

INSIGHTS INTO LEADERSHIP: THE ROLE OF POLITICAL SKILL,
SOCIAL SKILL, AND SELF-MONITORING IN MEDIATING
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP AND JOB PERFORMANCE

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Felix Louis Verdigets

Certificate of Approval:

Joseph B. Hanna
Professor
Aviation and Supply
Chain Management

Charlotte D. Sutton, Chair
Associate Professor
Management

William I. Sauser
Professor
Management

George T. Flowers
Dean
Graduate School

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Felix Louis Verdigets

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Felix Louis Verdigets

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(M.B.A., Auburn University, 2000)
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Although there have been numerous studies supporting the correlation between transformational leadership and job performance, very few of these studies have gone as far as to detail how transformational leadership predicts job performance. The goal of this study was to address the lack of mediation research on transformational leadership and job performance.

It was hypothesized that political skill, social skill, and self-monitoring would have a positive impact on the job performance ratings of transformational leaders. The deans and department heads of the 420 colleges of business accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) were invited to participate. The

various measures used in this study called for input from both deans and department heads of the contributing dean, resulting in two data collections phases: the first to all AACSB deans (119 of the 420 agreed to participate for a phase one response rate of 28%); the second to the department heads of the deans who chose to participate (87 of the 119 agreed to participate for a phase two response rate of 73%).

Leadership style was measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire-Form 5X (MLQ 5X). Job performance was measured using the Administration Effectiveness in Higher Education (AEHE) survey. Political skill was measured via six items developed by Ferris. Similarly, social skill was measured via seven items developed by Ferris. Finally, self-monitoring was measured using the revised Self-Monitoring Questionnaire developed by Snyder and Gangestad.

Transformational leadership was positively correlated with job performance and social skill proved to mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance. While there was an effect size for the mediators political skill ($p=.056$) and self-monitoring ($p=.06$), this effect size was not large enough to claim they mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance. Given the increasingly complex, ever-changing, global business environment, research on leadership, job performance, and the factors that potentially affect this process, is both timely and relevant.

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“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it” - Dwight Eisenhower

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a complex skill that takes years to master, regardless if the leader was born to lead or had to learn how to lead. The global nature of today’s business environment calls for leaders to be in contact with increasingly different types of people. The complexity of organizations striving to do more with less is causing the leader to adapt his/her leadership style to be more flexible. Those leaders who can adapt will be more effective in a business environment that is ever-changing. It is leadership skills that allow leaders to recognize the challenges that they and their followers face, and to effectively address these challenges (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Adaptive leaders also have the ability to work with many different types of people, a skill that makes these leaders more effective at creating solutions to difficult problems, while molding their followers to respond to a wide range of leadership responsibilities (Bennis, 2001).

Bass (1985) described the aforementioned adaptive style of leadership as transformational leadership. Transformational leadership involves emotion, symbolic behavior, traits, and influences, all of which make transformational leadership relevant to research on top executives (a key feature in this dissertation) and their influence on people with whom they do not have a great deal of direct contact with (Yukl, 2002). Avolio (1999) noted that there have been numerous studies supporting a correlation between transformational leadership and individual performance. However, few studies

have gone as far as to detail how transformational leadership predicts that performance (Bass et al., 2003).

It is my contention that many things affect the relationship between transformational leadership and individual performance. Unfortunately, mediation studies regarding transformational leadership and performance are rare. Kark, Shamir, and Chen (2003) found support for the mediation effects of empowerment and dependency on transformational leadership and performance. Further, Bass et al. (2003) found support for the mediation effects of cohesion and potency when researching performance and transformational leadership. However, academia has yet to fully examine the wide range of potential mediators that influence the relationship between transformational leadership and performance (Yukl, 1999).

The goal of this dissertation is to address Yukl's concern regarding the lack of mediation studies on transformational leadership and performance. Specifically, it is hypothesized that political skill, social skill, and self-monitoring will have a positive impact on performance ratings of transformational leaders. According to Mintzberg (1983), political skill deals with a specific set of characteristics one uses to maneuver effectively through the political environment of the organization. Political skill was chosen due to the inherently political nature of most organizations. Some researchers believe effective leaders are more competent politically than intellectually (Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, & Ammeter, 2004). It may be the leader's political skill that helps the leader sift through the vast amounts of information, from both humans and data, and relay the right message to the followers.

Social skill was chosen because it is the leader's social skill that translates training, analytical thinking, and creativity into actionable, performance-oriented outcomes. Thorndike (1920) defined social skill as “the ability to understand men and women, boys and girls—to act wisely in human relations” (p. 228). Goleman (1998) believed that truly effective leaders possessed a different set of skills, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill. Goleman argued that it is these skills, rather than intellectual ability, that help differentiate good leaders from great leaders.

Self-monitoring is defined as the ability for people to react differently as they monitor and direct the way they present themselves in their social environments (Snyder, 1974). Self-monitoring was chosen because high self-monitors find it easier to initiate conversations, have rewarding interactions with groups, discern the needs of other people, gain the acceptance of others and have high referent power (Day, Schleicher, Unckless, & Hiller, 2002). All of these are key characteristics of effective leadership and should translate to increased job performance. Effective leaders are socially perceptive, and self-monitoring is a key factor in social perception.

While research is clear regarding the positive correlations between transformational leadership and individual performance (see meta-analyses by DeGroot, Kiker, & Cross, 2000; Fuller, Patterson, Hester, & Stringer, 1996; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996), what remains unclear are the potential mediators that separate the good transformational leaders from the great transformational leaders. Indeed, researchers have argued that there is a gap in the transformational literature regarding potential mediators that bridge leadership style with performance (Bass et al., 2003;

Yukl, 1999). Therefore, the key goal of this dissertation is to evaluate the performance ratings of transformational leaders and measure how the leader's performance may be mediated by the leader's political skill, social skill, and self-monitoring ability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational Leadership and Its Impact On Performance

Transformational Leadership

In the 1980s, research on leadership focused on the processes leaders used to get their followers to shift psychologically from acting in the best interests of themselves, to acting in the best interest of the organization (Yukl, 2002). With this shift in research came the birth of the transformational leader. Burns' (1978) book on leadership is the basis for modern research on transformational leadership. According to Burns, transformational leadership "occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1978: 20). The remainder of the 1980s was rife with leadership research, heavily influenced by Burns that focused on leaders' ability to appeal to the values and emotions of their followers (Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Sashkin & Fulmer, 1988; Tichy & Devanne, 1986).

The majority of current studies regarding transformational leadership are based on the work of Bass (1985) and his distinctions between transformational and transactional leadership. Bass' (1985) version of transformational leadership is based on faith, approbation, allegiance, reverence, and incentive, in effect transforming the follower

through awareness and stressing the importance of task outcomes which activate the follower's higher-order needs. The constructs surrounding transformational leadership theory rely on several different influences that help promote their effectiveness, including instrumental compliance, internalization, and charisma (Yukl, 2002). Furthermore, transformational leadership has been shown to be generalizable and effective across many different situations. For instance, Bass (1997) has shown the effectiveness of transformational leadership across leaders, across management hierarchies, across organizations, and across cultures.

However, other research has shown that different situations and environments have different effects on the outcome of transformational leadership. Situations that have been shown to positively influence transformational leadership include stable organizational environments, flat and organic (as opposed to hierarchical and bureaucratic) organizations, entrepreneurial organizations, and organizations that encourage their employees to go beyond the spans of their boundaries (Bass, 1996; Hinkin & Tracey, 1999; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Pawar & Eastman, 1997).

