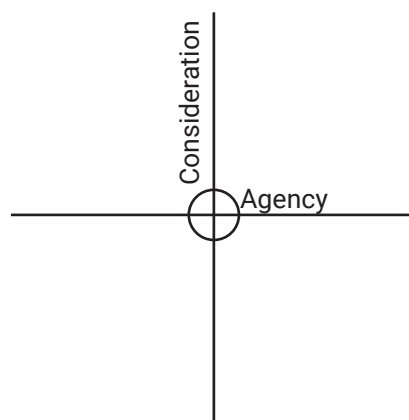


Figure 1.3. Balancing agency and consideration.

## Leadership Styles

In addition to examining two broad categories of leader behaviors, scholars began exploring the ways or styles people enact leadership. Based on experiments conducted in the 1940s, investigators identified three primary behavioral leadership styles, which they named autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. Some modifications have been suggested over the years, but a common understanding of these styles remains.

### Autocratic

Autocratic leaders are characterized as being forthright, directive, and assertive (Rast, Hogg, & Giessner, 2013). Most of those who study leadership styles talk about four general qualities of autocratic leaders: Autocratic leaders make all the important decisions, they are more concerned with accomplishing a task than with the satisfaction of followers, they tend to maintain considerable social distance from followers (autocratic leaders rarely become friends with followers), and they motivate followers by threat of punishment rather than by reward.

These features of an autocratic leader suggest that a person using this style demonstrates little trust or

faith in group members and expects them to comply with given directions. Autocratic leaders present themselves as authority figures and as the only people with the right answers. In autocratic relationships, follower responsibility tends to be low and people merely do what they are told. Given this, sometimes when the leader is gone followers cut loose and act out. In addition, feelings of anger, hostility, and aggression among group members may increase when a person uses this leadership style.

This characterization of autocratic leadership may leave a person wondering if there is ever an appropriate use of this leadership style. Indeed, research has demonstrated that there are situations when an autocratic (sometimes called authoritarian) approach to leadership is fitting—it is referred to as a benevolent autocratic style when a leader acts as an authoritarian for the welfare of others. Lifeguards who shout at people or blow whistles to demand that people get out of the water when danger arises demonstrate a benevolent autocratic leadership style. A similar situation that calls for an autocratic leader is when a quick, sharp, immediate response is necessary to protect someone or something from harm. A leader might command followers to action or direct the most competent group member to act. No questions from participants are expected, and if the (dangerous) situation is understood, group members readily comply. Under such circumstances, once the safety concern has passed a leader concerned with group feelings would share her or his reasons for being autocratic with the group.

Another circumstance that may call for an autocratic leadership style is when group members are highly uncertain about a situation (no one really has any idea of what to do or what is happening); they tend to desire and respond favorably to a strong autocratic leader (Karp, 2013). Having a strong leader who takes control in these situations helps followers to feel emotionally safe and secure. Followers often willingly do as asked as they work toward fully grasping the situation and their role in it. When leaders explain their reasons for using an autocratic style and treat participants with respect, participants learn about leadership, safety issues, judgment, and responsibility.

Similar to the information related to the gender-linked behaviors of consideration and agency, people often respond differently to autocratic behaviors by females and males. Williams and Tiedens (2016) found that followers respond more positively to a male who demonstrates an autocratic leadership

style than they respond to a female who does so. Autocratic leadership is perceived to be associated with power, and because of continuing stereotypes, men are believed and expected to be more powerful than women. Power falls within the masculine domain of behaviors. Thus, male leaders who engage in authoritarian behaviors tend to be accepted, whereas women leaders who demonstrate similar behaviors are commonly denigrated.



**When leaders explain their reasons for using an autocratic style and treat participants with respect, participants learn about leadership, safety issues, judgment, and responsibility.**



## Democratic

The second approach to this trio of leadership styles is referred to as democratic leadership. Using this style, democratic leaders make the final decision, but prior to doing so they invite group members to participate in the decision-making process. Depending on the level of involvement in making decisions, a leader might consult with group members (called consultative leadership) or they might invite their full participation (participative leadership).

Involving group members in the decision-making process takes time, so this approach may slow the process of achieving group goals. In many situations, a leader who invites and genuinely listens to follower input can be effective. Transparency as to how the input is used is an important aspect of using a democratic leadership style. Decisions to act should clearly reflect what was learned through the group process—in this way, a trusting and respectful relationship develops between the leader and followers. Groups may resist the leader in the future if they perceive that the leader disregarded their thoughts and feelings in earlier decision processes.

As with all potential leadership behaviors, circumstances determine the effectiveness and efficiency of using a democratic leadership style. Democratic leadership behaviors are often effective in situations in which followers are skilled and mature and the leader



wishes to facilitate developing group cohesion and follower decision-making skills. However, if a group is underskilled and immature (new to one another, have not yet engaged in meaningful group activities) or has little knowledge about a situation, using a leadership style that places decision making in the group's hands may be detrimental. For instance, if a newly formed group is participating on a white-water rafting trip and is not familiar with river markers that indicate safe and unsafe passage, it would be unwise for the skilled raft guide to engage the group in a discussion about which route they should take through the rapids. This type of leader decision making could apply to any situation in which a group of ill-equipped followers have task responsibilities—to plan a special event, create an inclusion program, or put on a community theater production.

### Laissez-Faire

The laissez-faire leadership style involves a noninterference policy in which the leader gives the group members free rein to do their work and figure out how best to reach their goals (Bhatti, Maitlo, Shaikh, Hashmi, & Shaikh, 2012). *Laissez-faire* is French for “let it be,” which captures the hands-off essence of this leadership style. A laissez-faire leader tends to shy away from group members and tasks, and she or he avoids decision-making responsibilities. The leader provides information or materials when asked, but otherwise stays out of the group process and the workflow. Some describe this style of leadership as an absence of leadership or nonleadership.

As one might imagine, laissez-faire leadership is often viewed as a weak form of leadership because the leader has little involvement in facilitating the group working toward a goal. However, when intentionally used, this style can be highly effective in helping a group mature and grow in its decision-making abilities. Leaders who are purposeful in activating a laissez-faire approach are available to the group and are attentive to the group's needs (e.g., to provide direction, materials, conflict resolution guidance). This hands-off leadership style enables a group to struggle through decision making and task accomplishments knowing that they have access to support, if needed. Group members often feel empowered and group dynamics can be extremely strong when facilitated with an intentional laissez-faire approach to leadership.

## How Is Leadership Perceived Today?

Research and study have evolved a great deal over the years and have led to several contemporary views of leadership, all of which continue to be investigated. These models portray leadership as a skill that develops over time through a person's personal journey of growth and development. Most of the following theories of leadership emphasize leader values and worldviews and the effects those perspectives have on followers. Scholars have identified three primary theories to explain the leadership–followership process: transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and servant leadership.

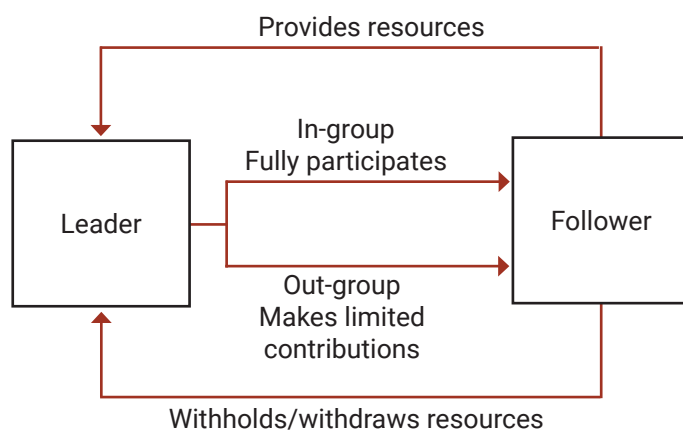
### Transactional Leadership

Antonakis and House (2014) suggest that the most commonly used type of leadership across a variety of settings is viewed as an exchange—a transaction—between a leader and followers. The exchange is based on a subtle agreement between leaders and followers: If followers will acknowledge and validate the leader (usually by performing well), the leader will give the followers recognition and status for their efforts (e.g., reward them with a paycheck, public accolades, increased responsibilities). In this way, leaders and followers influence one another and benefit from the transaction.

With an eye toward achieving efficiency, transactional leaders tend to focus on goals and objectives, problem solving, making decisions, and following policies and procedures. One of the most common transactional theories that continues to be studied is the leader–member exchange (LMX) model. Along with other researchers, Zacher, Pearce, Rooney, and McKenna (2014) explained the LMX theory as one in which the leader (L) develops relationships with followers (members; M) based on expectations of one another. Those expectations relate to the exchange (X) between leaders and followers in which they meet one another's expectations to contribute positively to the group and end goal.

It is clear that follower contributions to group tasks vary; some group members fully participate and provide excellent and timely information, and others engage as little as possible. In response, the relationships between leader and individual followers differ. Leaders value and favor hardworking, productive followers who are fully involved in the group's work; this

subset of followers is referred to as the *in-group*. In this situation, the L–M relationship is strong; in-group members receive more resources (e.g., leader attention and assistance, materials, financial rewards) from the leader than do members of the out-group; thus, the in-group members continue to thrive. Followers who are disengaged and make limited contributions to group efforts face lower quality relationships with the leader and have lower quality experiences. Leaders may withhold and/or withdraw resources from out-group members, which typically has a negative effect on out-group follower success (see Figure 1.4).



**Figure 1.4.** Transactional leadership.

## Transformational Leadership

Another contemporary view of leadership, *transformational leadership*, has also received much attention in the last 15 to 20 years. To transform means to change the nature, function, or condition of something. In terms of transformational leadership, the term describes a model of leadership that explains how strong leaders can change the nature or function of followers in such a way that individual followers become more concerned with group rather than personal interests.

Transformational leadership describes an approach in which the leader inspires others to commit to a common value-supported purpose when working toward a particular objective. Transformational leaders promote nontraditional thinking, full engagement in the group process, and follower empowerment. Successful transformational leaders influence follow-

ers to act in the best interest of the group and to share that approach with others. As such, followers help to communicate the leader’s ideals, values, and convictions through their efforts. This model of leadership includes four components: *leader charisma*, *inspirational motivation*, *individualized consideration*, and *intellectual stimulation* (Antonakis & House, 2014).

“Leaders value and favor hardworking, productive followers who are fully involved in the group’s work.”

**Leader charisma.** Charisma is defined as a “rare personal quality attributed to leaders who arouse fervent popular devotion and enthusiasm” and as “personal magnetism or charm” (“Charisma,” 2011). As an element of transformational leadership, leader charisma serves as an outlet for visionary and inspirational abilities of the leader. Leaders who are considered a visionary, who see the big picture, who take risks, and who generate enthusiasm, emotion, and confidence in their followers are considered transformational leaders. These leaders are sensitive to the needs of the group, are masters of social skills, and develop emotional bonds with followers. It is common for followers to want to be like the leader. Sometimes participants even start dressing, acting, and talking like the leader. In recreation settings, leaders with charisma seem to electrify the room. Everyone is well behaved, participant enthusiasm is high, and followers seem to gravitate toward the charismatic leader.