Transformational leadership theory has been revised to include four types of transformational leadership behavior: idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Idealized influence deals with follower identification with the leader and is emotion-based leadership. The idealized leader is well liked, appreciated, trusted, and consistent in his/her ethical beliefs, principles, and values (Bass et al., 2003). Individualized consideration concerns the support functions of the leader, including coaching and encouragement. The individualized leader is a mentor who understands that followers

need a supportive climate in which to grow and reach new heights within the organization (Bass et al., 2003). Inspirational motivation involves effectively communicating the leader's vision, symbolic references, and behavior modeling. The inspirational leader is not only enthusiastic and optimistic, but also constantly rousing individual and team spirit (Bass et al., 2003). Finally, intellectual stimulation refers to follower awareness of organizational issues and attempts to get the follower to take different perspectives in problem solving. The intellectual leader does not criticize when mistakes are made and followers are always a part of new idea generation and solution processes (Bass et al., 2003). These four types of transformational behavior are in contrast to Bass and Avolio's (1990) transactional behavior types.

Transactional leadership is mentioned here because it is not uncommon for some transformational leaders to occasionally exhibit transactional behaviors and there is some research that has shown positive correlations between transactional leadership and commitment, satisfaction, performance, self-monitoring, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Bass, 1998; Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Godwin, Wofford, & Whittington, 2001; Hunt & Schuler, 1976; Podsakoff, Todor, Grover, & Huber, 1984).

The three types of transactional behavior include contingent reward, active management by exception, and passive management by exception. For the transactional leader to be effective, followers feel they must comply with the leader's request in order to avoid punishment and receive praise and rewards (Bass et al., 2003). Contingent rewards focus on a leader's clear articulation of what needs to be done for rewards, active management by exception involves preventative leadership focused on avoiding

mistakes, and passive management by exception refers to the punishment of a follower for deviating from acceptable forms of organizational behavior.

While there are situations where transactional leadership is the preferred method of leadership (e.g., the military), ultimately, motivation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance are greater in followers of transformational leaders (Bono & Judge, 2003). According to self-concept-based theory, transformational leaders motivate their followers in three distinct ways. The first is by increasing follower self-efficacy and transformational leaders are able to guide the follower past trepidation and toward the confidence it takes to meet one's goals (Bono & Judge, 2003). The second is through self-identification, in which transformational leaders show their followers how important they are to the organization and allow their followers to feel a sense of pride in belonging to the group (Bono & Judge, 2003). The third is by relating follower values with organizational values. The transformational leader focuses on higher-order needs and describes work in ideological terms, thus causing the follower to equate the organization's goals with his/her own goals. This in turn causes the organizational goals to be more meaningful to the follower (Bono & Judge, 2003). Further, the self-concordance model, a component of self-concept-based theory, suggests that employees who view their work in the same manner they view their goals and values are more motivated and perform better. Bono and Judge (2003) researched these effects on more than 1000 transformational leaders and their followers and found the relationship to hold true. The followers of transformational leaders viewed their work as more important and self-congruent and exhibited better job attitudes and higher performance.

Leadership has been shown to have an impact on employee creativity (Scott & Bruce, 1994; Tierney, Farmer, & Graen, 1999). At the individual level, Shin and Zhou (2003) studied nearly 300 Korean employees and were able to show that transformational leadership is positively related to creativity, thus exhibiting another benefit of transformational leadership. Sosik, Kahai, and Avolio (1998; 1999) have also linked transformational leadership to creativity in employee groups. Thus, one could argue that employee creativity is a potential source of sustainable competitive advantage for organizations.

Performance

Leadership is a continuous process, rife with change dictated by the environment, both internal and external; and leaders have evolved from overseers or gatekeepers to coaches and facilitators (Ahearn et al., 2004). Successful leaders are doing away with bureaucracy in favor of a barrier-free work environment (Cascio, 1995). These constant changes require leaders to equip themselves with the proper set of skills to succeed, a set of skills that is different from what was required of the leaders before them (Ahearn et al., 2004). Transformational leadership is a significant part of the new skill set required for leader success, a comment backed by five types of research involving leadership and performance (Yukl, 2002). It should be noted that the five types of leadership research contain studies on both transformational leadership and charismatic leadership. Both House and Shamir (1993) and Yukl (1999) cite how it is now common practice in both text and articles to treat the two theories as equivalent.

The first type of research involves survey research. This is the most common form of research on transformational leadership (Yukl, 2002) given the large amount of research using Bass and Avolio's (1990) multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ). Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1999) re-examined the latest shortened version of the MLQ, the MLQ-5X, and found that the questionnaire still holds up extremely well. Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996) performed a meta-analysis using the MLQ and were able to show that transformational leadership was related to performance. Assuming House and Shamir (1993) and Yukl (1999) are correct in their belief of the overlap of charismatic and transformational leadership, two other meta-analytic studies add further support for the positive relationship between transformational leadership and performance. Both the meta-analytic review conducted by Fuller, Patterson, Hester and Stringer (1996), and the meta-analysis conducted by DeGroot, Kiker, and Cross (2000), confirmed the positive correlation between charismatic leadership and performance.

The second type of research consists of laboratory experiments. This type of research generally enables better inferences about causality than the first type, but few authors have attempted this type of research (Yukl, 2002). Kirkpatrick and Locke (1996) conducted such an experiment and were able to show that charismatic leadership did translate into higher follower performance.

The third type of research is field experimentation. Barling, Weber, and Kelloway (1996) studied bank employees and found that employees who had transformational leaders exhibited higher organizational commitment and higher loan sales, a direct measure of performance. Further, Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir (2002)

studied Israeli infantry officers and found that soldiers scored higher on tests and performed better in the field when led by transformational leaders.

The fourth type of research is descriptive or comparative studies. Descriptive research involves looking for commonality among leaders and generally revolves around a content analysis searching for behavioral characteristics, traits, influences, biographical information, and critical incidents (Yukl, 2002). This type of research has been effective in highlighting the types of transformational (Bennis & Nanus, 1985) and charismatic (House, Spangler & Woycke, 1991) leadership behavior that best correlate with performance.

The fifth type of research on transformational leadership and performance is an intensive case study. This basically is a single study of a particular transformational leader. A popular approach is a longitudinal case study measuring a leader over different periods of time. Prior case study research has been helpful in spotlighting significant performance from transformational (Roberts, 1985) and charismatic (Beyer & Browning, 1999; Weed, 1993) leaders.

Avolio (1999) and Bass (1998) have shown correlations between transformational leadership and many different performance measures. Such research has correlated transformational leadership with supervisory evaluations of managerial performance (Hater & Bass, 1988; Waldman, Bass, & Einstein, 1987), promotion (Waldman, Bass, & Yammarino, 1990), innovation (Keller, 1992), and achievement (Howell & Avolio, 1993). Barling et al. (1996) indicated the positive effects of transformational leadership on financial outcomes. Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir (2002) measured the impact of transformational leadership and were able to show that followers performed better under

transformational leaders than other types of leaders. Walderman, Ramirez, House, and Puranam (2001) were able to show how transformational leaders were more profitable, even under conditions of environmental uncertainty. Finally, Kark, Shamir, and Chen (2003) measured follower identification with the leader, organizational unit, dependency, and empowerment on nearly 900 bank employees. The authors found that transformational leadership was positively related to both follower dependence and empowerment, both of which played a key role in performance.

Given the review of the transformational leadership literature above, and the documented relationship between transformational leadership and performance, the following hypothesis is offered:

Hypothesis 1- Transformational leadership will be positively correlated with individual job performance

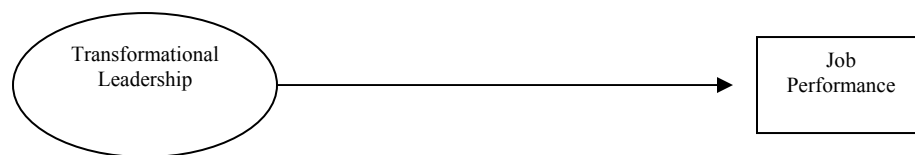


Figure 1. Relationship of the correlation between individual job performance and transformational leadership.