**Inspirational motivation.** Leaders act in ways to motivate and inspire others by providing meaning and challenge in their work. Transformational leaders are excellent communicators and instill high ethical standards among group members. Team spirit, enthusiasm, and optimism run high in groups that are led by a transformational leader. These leaders help others to envision the future, clearly communicate their expectations to followers, and demonstrate commitment to goals and the shared vision. Vision and the ability to get others “fired up” are hallmarks of a transformational leader.

“**Transformational leaders promote nontraditional thinking, full engagement in the group process, and follower empowerment.**”

**Individualized consideration.** Transformational leaders appeal to ideological values of followers. This means that they can connect with followers at a “heart” level. While appealing to these common values and ideals, transformational leaders treat followers as individuals, generating a great deal of follower confidence. Leaders empower followers to engage in a variety of tasks and they celebrate individual accomplishments and growth. Transformational leaders believe in and work toward personal and professional development of their followers—they help others to grow and develop their potential. Recreation leaders who allow for individual consideration make each person genuinely feel special. Furthermore, leaders hold each person to high expectations and let them know that they have great confidence in follower abilities to meet those challenges.

**Intellectual stimulation.** Visionary and transforming leaders challenge existing thinking about the way things have been done. They encourage new ways of looking at things, generate innovative ideas, ask many questions, and give followers opportunities to participate in discoveries. Intellectual stimulation tends to make a transforming leader exciting to be around; they are not afraid to take risks. By challenging people to think differently than they are used to thinking, transformational leaders stimulate follower intellectual and cognitive development. Elements ranging from activity rules to social policy are challenged, and the intellectual excitement is high among group members.

Researchers have found that leaders who engage in transformational behaviors are viewed as effective leaders and have satisfied and highly motivated followers. It is certainly easy to see how someone with charisma, who treats people as though they are special and unique, and who challenges and encourages people to think would be well liked and well respected. Transformational leaders exhibit a philosophy that influences leadership tasks and people. Using a

variety of leadership styles, a transformational leader is involved in several tasks: visioning, valuing, coaching, motivating, team building, and promoting quality work. In addition, scholars have reported that transformational leaders are more compassionate, flexible, insightful, pragmatic, and less forceful and tough than nontransformational leaders (Gardner et al., 2011; Landis et al., 2014).



Recreation leaders who allow for individual consideration make each person genuinely feel special. Photo courtesy of Ron Ramsing.

### Servant Leadership

Similar to the transformational leadership model (in philosophy and approach) is the theory of servant leadership. The two views focus on the growth and development of followers. Because it has proven to be difficult to test, some theorists consider servant leadership to be a philosophy rather than a theory that describes a special relationship between leaders and followers; nonetheless, it continues to receive a lot of attention in the leadership literature.

Servant leadership is based on strong moral, ethical, and spiritual values. This approach focuses on developing others to their fullest potential in the areas of task effectiveness, community stewardship, self-motivation, and future leadership capabilities. Servant leaders are excellent communicators and deeply believe in the value of active listening. Like transformational leaders, servant leaders make followers feel significant and celebrate what each person brings to the group. Further, servant leaders have charisma, challenge old ways of doing things, and have a great deal of influence over followers. The primary distinction between transformational and servant leadership is the focus of the leader. The overriding

focus or drive of a servant leader is on service to followers as well as to the broader society, and transformational leaders tend to focus on helping followers to achieve group goals (Parris & Peachey, 2013). Greenleaf (1991), who coined the phrase servant leadership, articulated the essence of servant leadership when he stated,

The servant leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit or, at least, not be further deprived? (p. 7)

In attempts to make the concept of servant leadership more concrete, several authors have created lists of qualities that describe someone who demonstrates servant leadership (see Table 1.1). Spears (1998) identified an initial list of 10 servant leader qualities: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and building community. Researchers began scientifically examining the validity of those traits, resulting in slightly different lists. In a review of the research on servant leadership conducted up to 2011, Van Dierendonck (2011) identified six distinct characteristics of servant leaders: empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship. Shortly after that report, Mittal and Dorfman (2012) identified six factors that make up servant leadership: altruism, egalitarianism, emotional dimension, managerial skills, human skills, and commitment to community. More recently, Hunter, Neubert, Perry, and Witt (2013) summarized existing research and identified seven common dimensions of servant leadership: relationships, empowerment, help others to grow as persons, ethics and morals, conceptual skills, put followers first, and community service.

Scholars have created lists of servant leader characteristics that differ in some respects, but the underlying belief of this leadership theory is that a leader serves others, strives to help others to grow and develop, and focuses on how group actions benefit individuals and society. A servant leader believes in the power of each individual to enhance society. As an

**Table 1.1**

*Qualities of Servant Leaders*

Author	Traits
Spears (1998)	listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and building community
Van Dierendonck (2011)	empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship
Dorfman (2012)	altruism, egalitarianism, emotional dimension, managerial skills, human skills, and commitment to community
Hunter, Neubert, Perry, & Witt (2013)	relationships, empowerment, help others to grow as persons, ethics and morals, conceptual skills, put followers first, and community service

example, in discussions about future development of a park or greenway, a servant leader would encourage those in the decision-making process to consider the effects on individuals who might be displaced, the environment and its flora and fauna, the spirit of the community, and the driving force of the intended development—elements beyond the potential economic development of such an enterprise.