Political Skill as a Mediator Between Transformational Leadership and Individual Performance

Mintzberg (1983) coined the term “political skill” more than 20 years ago, and since its introduction there has been a plethora of research on politics in the organization, but little research on the political skill of the leaders in said organizations (Perrewe, et al., 2004). According to Mintzberg (1983), political skill, which was initially heavily

influenced by research on formal power, deals with a specific set of characteristics one uses to maneuver effectively through the political environment of the organization.

Persons with good political skill have the capability “to exercise formal power with a sensitivity to the feelings of others, to know where to concentrate one’s energies, to sense what is possible, and to organize the necessary alliances” (Mintzberg, 1983: 26).

Upon further examination of power in organizations, Kotter (1985) found that political skill was more appropriate and effective when viewed as an informal influence. It is the savvy manager who is able to use political skill as a career advantage without drawing undue attention and “making waves” (Ferris, Fedor, & King, 1994; Mainiero, 1994). There was a brief interest in the specific characteristics behind one’s ability to engage in political skill and be effective in influencing others. Jones (1990) noted that these characteristics potentially involve self-confidence, self-mockery, the ability to tout oneself while being humble, communication that can stir and provoke, and some sort of personal appearance that others find attractive. It took nearly 20 years before scholars began relevant research on the construct of political skill, its validity and the appropriate measures of the construct (Perrewe et al., 2004).

Ferris et al. (1999) are credited with creating the political skill measure that is currently used in researching the construct. Research by Ferris et al. (1999) resulted in a more modern definition of political skill that can be best described as “the ability to effectively understand others at work and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one’s personal and/or organizational objectives” (Perrewe et al., 2004: 142). Further, Ferris et al. (1999) noted that it is the politically skilled individual’s ability to influence that fosters personal power in the organization. As political skills

increase, so does the feeling of self-confidence and security that leaders can accomplish their agendas, both personal and organizational (Perrewe et al., 2004).

Political skill seems to tie nicely into social skill through the leader's social capital. Research by Perrewe, Ferris, Frank, and Anthony (2000) showed that those high in political skill were able to understand others better, manage the development and result of their relations with others better, and expand and control their social capital better, all of which help make it easier to achieve one's agenda. In addition, Perrewe et al. (2000) also indicated that those high in political skill saw their relationships with others and their interactions with others as opportunities, as opposed to threats. Finally, those high in political skill were shown to read and evaluate clues from their environment differently and more effectively than those low in political skill (Perrewe et al., 2000).

There has been some controversy surrounding the perceived similarities of political skill and social skill. Ferris et al. (1999) have done an excellent job in showing how political skill is different from other social skills. Political skill does concern one's social awareness and interactions with others in social situations. However, political skill is also a component of the recent wave of research on performance, leadership and the social nature of organizations (Perrewe et al., 2000). Social skill is rooted in Thorndike's (1920) social intelligence and Goleman's (1995) emotional intelligence. Although political skill and social skill share commonalities, political skill is believed to be the first communal skill to target specific behavior in the organization (Perrewe et al., 2000). Political skill goes beyond knowing how to behave in different organizational situations (social skill), to include being able to execute the appropriate behavior in an effective manner. Following this line of research, another distinction between political skill and

social skill is that political skill does not concern itself with interpersonal influence behaviors such as being ungrateful and self-promoting (Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980; Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Political skill is discrete, calculating and shrewd, dealing with one's social connections, reputation and trust in the relationships one establishes, and leveraging such behavior to transform social capital into goal attainment (Perrewe et al., 2000).

Political Skill and Leadership

Political skill is a necessity given the changes in today's organizational environment. Leadership is a political process because in organizations today, there are many different people seeking to promote different—and often conflicting—principles and interests (Hosking, 1988). Often these principles and interests are promoted at the expense of others. Today's leader has to possess many skills in order to achieve the high performance goals set by organizations competing in a tough global market. Ahearn et al. (2004) view leadership success as a function of one's political and social skills, skills as coach, facilitator, coordinator, orchestrator, talent scout and motivator.

Given the political nature of most organizations, effective leaders need to possess the ability to sway, win over and influence their constituents (Ahearn et al., 2004). Referring to work place politics as the management of shared meaning, Ferris, King, Judge and Kacmar (1991) speak about politically adept leaders as those who possess the ability not only to manage personal relationships, but also to manage information. It is a leader's political skill that helps the leader to sift through the vast amounts of information and relay the right message to followers who can relate to that leader. Some researchers

suggest effective leadership now stems less from intelligence and hard work and more from social and political competencies (Ahearn et al., 2004; Deluca, 1999; Ferris et al., 1999; Jackall, 1998; Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981; Spencer & Spencer, 1993).

Leadership has many definitions; Ahearn et al. (2004) view it as influence from a social perspective. From this viewpoint, what separates average leaders from good leaders is judged not only on individual performance, but also on the ability to motivate people to go above and beyond the minimal requirements while sharing a common belief that this behavior is good for the organization as a whole. Ahearn et al. (2004) argue that effective leaders know which situations require the use of their political skills, how to use that power respectfully and which goals and objectives require inspiration or motivation to accomplish.

Political skill also fosters the leader's social networks, making the leader more valuable to the organization. Politically savvy leaders are able to build strong coalitions and a wide array of networks allowing the leader to acquire valuable resources not currently in the leader's or the organization's repertoire (Ahearn et al., 2004). A leader's political skill is also effective during times of change. By building a strong network of friends, connections, and alliances through politics, the leader in turn is building a strong reputation, which can positively affect follower reaction in times of change (Ammeter, Douglas, Gardner, Hochwarter, & Ferris, 2002).

Leaders high in political skill share commonalities with leaders high in social skill and self-monitoring. In terms of leadership, how political skill differs from social skill is addressed above. The leader's behavioral intent lies at the root of how political skill differs from self-monitoring. Politically skilled leaders master their social situations,

knowing exactly how to respond in given situations and how to do it “with a sincere, engaging manner that disguises any ulterior motives and inspires believability, trust, and confidence” (Ahearn et al., 2004: 314). It should be noted that leader ability to be successful in the above often comes from altruistic behavior. However, there are occasionally cases where this behavior stems from being a skilled sociopath. In terms of follower behavior, research has shown these characteristics of leadership to be beneficial in facilitating follower understanding of leader behavior, resulting in increased leader effectiveness (House & Aditya, 1997).

Political Skill and Performance

Leaders who are high in political skill relish the opportunity to interact with others, for it is through these interactions that the leader can exhibit his/her control. It is this control that gives the leader the confidence that comes with the predictability of performing in a successful manner (Perrewe et al., 2000). Simonton (1986) conducted research on a six-variable equation designed to predict the overall performance of U.S. Presidents. Simonton (2001) set out to test the performance predictability of the six-variable equation and the five core components of the rankings. He did this by using research from Ridings and McIver (1997) in which 719 experts ranked all U.S. Presidents through Clinton. Simonton found that two of the core components of performance were leadership and political skill. If America can be viewed as an organization, and the President as the leader of that organization, then it follows that Simonton’s research is applicable here. Simonton (2001) was able to replicate the predictability of presidential

performance using the six-variable equation and, relevant to this research, political skill was shown to be one of the predictors of leader performance.

In a review of the skills executives need to develop and maintain, Thomas (1995) identifies both leadership and political skill as two of the five most crucial skills. Thomas (1995) recognized the importance of leadership skills such as communication, planning, decision-making, boardsmanship, consensus building, group dynamics, and delegation, but contended that it is the leader's political skill that enables him/her to use leadership skills in all types of situations with all types of individuals.