**Like transformational leaders, servant leaders make followers feel significant and celebrate what each person brings to the group.**



### **Agile and Authentic Leadership**

In the early 2000s, several business leaders promoted the concept of agile/adaptive/flexible leadership as a distinct leadership theory. These terms were intended to capture the idea that to be effective in a fast moving, information-based society, leaders have to be able to make quick adjustments in their approach

to leadership, leadership styles, and related behaviors. It is certainly true that successful leaders can adapt to new and increasingly complex situations and do so quickly—particularly in parks, recreation, and tourism services, in which situations change minute by minute. It has been difficult, however, for researchers to find support for this idea as a stand-alone leadership theory.

Scholars continue to try to discern the essence of leadership and its specific components. One method of doing so involves examining major societal events and pulling out the factors for successful leadership. Reflecting events occurring in society, business, education, and other settings, scholars have filtered out an important leader quality: *authenticity*. Being authentic means being true to oneself—staying true to one’s principles, values, and approaches to relationships and tasks—no matter the situation. Further, an authentic leader is consistently ethical, self-aware, and appreciative of the life experiences of others (Gardner et al., 2011).



**It is certainly true that successful leaders can adapt to new and increasingly complex situations and do so quickly—particularly in parks, recreation, and tourism services, in which situations change minute by minute.**



Nyberg and Sveningsson (2014) identified four dimensions of authentic leadership: self-awareness, transparency, ethics and morals, and balanced processing (see Figure 1.5). Knowing and acknowledging strengths and weaknesses and engaging in ongoing efforts to enhance development reflect a leader’s self-awareness. Transparency happens when leaders are genuine, stand on their principles, and are clear and open about personal values. The third dimension, ethics and morals, builds on transparency and is evident when leaders are consistently guided by internal moral standards. Last, Nyberg and Sveningsson described balanced processing as leaders being objective, seeking and analyzing extensive information (including from those who may or may not agree with

their views), and then using that knowledge in guiding their behaviors, decision making, and goal attainment. Being authentic facilitates leader–follower trust and provides a stable base for relating to people and tasks, which leads to effective leadership.

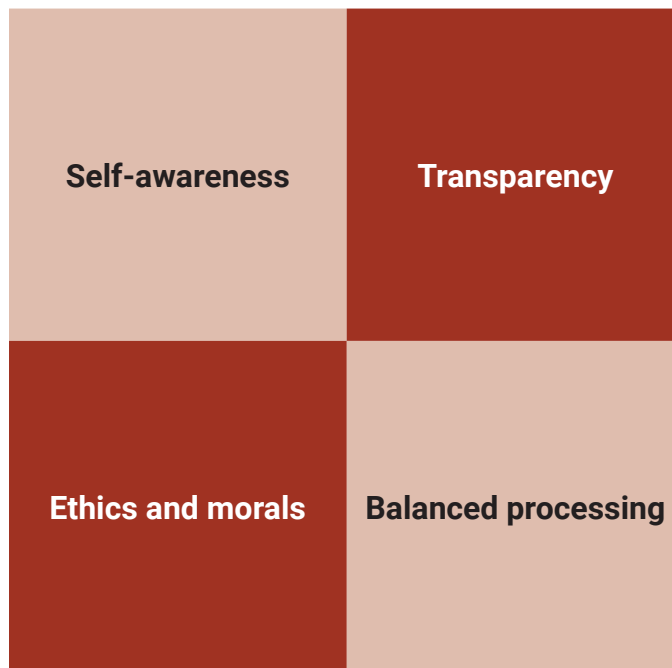


Figure 1.5. Four dimensions of authentic leadership.

### Shared Leadership

Another view of leadership that has been deliberated is shared leadership, in which the capacity for leadership is spread among group members. Rather than one individual serving in a leadership role in all situations, the role and its associated responsibilities are shared among group members. Rather than focusing primarily on the leader when exploring the process of leadership—the leader’s behaviors, styles, qualities, and so on—this theory describes the nature of leadership in ways that clearly encompass the relationships between leaders and followers, the interrelationships among leaders and followers, and the effects and influence of followers on leaders and leadership. Also known as distributed, collaborative, or collective leadership, this perspective on leadership is described as a dynamic process that occurs among several group members (DeAngelis, Penney, & Scully, 2014; Wilson, 2013).

Shared leadership is fluid and dynamic. In one circumstance a person might fill a leader role and in another serve in a follower role. The role of leader floats among group members; the most appropriate

(knowledgeable, agreeable) person serves as leader in a situation in which her or his traits and skills will be most valuable. The relationship among all group members, leaders and followers, can be thought of as horizontal (group members share authority and responsibility) rather than vertical (the leader has the most authority and responsibility). Followers and leaders complement one another; leadership is a group effort in which group members join for the benefit of all.

Successful shared leadership requires a mature and skilled group in which all group members share an understanding of the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to achieve the objectives. In addition, team members need to have some idea about which group members have the related expertise for successful completion of various group processes. Hoffman and Lord (2013) wrote about how in a shared leadership situation group members alternately grant and claim the leadership role. Granting and claiming leadership reflects the idea that someone cannot be a leader until and unless the rest of the group *grants* or allows that person to assume the leadership role. Likewise, an individual will not fill a leadership role unless they *claim* it. The granting–claiming process occurs at a subconscious level and is necessary for effective leadership.

“**The role of leader floats among group members; the most appropriate (knowledgeable, agreeable) person serves as leader in a situation in which her or his traits and skills will be most valuable.**”

The final theory of leadership that we will present considers some of the unconscious assumptions, reactions, and responses people have to those who are (or are expected to be) leaders, as well as to those who are followers. Called the implicit leadership theory (ILT), it describes the processes that occur within each person wherever her or his concept of leadership is activated. A corresponding theory, the implicit followership theory (IFT), describes the other half of the leadership–followership dynamic.