According to Thomas (1995) there are six areas of leader responsibility where political skill can positively affect performance. The first centers on the organizational mission. Political skill allows the leader to act effectively in a manner that best fulfills the mission and motivates others to fulfill the mission. The second area in which political skill can influence performance is money. Political skill allows the leader to effectively manipulate the funding source, whether that is leader compensation, or the funding necessary for organizational improvement. The third area in which political skill can influence performance is with the individual(s) to whom the leader reports. Political skill allows the leader to make and maintain favorable impressions on these key constituents. The fourth area in which political skill can influence performance deals with the other organizations with which the leader must contend. Political skill allows the leader to allocate the responsibility of running the organization to others with the time and knowledge to get the job done. The fifth area in which political skill can influence performance is networking. At all levels—local, regional, national, and international—political skill plays a role in building and maintaining a network of individuals and

resources for the leader to call upon in a time of need. The politically savvy leader also understands the importance of providing his/her help to other leaders in need. This is part of building a strong network. The sixth and final area in which political skill can influence performance involves knowing when to take credit for actions. A leader with strong political skill knows how to attract the attention of the right people at the right time, and deflect negative attention when needed. Positive press is crucial, and a leader with political skill can bring his/her accomplishments to light without grandstanding.

The literature abounds with research on the importance of technical and administrative skills. The literature on political skill contends that technical and administrative skills are entry-level skills that are needed to get the leader to certain points in his/her career. When it comes to leader performance that separates some leaders from others, it is the leader's political skills that "are the secret weapon of winning leaders" (Peled, 2000: 20). By researching the leadership skills of managers in the information technology sector, Peled (2000) was able to show that leaders who were more focused on organizational politics completed their projects more successfully than leaders who were technology focused.

Given the review of the political skill literature above, and the documented relationship between political skill, leadership and performance, the following hypotheses are offered:

Hypothesis 2- Political skill will be positively correlated with transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 3- Political skill will be positively correlated with individual job performance.

Hypothesis 4- Political skill will positively mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual job performance.



Figure 2. Mediation of political skill with individual job performance and transformational leadership.

Social Skill as a Mediator Between Transformational Leadership and Individual Performance

How one interacts socially with one's peers is relevant in almost every job in today's business environment (Hogan & Shelton, 1998). As the new knowledge economy continues to grow, economic value will be found in the intangibles, such as relationships and social skills (Thompson, Warhurst, & Callaghan, 2001; Vickery, 1999). The underlying concepts of social skill, namely the reading, understanding, and controlling of social interactions, have been points of study for almost 85 years. Thorndike (1920) considered social skill “the ability to understand men and women, boys and girls—to act wisely in human relations” (p. 228). In the 1960s, Argyle (1969) proposed that social skills reveal themselves in one's ability to influence others by counseling, persuading, explaining, and suggesting. These skills were in contrast to socially undesirable ways of influencing others such as coercion, criticism, and commands.

By the 1980s, research on social skills had increased to include concepts such as personal intelligence (Gardner, 1983) and social competence (Sternberg, Conway, Ketron, & Bernstein, 1981). It was Meichenbaum, Butler, and Gruson (1981) who

moved the concept of social skill beyond the ability to influence others and toward the ability to know what to do and when to do it, thus making social skill an effective way to be more successful strategically. Continuing with the strategy theme, Riggio (1986) defined social skill as strategies for interpersonal exchange associated with learned social ability. Building on this internalization of the concept of social skill, Marlowe (1986) used the term social intelligence, and defined it as "the ability to understand the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of persons, including oneself, in interpersonal situations and to act appropriately upon that understanding" (p. 52).

Research on social skills in the 1990s turned to synergizing the different conceptions of social skill and focusing on their outcomes. Goleman (1998) fathered the five concepts of emotional intelligence, one of which is social skill. He defined social skill as a proficiency in managing relationships and building networks with an ability to find common ground and build rapport. Some of Goleman's characteristics of leaders with social skills include: effectiveness in leading change, persuasiveness, and expertise in building and leading teams. Hogan and Lock (1995) researched several hundred critical incidents and concluded that the domain of social skills stretched across seven different dimensions. These dimensions were identified before there was a measure for social skill and would be identified by the leader's followers.

Hogan and Lock's seven dimensions are: 1) being able to listen to and communicate with a wide range of audiences, 2) being accountable, 3) being consistent across interactions, 4) being able to instill trust in others, 5) being persuasive, 6) being flexible and adaptable, and 7) being sensitive and responsive to others. Schneider, Ackerman, and Kanfer (1996) saw social skill as a way to achieve social goals, using

social skill as a measure of one's social competence. Gardner (1993) added that those high in social skill are not only more competent in recognizing their own capabilities, but also more competent in recognizing the capabilities of others.

Modern day descriptions of social skill center on fusing earlier research on social intelligence (Thorndike, 1920), interpersonal perceptiveness (Argyle, 1969), and social competence (Schneider et al., 1996). Similarly, social perceptiveness is the ability to understand interpersonal dynamics (Ferris, Witt, & Hochwarter, 2001). This is where the focus turned to the “skill” in social skills. Effective social skills enable individuals to know when to improvise, when to exert influence, and when to speak up (Witt & Ferris, 2003). Social skill enables one to correctly identify and deduce even the subtlest of clues, thus Witt and Ferris’ (2003) modern day definition of social skill encompasses both the cognitive ability to read and understand and the behavioral ability to act and influence.

Initially there was some debate as to how social skill is different from personality. Social skills are learned (Gesten, Weissberg, Amish, & Smith, 1987; Riggio, 1986), which is an important distinction in differentiating social skill from personality characteristics which tend to be a part of who an individual is. Hogan and Shelton (1998) continued this distinction while researching job performance, noting that personality tends to remain even, yet social skills can come and go, in effect making them trainable. The key distinction is that social skill is the mechanism that one uses to translate one’s personality into actions (Hogan & Shelton, 1998), regardless if personality is inferred based on behavior. These observations were built on earlier research by Leary (1995) and Block and Kremen (1996). Leary was able to show a difference in personality and

social skill by highlighting that the two do not always mutually co-exist. From a negative standpoint, an individual can have good social skills and a deviant personality.

Specifically, Leary (1995) studied the negative personality dispositions of insecurity, selfishness, irrationality, treachery and deceit. From a positive standpoint, social skill has been shown to regulate personality and allow for effective adaptation to social situations (Block & Kremen, 1996). Some may take exception to Leary by arguing that the above personality characteristics can be learned. This goes back to the debate regarding whether personality is a state or a trait. Although there is no clear definitive answer to this question, this dissertation views personality as something that is not easily learned, thus agreeing with Leary's argument that while a leader's personality may be constant, the leader's social skill is learned and can vary greatly from leader to leader.

Social Skill and Leadership

The 1998 *Harvard Business Review* article by Daniel Goleman best relates social skill—he calls it emotional intelligence—to being an effective leader. Goleman researched almost 200 large, global companies and found the usual leader qualities of intelligence, toughness, determination and vision were insufficient in categorizing truly great leaders. Goleman found that the truly effective leaders had other qualities such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill. He coined these other qualities “emotional intelligence” and was able to correlate this construct with measurable business results.

Goleman (1998) was quick not to rule out concrete skills like intelligence and technical ability. These types of skills are best described as entry-level requirements for

leadership. It is a leader's social skill that translates the training, the analytical thinking and the smart ideas into actionable items. Naturally the Goleman article came under much debate. Therefore, how he came to the concept of emotional intelligence is important.

Emotional intelligence (social skills) came from an analysis of more than 188 corporate competency models. Goleman was interested in knowing which individual capabilities equated to performance in the organizations. He grouped the capabilities into three categories: technical skills, cognitive ability and emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1998). When Goleman calculated the ratio of technical skills, cognitive ability and emotional intelligence to performance, the category of emotional intelligence (social skills) was twice as important as the other two categories. In fact, the higher the leader was ranked in the organization, the more frequently emotional intelligence came up as the reason for that leader's effectiveness (Goleman, 1998). Goleman cited prior research on executive performance which indicated executives who rated high in emotional intelligence led their divisions to outperform its earnings goals by 20%. Furthermore, when executives did not rate high in emotional intelligence, their divisions underperformed earnings goals by 20%. More recently, while researching the British service sector, Thompson et al. (2001) were able to show that technical skills were less important than social skills in predicting performance. The authors were able to conclude that the manager's social skills acted as a critical factor in his/her success on the job.