### Implicit Leadership Theory

Something that is implicit goes without saying; the process or characteristic being described is inherent

in the event or activity in which people are engaged. In this case, implicit refers to the underlying assumptions, perceptions, and realities that occur whenever people act as leaders and followers. Thus, the ILT explains how people make use of subconscious interpretations to help explain leadership.

Hopton (2016) explained that all people have a preconceived notion or picture in their minds about what a leader looks and acts like and what a follower looks and acts like. These subconscious pictures about what they consider a leader is called a schema; schemas help make sense of what people observe and instructs them about how they should interact with others. People learn and develop these underlying mental pictures from childhood based on experiences with leadership and followership within their particular culture. When they see or are involved in situations in which leader and follower roles are acted out, their brains spontaneously (within nanoseconds) bring up mental images of what they think a leader looks like and does. They then compare what is in front of them with their expectations for leaders.

The image of leader and follower that comes to mind in the way described is called a prototype; it is a mental model of what and who a leader is and how leadership is supposed to happen. Van Quaquebeke, Graf, and Eckloff (2014) noted that prototypes of leader

can be based on two frameworks. One is the concept of central tendency, in which people merge the traits and behaviors of all the leaders they have known and from that information create a generalized notion of what a leader is—this is considered a *typical* prototype. The other im-

PLICIT model people hold is one of an exemplar—the notion of what an *ideal* leader is and does. People are apt to attribute leadership to those who most accurately match their prototype for leader. Conversely, individuals are unlikely to recognize the leadership capabilities of those who do not fit their leader prototype (Carnes, Houghton, & Ellison, 2015).

**Influence of gender and race.** Researchers have identified several traits that are associated with a prototypical leader. Carnes et al. (2015) found that common traits ascribed to leader prototypes include intelligence, dedication, sensitivity (to others), and dynamism (charisma). Cairns-Lee (2015) added competence, assertiveness, confidence, directiveness, and

being task oriented to that list. The first list of leader traits fits people's views of any type of person—female or male, Black or White, aged or young. The second list is more defined and includes characteristics that are generally ascribed to males more than to females. These gender-based expectations are called gender roles, and gender roles are reinforced in every aspect of life. Because the traits that define leadership are commonly attributed to the male gender role, leadership is perceived to be more suitable for men than for women (Rhee & Sigler, 2015; Williams & Tiedens, 2016).

**“All people have a preconceived notion or picture in their minds about what a leader looks and acts like and what a follower looks and acts like.”**

Women are expected to be nurturing, caring, gentle, and empathetic. Thus, females generally do not meet the expected leader prototype. This gender role mis-fit affects both female and male leaders. Initially, women are perceived to be less capable leaders than men are, and once they take on leadership roles, they often face backlash for their competence (Rhee & Sigler, 2015). Other researchers have found that men, who are assumed to be competent leaders, face penalties if they ask for help because needing help is antithetical to being a leader and to being male (Rosette, Mueller, & Lebel, 2015).

Nelson, Bronstein, Shacham, and Ben-Ari (2015) found that when women in leadership positions demonstrated prototypical leader behaviors, they were not seen as leaders. Further, because women leaders act in ways that are considered masculine and inconsistent with female gender role expectations such as nurturing and caring, followers evaluated them negatively as leaders. On the contrary, the investigators found that when males exhibited feminine traits such as being caring, they received positive evaluations.

In terms of exploring the relationship between race and the leader prototype, Rosette et al. (2015) found that Black female leaders were more harshly treated than were Black male and White female leaders when they made a mistake. This is due to a percep-

tion that Black women do not meet the typical prototype that society holds for Black (which is male) nor woman (which is White) nor leader (which is White male). Thus, Black women can be thought of as being twice removed from the schema of a leader. Black males who exhibited behaviors such as directiveness and assertiveness, which are prototypical of males and leaders, received negative leadership evaluations because of their race. People cannot change their race or gender, but being aware that others' subconscious and spontaneous assessment of gender and race may clash with the common prototype of leader can facilitate their own leadership development and roles as followers. Acting on this awareness may help people recognize, seek out, and thrive on the leadership potential in others as well as in themselves.

### Implicit Followership Theory

The ILT speaks to conceptualization of a leader—one factor in the leadership process. The other primary component to leader is follower; thus, a counterpart to the ILT has been articulated as the Implicit Followership Theory (IFT). Like the ILT, the IFT followership theory speaks to subconscious mental images and expectations people hold for who is a follower and what a follower looks like and does. Again, as with the ILT, the prototypes people hold for follower might be a mix of all the followers they have ever encountered or of the ideal follower.

Followers are typically thought of in relation to a leader; conversations about followers rarely arise unless the discussion is about leaders and leadership. This holds true in the research that has been conducted around the IFT, as well. Researchers have examined the prototypes that leaders hold for followers and the effects of those schema on the leader–follower relationship and overall group effectiveness. As with the ILT, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) emphasized that follower prototypes are strongly affected by culture. In the U.S., leaders hold typical prototypes of followers that include industry (how hardworking followers are), competence and skills, conformity (whether followers are easily influenced by others or trends), enthusiasm, and good citizenship (followers are loyal, reliable, and team players). Followers who have the expected traits and fit this prototype receive the leader's trust, support, and mentorship. And, of course, those who do not fit the leader's follower schema will likely not be perceived as effective followers—they might be viewed as members of an out-group.



The ILT suggests that the typical prototype for a leader is a White male. Photo courtesy of Paul Jordan.

With this information, it becomes important that leaders are aware of their prototypes for followers. Bligh and Kohles (2014) provided examples in which follower prototypes held by leaders limited the leaders' ability to recognize the potential of contributing and effective followers. One example was that Western (including those in the U.S.) leaders often recognize the potential of followers who demonstrate enthusiasm—they are committed, involved, extraverted, and take initiative (for example)—and label and treat individuals with these traits as “high potentials.” High potentials receive more attention and resources from the leader, which contributes to their success. Enthusiasm is an important implicit followership trait, so much so that Bligh and Kohles found that Western leaders often overlooked the potential in equally capable followers who, because of cultural differences, did not exhibit outward enthusiasm (e.g., followers who were American Indian). The nonprototypical followers received less attention from the leader and were granted fewer responsibilities, thereby limiting their leadership advancement.

Research is ongoing, but it has been suggested that similar IFT bias may exist for gender in which females are perceived to be less competent, less committed, and more easily swayed by others (all undesirable traits for a prototypical follower). A leader who holds this follower prototype could easily overlook female group members' contributions to group success. In turn, this could lead to fewer opportunities for personal development, access to leader attention, and other important resources for personal and professional growth. Overlooking the potential of any follower can be detrimental to the individual as well as to the success of the group. Thus, it is important that leaders and followers understand follower prototypes so as to facilitate leadership opportunities for all.

One distinct aspect of the ILT and IFT that is embedded in how people perceive leaders and followers is power. Leadership, followership, and power tend to be considered as comingled and finite—a leader has power, a follower does not (or has less). In other cases such as with shared leadership, power is shared and leaders and followers are both empowered to act. And, as with other elements of leadership (e.g., gender, age, disability, and other traits of prototypes), there is an assumption about the distribution of power. See Table 1.2 for a comparison of theories.



**Leaders hold typical prototypes of followers that include industry (how hardworking followers are), competence and skills, conformity (whether followers are easily influenced by others or trends), enthusiasm, and good citizenship (followers are loyal, reliable, and team players).**



### **Leadership and Power: What's the Connection?**

An accepted definition of power is the ability to influence others to do something; this means that both leaders and followers can have power. However, the most commonly held perspective on power is that



those in charge (leaders) have more power than those who might be identified lower on the organizational chart (followers). Hopton (2016) found that in traditional views of leadership followers expect leaders to have power; power is part of the leader prototype. In a situation where shared leadership is the orientation of a group, however, power is shared among group members.

Schaap (2014) identified two foci of power: *socialized* and *personalized*. Socialized power is used to influence others to accomplish tasks in order to achieve goals; it is task focused. On the other hand, personalized power is used to obtain power that can help people gain appreciation/esteem and status for themselves. The focus of personalized power is on enhancing perceptions of the self rather than on helping the group to achieve goals.

In addition to how power might be focused, Schaap (2014) conceptualized two types of power: power *over* and power *with*. Power over describes the traditional understanding of power—one person has it and others do not. Those with power can tell others what to do and others are supposed to do it. The foundation of power over is usually access to and control of resources. The one who has power has more resources than the others. The powerful one might be able to promote someone, provide inside information, or award public recognition. At the same time, the powerful can apply consequences to those who do not comply with directives.

Power with, on the other hand, is generally thought of as empowerment when power is shared among all involved. In this view, there is no fear that giving others power will reduce the power of any one individual. Power is viewed as infinite—everyone has access to and control over resources. This enables

group members to apply power in ways that will benefit the efforts of the group.

To understand the various manifestations of power, several researchers have contributed to a list of the various ways people exhibit and recognize power (Goncalves, 2013; Lumby, 2013). Individuals, groups, and leaders all use one or more of these types of power in different situations. It is important to remember that culture, gender, seniority, and sometimes age all influence how people act out, grant/claim, and perceive power. These differences may be due to strongly embedded values, stereotypes individuals hold about the capabilities of a particular people, or other factors. The types of power are listed alphabetically, and short explanations are provided for each.

### Charisma/Referent

People admire, respect, and look up to a person with charisma; she or he exhibits confidence and social magnetism. These individuals exude a special energy, warmth, and charm that draws others to them seemingly without any effort on the part of the leader. Followers admire and want to be associated with a leader

“Power with, on the other hand, is generally thought of as empowerment when power is shared among all involved. In this view, there is no fear that giving others power will reduce the power of any one individual.”

**Table 1.2**  
*Comparison of ITL and IFT*

Characteristic	ILT: Leader	IFT: Follower
Definition	Subconscious mental images and expectations people hold for who is a leader and what a leader looks like and does	Subconscious mental images and expectations people hold for who is a follower and what a follower looks like and does
Prototypical Traits	Intelligence, dedication, sensitivity (to others), dynamism (charisma), assertive, confident, dominant, powerful	Committed, involved, extraverted, takes initiative, loyal, competent, hardworking
Gender Bias	Males viewed as more powerful, assertive, and competent than females	Females viewed as less competent, less committed, more easily swayed by others than are males
Power	Has power	Does not have power

who has this type of power. Gender plays a role in attributions of charismatic power, with research showing that women are infrequently perceived as having this type of power. Charismatic power has been attributed to historical figures such as highly regarded religious leaders, which typically included only males (Buddha, Moses, Confucius, Jesus); contemporary public figures include women such as Oprah Winfrey and Michelle Obama.

### Coercive

A person who uses coercive power demands immediate compliance from others with a threat of punishment if demands are not met. A leader who uses coercion to achieve a goal may receive compliance from followers, but commitment to the task and trusting relationships will be lacking. Research has shown that women and African Americans are often negatively evaluated when using this type of power. In the parks and recreation profession, a coercive leader might have the ability (and use this information as an underlying threat) to suspend participants from a sports league, to withhold a paycheck, or to make an individual sit in time-out. Although one of the least effective forms of power, coercion (punishment) is a component of transactional leadership.