Leadership and social skills seem to go hand-in-hand, given that leadership is, at its roots, a social phenomenon and that some form of social interaction, usually face to face, is required (Hosking, 1988). Effective leaders know how to use their social skills to

foster their social contacts, which in turn have the ability to provide the leader with information and resources, both monetary and non-monetary. This is similar to social networking, and prior research has shown that this is important for leaders to be effective (Kanter, 1983; Kotter, 1982; Stewart, 1976). It is a leader's social skills that build and feed these increasingly important networks. This, in turn, can help the leader build his/her knowledge base, promote his/her values and interests, and translate his/her understanding into actions (Hosking, 1988). Huff (1984) and Wrapp (1984) were able to show how social skills, evident through the leader's social networks, enables the leader to pass ideas around and get valuable feedback on what may work and what is acceptable. Leaders adept in social skill cast wide circles of acquaintances, some of whom seemingly have nothing to do with the leader's current job. These contacts allow the leader more flexibility to respond in any given situation (Goleman, 1998).

Future leaders begin their tenure with the organization in the same manner as other employees—they have to be hired. Thus, the personnel selection process, a process where effective social skills are an advantage, plays an important role. Social skills play a part in leadership as it pertains to the selection process. Personnel selection may be one of the first formal steps to officially becoming a leader, considering that one may be placed into a position to lead. Huffcutt, Conway, Roth, and Stone (2001) performed a meta-analysis on the constructs measured in employment interviews and found that raters focused on the interviewee's social skills almost as much as the interviewee's personality.

Germane to this study was the identification of four specific social skills raters use in an interview when trying to select future employees/leaders in an organization.

Raters are trying to get a sense of a candidate's applied social skills, or one's ability to function effectively in social situations, so that they can assess how well the candidate deals with others. The four social skills that raters look for in interviews are: 1) communication skills—oral, expression, idea presentation, voice, speech, and listening (Robertson, Gratton, & Rout, 1990) 2) interpersonal skills—relationships, sensitivity, teamwork, ability to relate, rapport, tact, ability to deal, adapting to different people, cooperation, team focus and team building (Dougherty, Ebert, & Callender, 1986) 3) leadership—vision, coaching, employee development, maintaining control, directing others, activating others, developing team skills, building morale and discipline (Wiesner, Latham, Bradley, & Okros, 1992) and 4) persuading/negotiating—persuasiveness and ability to negotiate (Hoffman & Holden, 1993).

Leaders tend to enter the organization as novices, lacking the initial concepts that give them a fundamental idea of the work, the organization, and the leadership skills it will take to advance (Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000). Effective leaders quickly realize that they can use social skills that have been sharpened from their education and prior work experiences to familiarize themselves with their new environment (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). Social skills now help the emerging leader to commit to organizational goals and to begin effectively evaluating both self and others (Schmeck, 1988). The better the social skills, the better the evaluation, thus giving the leader an advantage early on in his/her organizational tenure. The evolution of a leader's social skill thus plays an important role in the progression of the leader through the organization. Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, and Fleishman (2000), using a cross-sectional design to assess differences in leadership skills across

different grades of U.S. Army officers, found that as grade level increased, so did the leader's social skills.

Social Skills and Performance

Social skill has been referred to as a facilitator between personality and job performance (Hogan & Shelton, 1998). Witt and Ferris (2003), noting the social realities of contemporary and future organizational environments, suggested that social skill plays an important role where performance and interpersonal effectiveness are key.

There has been some debate as to whether social skill predicts only those dimensions of job performance that deal with interpersonal and extrarole behavior, or if social skill is applicable to all aspects of work (Ferris, Witt & Hochwarter, 2001). Research is fairly clear on how effective social skills are in management (Kilduff & Day, 1994; Wayne, Liden, Graf, & Ferris, 1997). Ferris et al. (2001) make a compelling argument for the effectiveness of social skill in any aspect of work that involves the support of others. Citing cooperation, job dedication and interpersonal facilitation, Ferris et al. (2001) indicated that those high in social skills are more apt to influence, motivate, and be more patient with others, all of which directly affected the leader's performance.

Social skills play a critical role in allowing people to pursue their work-related goals, which are often correlated with job performance (Hogan & Shelton, 1998). A significant portion of social skill centers on one's relationships with others in the workplace. Someone else often measures job performance; hence the perceptions that can be manipulated by effective social skills can strongly influence perceived performance on the job (Hogan & Shelton, 1998).

Other links between social skill and performance can be found in the person-organization fit literature. Person-organization fit states that the better the relationship between a person's attitudes, ideals, knowledge, skills, capabilities, and personality, the better one's performance tends to be (Markman & Baron, 2003). In a recent study on entrepreneurs, Markman and Baron (2003) were able to show that those entrepreneurs who scored high on certain individual-difference dimensions, of which social skill is one, were more likely to be successful and their successes were greater in magnitude. The success of entrepreneurs, like leaders, relies heavily on their ability to engage in a variety of tasks that are directly related to their social skill ability. Related tasks include raising external capital, generating enthusiasm, generating commitment from followers, communicating effectively with numerous different people from different backgrounds, attracting and retaining effective partners, attracting and retaining effective employees, establishing trust, establishing legitimacy, and negotiating with others over a diverse range of issues (Markman & Baron, 2003).

Prior research in the areas of applied and social psychology have shown, on many occasions, how social skills play a major part in both social and professional interactions (Baron & Markman, 2000). Specifically, social skills have been shown to positively influence job interviews (Riggio & Throckmorton, 1988), legal proceedings (McKelvie & Coley, 1993), the outcomes of negotiations (Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies, 1998), conflict (Baron & Richardson, 1994), aggression (Baron & Richardson, 1994), happiness (Thomas, Fletcher, & Lange, 1997), formation of strategic alliances with other companies (Gulati & Westphal, 1999) and performance (Robbins & DeNisi, 1994). As for performance, Wayne, Liden, Graf, and Ferris (1997) studied over 1400 individuals in a

variety of different positions and found that social skills not only accurately predicted performance, but also served as the single best predictor of performance in the study. Furthermore, the Baron and Markman (2000) study recognized that while both human capital and social capital are important in facilitating access to resources, it is social skill that is of utmost importance once success is obtained.

Given the review of the social skill literature above, and the documented relationship between social skill, leadership and performance, the following hypotheses are offered:

Hypothesis 5- Social skill will be positively correlated with transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 6- Social skill will be positively correlated with individual job performance.

Hypothesis 7- Social skill will positively mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual job performance.

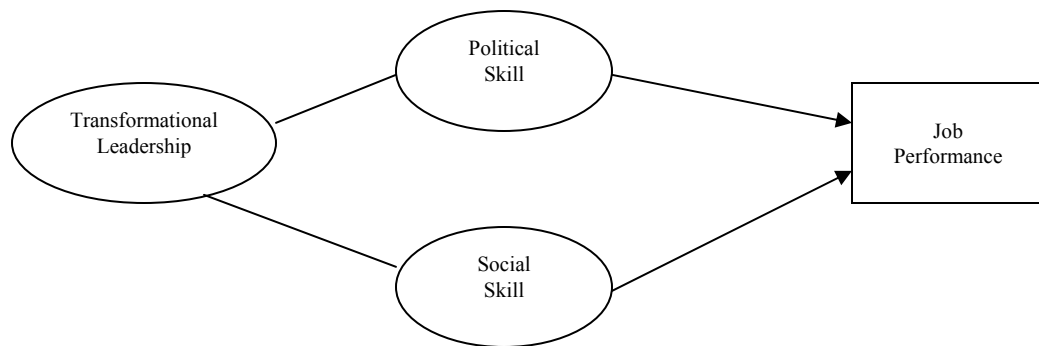


Figure 3. Relationship between the mediators political skill and social skill with individual job performance and transformational leadership.