### Connectional

In this day and age when networking is considered vital to professional development, an individual who has varied and strong connections with others is perceived as having connectional power. It is important for leaders (and followers) to develop connections and networks—both social and professional—and to engage ethically in those relationships. Connectional power facilitates people’s ability to enhance their base of support and extend known information sources; those who have strong and varied networks manifest this type of power. Leaders who know numerous people in the profession, including those in support positions (e.g., maintenance staff, city officials), vendors, and other “people who know people” exhibit connectional power.



People perceive leader power through a variety of behaviors. Photo courtesy of Deb Jordan.

### Empowerment

Empowerment is power shared with others; it facilitates the ability of people “to do.” In this view, power is not viewed as finite, but rather as expansive. Giving power to followers enables them (and the leader) to accomplish more within trusting and satisfaction-laden groups. Leaders empower people when they teach them the skills, provide them the social support, and give them the resources needed to meet group goals. Empowerment involves people having the authority to make decisions for the situation at hand without having to ask permission every step of the way. For example, a front desk staff member might be empowered by her supervisor to handle customer complaints directly rather than passing the complainant up the line. People who express dissatisfaction with an experience and feel like they are being passed from one person to another before they are truly heard often escalate from feeling minor annoyance to expressing full-blown public frustration. Being empowered to address a problem at the outset can be beneficial to all.



**Empowerment is power shared with others; it facilitates the ability of people “to do.” In this view, power is not viewed as finite, but rather as expansive.**



## Expert Power

Some people attribute power to an individual because they believe that person has special knowledge or expertise about the task at hand. This type of power is often situational, and the power will shift as the individual's expertise no longer applies. As with other types of power, women, people of color, young people, and those who represent other undervalued dimensions of diversity may find it challenging to be perceived as having expert power. For example, an individual who knows the meanings of gang symbols will likely be granted power when in gang-tagged territory. In general, people with expert power tend to be well respected within their area of expertise. As with other types of power, women, people of color, young people, and those who represent other undervalued dimensions of diversity may find it challenging to be perceived as having expert power.

## Helplessness

Everyone uses helplessness power at one time or another. For example, people can claim to be helpless to induce others to do something for them. This is a form of indirect power and can be successful in terms of influencing others to action. At the same time, however, when overused or used by low status people, helplessness power can be detrimental to the actor. Examples of this include a person seeking help with a crafts project by claiming a lack of skill to complete it or a leader saying that she or he does not know what to do with crying children so that someone else will handle the uncomfortable situation.

## Indirect Power

In groups in which power is relatively balanced, at times a few group members may use indirect power to persuade one or more individuals to do things their way. Using group norms, dropping subtle hints, and making other people think an idea was theirs to influence behavior are methods of expressing indirect power. For instance, when standing in front of a new group member, one teammate might say to another, "You know, around here, we follow this process . . ." This is a subtle way of telling a new group member to stop doing something in one manner and follow previously established and accepted group norms.

## Informational

A person with informational power has formal and informal access to material that can affect an-

other individual. This individual might be considered the agency or organization "historian," or keepers of knowledge. This is the person who knows where everything is, whom to contact for what resource, how to use a piece of machinery, the rules of the game, the required steps to process travel claims, and similar information vital for a leader's and organization's success. When used ethically, this type of power can lead to strong relationships within a group.

## Legitimate

In this situation, the person with legitimate power is seen as having the right and/or formally recognized authority to do something (usually by way of position) and others are obliged to follow. For instance, department staff members may grant legitimate power to members of a supervisory board, and tour group members commonly attribute legitimate power to the identified trip leaders. It is important to note that just because leaders hold a position with a title and authority does not necessarily mean that they will have influence over the group. As noted earlier, group members have to grant and others have to claim leadership before progress can be made.



**Just because leaders hold a position with a title and authority does not necessarily mean that they will have influence over the group.**



## Reward

Reward power is often perceived as the opposite of coercive power. Rather than sensing a threat of punishment from the leader, followers believe this leader has the capacity to reward them and thus they respond positively. A person high in reward power has access to resources that are perceived as prizes or awards. A reward might be something tangible such as a pay raise or a move to a more desirable office; it might also be something intangible such as public recognition for contributions or an increase in respect and trust from the leader.

## Social Status

Often, those with higher levels of social status, as indicated by their position in the community, occupa-

tion, or history of altruism (someone who donates a lot of time or money to various causes), are perceived to have more power than those with lower social status. Social status and the power that goes with it may be attributed to someone who is a team captain, a major donor to an organization, or the most respected member of the community. This type of power is not guaranteed to an individual who is in the upper strata of social class, but social status is a prerequisite to have this type of power and the associated influence.

Power is embedded in leadership, and when used ethically and with skill, it often facilitates group progress. Being familiar with the types of power helps leaders and followers to understand the potential motivations of others (as well as their own). This knowledge is beneficial to leaders who wish to influence others in one direction or another. See Table 1.3 for a list of the types of power.

**Table 1.3**  
*Types of Power*

Type of power	Description
Coercive	Threat of punishment
Connectional	Networking
Charisma/Referent	Magnetism
Empowerment	Shared power
Expert Power	Based on knowledge, skill
Helplessness	I need assistance
Indirect Power	Behind the scenes
Informational	Keeper of knowledge
Legitimate	Position viewed as powerful
Reward	Something given in return for good deeds
Social Status	Higher socioeconomic class

## Leader Development

Learning about the underpinnings of leadership—how people have understood it over the years, how leaders are identified, the roles of leaders and followers and the relationship between them, and how power relates to leadership—sets the stage for those who wish to improve their leadership and followership skills throughout their careers. To do so requires ongoing personal development that includes a growing self-awareness and the practice of interpersonal, task, and conceptual skills. These aspects of learning can result in failure or success. Those who learn from life experiences and can put what was learned into

practice will continue to develop as leaders who can make a difference.

Cairns-Lee (2015) suggested that leadership development is a process of self-development. People's inner selves are not static, but rather human nature is to be dynamic and full of energy and vitality. This enables people to learn, to evolve, to re-create themselves over and over again. This is good news, as the way of constantly becoming is filled with ups and downs. Throughout the process of developing the leadership self, each individual must remember that everyone lives in relation to others—attitudes, thoughts, and actions affect surrounding people. Thus, self-development requires self-awareness, and that self-awareness must include a person's recognition of and responsiveness to how her or his beliefs and actions affect others.

As parks and recreation professionals become increasingly aware of their values, motivations, biases, emotional intelligence, life experiences, and so on, they begin to relate those traits and experiences to their views about leadership and followership. Perhaps recreation practitioners are more comfortable understanding leadership as a transaction than as transformation—do they know where that inclination came from? Do individuals understand how the ways they manifest that piece of who they are affects others? Does that self-knowledge help them to discover effective and other affirming ways to lead?

**Learning about the underpinnings of leadership—how people have understood it over the years, how leaders are identified, the roles of leaders and followers and the relationship between them, and how power relates to leadership—sets the stage for those who wish to improve their leadership and followership skills throughout their careers.**

Two authors provide advice for those in the early stages of personal leadership development. Mitstifer (2014) presented a leadership development model that includes four areas on which a person can concentrate to enhance personal leadership capabilities:

(a) strengthen self-awareness, (b) develop relationships (with colleagues and peers) and practice teamwork as a leader and as a team member, (c) understand alliances (how and why professionals and agencies are connected) and political realities within the community and profession, and (d) envision and take steps to ensure the future success of an agency or organization in serving constituents. By being purposeful in taking actions to meet these foci, recreation professionals further their personal leadership and, by extension, followership development.

Another author who has offered advice for apprentice leaders is Allio (2013). He provides a succinct list of actions that can help people develop leadership and follower strengths:

1. Accept leadership challenges and practice acts of leadership. In formal learning environments, the simple act of raising a hand to ask or answer a question is a challenge for some; others might be challenged by volunteering to serve as a chairperson of a committee.
2. Emulate ethical and successful leaders and their leadership behaviors. This means that a person must consciously look for one or more effective leaders and pay attention to how they speak, act, and carry themselves with integrity.
3. Find one or more mentors or coaches who are willing to provide constructive feedback. This is an important step in ongoing leadership development. Ask people who are successful leaders how they arrived at that point, and most of them will easily be able to name one or more people who helped make them the person and leader they are today. All developing leaders are encouraged to engage formally with one or more mentors.
4. Attend leadership programs to refine specific leadership skills such as how to provide effective feedback to staff. One opportunity to learn the elements to leadership success is to attend state, regional, and/or national conferences and go to leadership development sessions. In addition to formal educational sessions, such meetings provide many informal opportunities to learn from peers, engage in networking, engage mentors, and test a person's views of leadership.
5. Work to develop personal traits of empathy, patience, and fortitude. These traits

can make a difference in a person's abilities to work effectively with a variety of people who have work styles, interpersonal skills, and ways of looking at the world that are different from their own.

In addition to the list for personal leadership development, Allio (2013) offered guidelines for followers, as all leaders are followers at some time in their careers. He suggested that as professionals evolve into the best followers they can be, they should seek to do the following:

1. Develop relationships with other followers (in- and out-group members) to share learning strategies and the associated outcomes—both positive and detrimental. One opportunity to learn in this way is to join more than one group, observe, ask questions, and get to know both group members and leaders.
2. Give constructive feedback to the leader. To do so first requires purposely paying attention to the leader's words and behaviors and the effect those actions have on group members. Fully understanding the effects of leader behaviors might include obtaining insights from other group members. Once a follower has a solid understanding of the leader action–follower reaction process, the next step is to be intentional about how to best word and offer the feedback to the leader in a way that will be helpful and not simply a complaint.



Leader development is an ongoing process. Photo courtesy of Deb Jordan.

3. Engage in creative dissent—know when to say no to leader suggestions and help to create alternative ways to accomplish the goal. One of the most important elements of creative dissent is to go beyond resistance and help generate alternatives to achieve the same end. Thus, any time a person disagrees with a particular course of action they should be prepared to suggest alternatives.
4. Recognize appropriate times and methods when followers can assume leadership roles to enhance the group process and goals. This is one way to enact shared leadership. It is important, of course, that such role switches avoid being acts of mutiny in which a leader and her or his guidance is deemed unworthy and group members abandon them.
5. Finally, take advantage of rapid and open access to information; this process and level of engagement can be beneficial in maintaining group cohesion while continuing progress.

Leadership is an important responsibility. A leader's attitudes, words, and actions have profound effects on followers, leaders, and observers. People rarely have a sense of how the way they present themselves and how their work touches others; thus, it becomes important for people to remain aware that their reach is broad and long lasting. As such for professionals in a human services field, it is incumbent upon all to engage in continual leadership development. Learning how to be intentional in leadership and in followership can have positive outcomes for constituents, the agency or organization, and the leaders themselves.

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