Self-monitoring as a Mediator Between Transformational Leadership and Individual Performance

Self-monitoring emerged in the 1970s as a contribution to the theory of expressive control. Expressive control deals with one's ability to portray internal states through external outlets, such as one's face, hands, body and voice (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). While expressive control is generally used for beneficial purposes, it does have a negative side, most often seen in lying, hiding true intentions and being fake (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Prior research has shown that there are many ways for one to engage in expressive control (Riggio & Friedman, 1982; Siegman & Reynolds, 1983).

Self-monitoring theory differentiates between high self-monitors and low self-monitors; according to Snyder (1974), the theory suggests that people react differently as they monitor their environment and choose how they present themselves in their social environments. High self-monitors keenly focus on what role they are to play as dictated by their social environment. High self-monitors are more sensitive and responsive to both social and interpersonal cues and do not mind adapting their behavior accordingly. High self-monitors often believe in the appearance they are projecting as if the image is a social reality (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). On the other hand, low self-monitors tend to remain true to themselves and their beliefs despite any pressures from their social environment. Although projecting false images can be learned, low self-monitors often do not have the desire or the ability to project such false images.

Three decades of research on self-monitoring has indicated its relevance in a number of different organizational contexts. From the introduction of self-monitoring in the mid 1970s through the 1980s, self-monitoring research was done in the areas of

expressive control (Riggio & Friedman, 1982, 1983, 1986; Siegman & Reynolds, 1983; Snyder, 1974); one's recognition of social cues (Costanzo & Archer, 1989; Funder & Harris, 1986; Hosch, Lieppe, Marchioni, & Cooper, 1984; Mill, 1984); development (Graziano, Leone, Musser, & Lautenschlager, 1987) and physical appearance (Snyder, Berscheid, & Glick, 1985; Snyder, Berscheid, & Matwychuk, 1988). During this time, the debate over personality and its trait or state constructs was beginning to peak. Initial research on self-monitoring seemed to suggest it was a construct that could relate to certain aspects of an individual's personality and explain certain social functioning behaviors (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Self-monitoring quickly evolved into a construct that showed promise in state/trait research. Specifically, self-monitoring was believed to explain both behavior as a product of forces that operate externally—one's environment, and behavior as a product of forces that operate from within—one's personality characteristics. Thus, self-monitoring could effectively mediate the state vs. trait dispute (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000).

The 1990s saw research on self-monitoring focus more on personality characteristics. Areas of note include self-knowledge (DeBono, Green, Shair, & Benson, 1995; DeBono & Snyder, 1995; Mellema & Bassili, 1995), modeling behavior based on content specific cues (Dardenne & Leyens, 1995; Fiske & Von Hendy, 1992; Friedman & Miller-Herringer, 1991; Lippa & Donaldson, 1990; Wong & Watkins, 1996), self-attribution of emotion and self-judgment (Chen, Schechter, & Chaiken, 1996; Graziano & Bryant, 1998, Jones, Brenner, & Knight, 1990; Krosnick & Sedikides, 1990), leadership (Anderson & Tolson, 1991; Cronshaw & Ellis, 1991; Dobbins, Long, Dedrick, & Clemons, 1990; Zaccaro, Foti, & Kenny, 1991) and how one interacts inside of an

organization (Deluca, 1991; Fandt & Farris, 1990; Jenkins, 1993; Kilduff, 1992; Kilduff & Day, 1994).

Recent research on self-monitoring has focused on the validity and reliability of the self-monitoring scale and whether or not self-monitoring is a unitary phenomenon (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Gangestad and Snyder (2000) reappraised the self-monitoring scale and concluded that the scale does indeed measure what it purports to measure. Current research into the organizational implications of self-monitoring has been done in areas germane to this study, including: self-monitoring personality at work (Day et al., 2002), mentoring (Sosik & Lee, 2002), leadership (Sosik & Lee, 2002; Sosik, Potosky, & Jung, 2002) and performance (Sosik et al., 2002).

Self-monitoring and Leadership

The need for effective leadership is prevalent in organizations, and a person's ability to lead is a fundamental job skill. In order for organizations to be successful, it is important that they have an effective leader. Work by Day et al. (2002) suggests that self-monitoring may be one of the many factors that play a key role in the effectiveness of a leader. High self-monitors find it easier to initiate conversations, have rewarding interactions with groups, and discern the needs of other people. They also have high referent power and can more easily gain the acceptance of others (Day et al., 2002). All of these are key characteristics of effective leadership. Effective leaders are socially perceptive (self-monitoring), being able to provide insight into the needs, goals, demands and problems of different organizational constituents (Mumford et al., 2000).

Kolb (1998) not only found that high self-monitoring was a factor in self-reported scores on leader emergence, but also found this to be true when the group as a whole reported scores on leader emergence. The implications of this explain much of the consistency in how leaders are chosen given different situations. It is the emergent leader's ability to predict the needs of the organization and modify his/her behavior to reflect these needs that seems to make the difference. Kolb (1998) noted the ability of high self-monitors to be more flexible and adaptable in positions that require an individual to deal with diverse groups of people, a key component of leadership.

Keller (1999) studied the effects of self-monitoring on implicit leadership theory. This has important implications in business since employees are more likely to follow leaders whose personalities closely resemble their own. Keller (1999) related the "Big 5" personality trait of agreeableness to self-monitoring and hypothesized that in implicit leadership theory, the ideal leader trait of sensitivity is positively related to agreeableness (self-monitoring). Respondents who characterized themselves as agreeable also characterized their ideal leaders as sensitive, and since high self-monitors see themselves as sensitive, high self-monitors want leaders who are similar (Keller, 1999). There is an important managerial implication Keller (1999) derived from her results. If subordinates recognize only those supervisors that possess similar personality traits as themselves, then one manager will probably not be seen as a leader by all subordinates. That leader then has to have the necessary skills to continue to lead people who do not view the leader as sharing similar characteristics with themselves. Self-monitoring may provide the leader with the ability to do this effectively.

Sosik and Dworakivsky (1998) found a positive correlation between self-monitoring and charismatic leadership, in that these leaders consistently project self-confidence, a strong will to succeed, and the importance of their values and beliefs. A leader with a high self-monitoring ability may benefit from an ability to adapt to and connect with their followers—much like the charismatic or transformational leader. Indeed, research indicates that charismatic and transformational leaders are described by followers as trustworthy, admirable, worthy of respect; and evokes emotional affection, additional effort, and extraordinary accomplishments (Bass, 1997, Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993, Sosik & Dworakivsky, 1998).

A key characteristic of transformational leaders is their sensitive behavior, which is made possible by a leader's self-consciousness. Self-monitoring is analogous to sensitive behavior, and Sosik and Dworakivsky (1998) hypothesized that the transformational leader's self-consciousness is positively related to self-monitoring and that self-monitoring is positively related to ratings of transformational leaders as a whole.

Another key aspect of self-monitoring and its impact on leadership involves the leader's ability to mentor other employees. Mentors who are high self-monitors are better able to engage in mentoring behavior that best helps the protégé (Sosik & Lee, 2002). Specifically, high self-monitors are able to determine job preferences, obtain career-relevant knowledge and boundary-span better than low self-monitors—all of which are important functions of effective leaders (Snyder & Copeland, 1989). Mentors who are skilled in the above are better able to place their protégés in the proper positions, expose their protégés to the right people and better match their protégés with the appropriate skills to help them develop and grow (Sosik & Lee, 2002). Further, high self-

monitors tend to display the leadership behavior that organizations are most interested in others emulating (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000).

In keeping with self-monitoring and its relationship with mentoring, which is positively related to leadership, research on social judgment theory may provide a link between self-monitoring, mentoring, and leadership. Social judgment theory centers on one's ability to come up with inventive ways to fix complex social problems by one's ability to view the answers to such problems from a variety of different perspectives (Mumford et al., 2000). Research has shown a positive correlation with social judgment theory and mentorship and has shown how both play an important role in leadership (Sosik & Lee, 2002).

In summary, high self-monitors may be better mentors; and mentorship relates to leadership in that it plays a positive role in organizational outcomes, human development (Sosik & Lee, 2002), personal networks (Ibarra, 1993), information (Mullen, 1994), power (Ragins, 1997), social support (McManus & Russell, 1997) and transformational leadership (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000).

Self-Monitoring and Performance

People differ in the manner in which they observe, regulate and control the way others view their actions. This is crucial in understanding how self-monitoring can influence performance (Day et al., 2002). One of the goals of self-monitors is to influence positively the evaluations one receives, making self-monitoring a valuable tool in a variety of employment decisions, including those that affect the appraisal of one's performance (Day et al., 2002; Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984). Specifically, research on

self-monitoring and its impact on individual performance and advancement has found a positive correlation, with high self-monitors being able to show superior performance over low self-monitors (Holland, 1985; Snyder, 1987).

One of the key articles on self-monitoring and its effects on career performance was authored by Kilduff and Day (1994). One hundred and thirty-nine participants who recently had graduated with a master of business administration degree were tracked for five years. It has been suggested that performance and/or advancement is influenced by factors such as education, training, and discrimination (Becker, 1975; Stroh, Brett, & Reilly, 1992). However, Kilduff and Day (1994) suggest that personality factors—specifically self-monitoring—have been overlooked. In addition, the literature reviewed by Kilduff and Day (1994) suggests that self-monitoring may be correlated with career advancement proficiencies such as leadership.

Kilduff and Day (1994) proposed three hypotheses which have influence on leadership theory and leadership performance: 1) the career of a high self-monitor would be more likely to advance than the career of a low self-monitor; 2) high self-monitors are more likely to change jobs than low self-monitors; and 3) high self-monitors are more likely to move or travel at the request of their employers than low self-monitors. The results supported all three hypotheses. High self-monitors were willing to move more than low self-monitors and thus were promoted across the organization more than the low self-monitors. In addition to these findings, Kilduff and Day (1994) found that of the participants who remained with the same employer, the high self-monitors were more likely to be promoted than the low self-monitors.

Turban and Dougherty (1994) initiated a study that measured which personality characteristics may influence a subordinate's desire to seek a mentoring relationship, hypothesizing that mentoring was linked to performance. Turban and Dougherty (1994) purported that due to a high self-monitor's ability to recognize and seek out interpersonal and social cues, the high self-monitor would be able to realize the benefits of the mentoring process. In essence, high self-monitors would be more likely to initiate the mentoring process than low self-monitors, thus exhibiting better leadership skills. Turban and Dougherty (1994) not only found that high self-monitors did initiate the mentoring process more than low self-monitors, but also that high self-monitors were more likely to receive mentoring than low self-monitors. Furthermore, Turban and Dougherty (1994) noted that this process was correlated with performance, in terms of career accomplishment and career achievement. Thus they provided evidence to the supposition that high self-monitors are promoted faster and advance faster through the corporate levels than low self-monitors, a finding which supports the Kilduff and Day (1994) article on self-monitoring.

Warech and Smither (1998) were interested in the effects self-monitoring has on performance feedback with respect to supervisors, assessors, peers, and subordinates. Warech and Smither (1998) questioned whether high self-monitoring was linked to job-related interpersonal effectiveness (performance), or is it that high self-monitors are more adept at controlling or influencing the performance evaluations they receive? Two postulations were offered regarding why high self-monitors were rated higher by their supervisor than low self-monitors. One reason suggests that high self-monitors are better able to manipulate the supervisor's impression and hence strengthen the supervisor's

fondness for the employee (Warech & Smither, 1998). The other reason is based on the belief that high self-monitors are extremely sensitive to situational cues. It is this sensitivity that may enable high self-monitors to match correctly the appropriate work-related behavior to the specific demand at the time, and thus perform better, especially in complex, ever-changing, and hostile work environments (Warech & Smither, 1998).

Salancik and Pfeifer (1978) describe social information processing theory as the part of an individual's wants and perceptions that are affected by the environment. Salancik and Pfeifer (1978) believed that because people have the ability to adapt their behavior to their social environment, a person's social environment could play a big role in affecting job satisfaction and performance. It is this aspect of social information processing theory that may be directly related to self-monitors, who by definition adapt their behavior in reference to their environment.

In an article by Pollock, Whitbred, and Contractor (2000) on the relationship between social information processing theory and self-monitoring, the researchers found that high self-monitors are more influenced by the social environment than low self-monitors. This may play a significant part in explaining the role of self-monitoring in performance, considering the relationship between performance and the environment. An important implication of this article was that Pollock et al. (2000) also found high self-monitoring to be correlated with job satisfaction.

There have been other theories that help to explain the correlation between self-monitoring and performance. The theory of self-regulation suggests that a manager who can adapt to different organizational contexts and requirements will perform better than a manager who is not as adept in organizational adaptation (Atwater & Yammarino, 1997;

Tsui & Ashford, 1994; Wood & Bandura, 1989). Self-monitoring is a key component of the self-regulation model and how it predicts managerial performance. Specifically, self-monitoring affects self-regulation theory through the leader's ability to understand the satisfaction expectation of others to performance (Manz & Sims, 1993). Atwater, Ostroff, Yammarino, and Fleenor (1998) researched managerial effectiveness and confirmed the correlation between self-monitoring, self-regulation, and performance. High self-monitors are able to detect discrepancies that may hinder their ability to engage in effective leadership behavior, thus affecting performance (Sosik, Potosky, & Jung, 2002).

Research also indicates that self-monitoring is correlated with performance outside of the United States. High self-monitors are trailblazers, constantly looking for new opportunities—such as expatriate opportunities. Research has suggested that high self-monitors perform better as expatriates. With this in mind, Caligiuri and Day (2000) hypothesized that self-monitoring would be positively correlated with expatriate-specific performance. The results of their study indicated that self-monitoring was indeed positively related to expatriate-specific performance. It may be that the self-monitoring part of a leader's personality enables that leader to fine-tune behavior based on the current situation and culture.

Given the review of the self-monitoring literature above, and the documented relationship between self-monitoring, leadership and performance, the following hypotheses are offered:

Hypothesis 8- Self-monitoring will be positively correlated with transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 9- Self-monitoring will be positively correlated with individual job performance.

Hypothesis 10- Self-monitoring will positively mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual job performance.

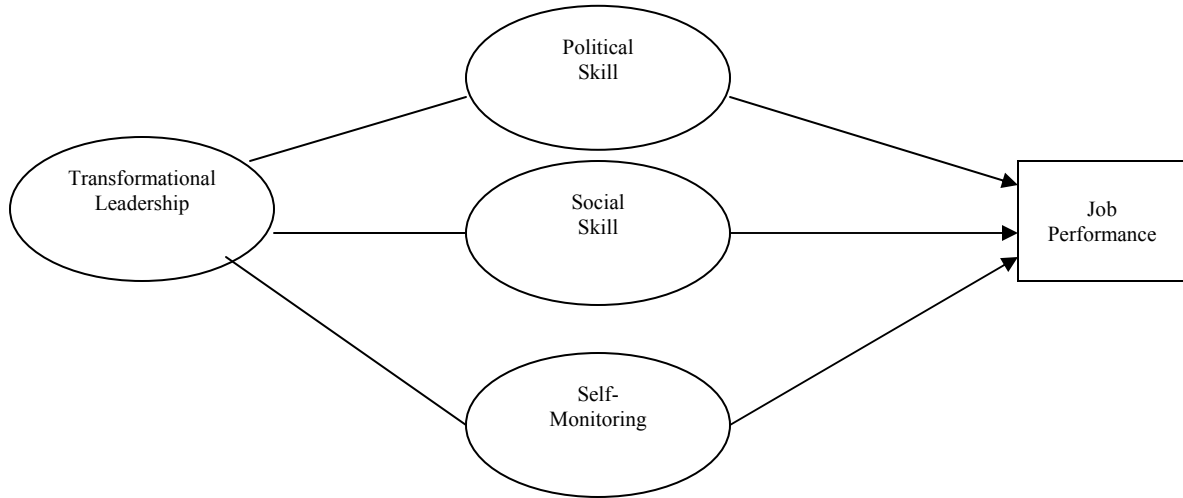


Figure 4. Relationship between the mediators political skill, social skill and self-monitoring with individual job performance and transformational leadership.

METHODS

Sample

The 420 American-based colleges of business accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) were invited to participate in this study. AACSB universities were chosen because of AACSB's commitment to excellence in business administration, its support for the *Code of Good Practice for Accrediting Bodies* of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA), and its recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). AACSB accreditation is a voluntary process that includes evaluation by both the member

institution and its peers. This is an important distinction. Universities elect to go through the rigor and expense to be accredited by the AACSB.

The demands predicated by AACSB accreditation are similar to those faced by organizations and managers, thus making this study more generalizable from the academic world to the business world. Like present-day organizations, AACSB accreditation forces its members to acknowledge and plan for global economic forces, differences in organizational and cultural values, diversity among employees and customers, and changing technology in products and processes. Just as leaders have external pressures to perform, so do deans of AACSB accredited colleges of business who strive to maintain this prestigious accreditation.

The various measures used in this study called for input from both deans and the department heads of the contributing dean, resulting in two survey distributions. The first (Phase I) to all AACSB deans, the second (Phase II) to the department heads of the deans who chose to participate. A complete data set consisted of the dean from a particular university and: a) one department head who responded regarding the leadership of the dean; and b) one department head who responded regarding the individual performance of the dean. In cases where multiple department heads responded, these instances were treated as separate complete data sets.

Four hundred twenty surveys were mailed to the deans of AACSB accredited colleges of business. Of this, approximately 119 deans participated, for a phase one response rate of 28%. The department heads of the 119 responding deans were sent their own survey packets. Responses were included in the study only when completed surveys were received from both a department head describing the leadership style of the dean

and from a department head regarding the individual performance of the dean. Of the 119 deans who responded in phase one, 87 sets of department heads responded to both leadership style and individual performance, for an initial phase two response rate of 73%. However, this study only focused on leaders who were scored as transformational. Of the 87 initial responses in phase two, 70 deans were scored by their department heads as transformational leaders. The sample did not appear to be biased by the age, size or location (urban, suburban, region, etc.) of the college or whether the college was private or public.

Measures

Independent variable. The transformational leadership style of each dean was obtained by randomly selecting half of the department heads, at that dean's institution, to complete the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire-Form 5X (MLQ 5X) (Avolio et al., 1999). This is a 36-item questionnaire measured on a five-point scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 4 (frequently, if not always). The coefficient alpha internal consistency reliability estimate is .93 (Avolio et al., 1999). This questionnaire measures six factors of leadership: four factors related to transformational leadership and two factors related to transactional leadership. All items regarding transformational leadership were averaged to create a single index tapping transformational leadership. Prior research has used this technique on the MLQ-5X, obtaining an alpha of .93 (Shin & Zhou, 2003).

The four components of transformational leadership are as follows: *inspirational motivation*, 12-items (e.g., emphasizes the collective mission), *intellectual stimulation*, 4-

items (e.g., re-examines assumptions), *individualized consideration*, 4-items (e.g., teaches and/or coaches), and *idealized influence*, 8-items (e.g., followers emulate behavior).

When measuring transformational leadership, the MLQ 5X is the most widely used measure despite past criticism for measuring follower, rather than leader behavior (Bono & Judge, 2003). In a re-examination of the current version of the MLQ 5X, the authors of the measure were able to show validity, reliability, and an adequate fit of the multidimensionality of the transformational leadership model (Avolio et al., 1999).

Dependent Variable. The individual performance of each dean was obtained via the responses of at least one department head serving under that dean. Department heads rated their deans' individual performance using the Administration Effectiveness in Higher Education (AEHE) survey (Heck, Johnsrud, & Rosser, 2000). This is a survey instrument designed to fill the gap in performance surveys for higher education. This survey has a generalizability coefficient of .84 and an internal consistency reliability coefficient of .97; suggesting the survey yields accurate information about the deans' effectiveness in carrying out the responsibilities of the role as perceived by the department heads (Heck, et al., 2000).

The AEHE consists of 57 items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (poor) to 5 (outstanding). The 57 items span seven leadership effectiveness dimensions or constructs: 1) *vision and goal setting*, 12 items (e.g., articulates clearly the strategic goals of the unit); 2) *management of the unit*, nine items (e.g., insures that fair administrative procedures are followed); 3) *interpersonal relationships*, ten items (e.g., demonstrates awareness of the quality of professional work of unit members); 4) *communication skills*, eight items (e.g., effectively represents the unit and its members to

the rest of the university); 5) *research/professional/campus endeavors*, six items (e.g., pursues professional growth opportunities); 6) *quality of education in the unit*, seven items (e.g., advances the unit's undergraduate programs effectively); and 7) *support for institutional diversity*, five items (e.g., demonstrates commitment to advancing and supporting equal employment opportunities). As with the MLQ-5X, all items regarding a dean's individual performance were averaged to create a single index tapping job performance in total.

Mediating Variables. The dean's *political skill* was measured via six items developed by Ferris et al. (1999). The Political Skill Inventory was given to the dean and utilized a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Responses to the six items are summed and averaged into a composite, with higher scores indicating greater political skill. The coefficient alpha internal consistency reliability estimate was .71 (Ferris et al., 1999). Some examples from the inventory include: (a) I find it easy to envision myself in the position of others; and (b) I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me.

The dean's *social skill* was measured via seven items developed by Ferris et al. (2001). This measure utilizes a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The coefficient alpha internal consistency reliability estimate is .81 for the leader and .88 for the leader's constituents (Ferris et al., 2001). Responses to the seven items were averaged into a composite, with higher scores reflecting higher levels of social skill. Some examples from the inventory include: (a) In social situations, it is always clear to me exactly what to say and do; and (b) I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others.

The dean's *self-monitoring* ability was measured using the revised Self-Monitoring Questionnaire developed by Snyder and Gangestad (1986). This is an 18-item instrument given to the dean. The revised scale is considered to be a more reliable version of Snyder's original 25-item scale (1974), with which it correlates at a .93 level (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). The Self-Monitoring Questionnaire is a true/false instrument where correct (true) items are tallied, with a higher score indicative of high self-monitoring. The coefficient alpha internal consistency reliability estimate is .80 (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). Some examples from this questionnaire include: (a) I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people; and (b) I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.

Other Variable Considerations. Dean tenure and classification of the dean's university were two variables in the data thought to potentially influence the data. For example, if the dean was new to the position, how would the department heads be able to evaluate the dean's leadership style and individual job performance? Similarly, with 420 AACSB accredited universities in the population set, how would the different types of universities affect the responses? For example, the mission and approach of one university, one with a large college of business and a research focus, could vary significantly from another university, one with a smaller college of business and a teaching emphasis.

Taking this into account, the deans who responded had to have been dean of that university for a minimum of one academic calendar year. Further, to account for the different classifications of universities, the *U.S News* was used as a measure of university classification. The *U.S. News* groups schools based on the Carnegie classifications. The

Carnegie classifications were determined by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in late 2000. The Carnegie classifications group American colleges and universities according to their mission as defined by factors such as the highest level of degrees conferred by discipline. Specialty schools, colleges with enrollments below 200, and schools whose undergraduate focus is other than traditional students are not ranked. This system is the generally accepted classification system for higher education. In order for schools to be considered in this study, the school had to fall within one of the Carnegie Foundation classifications.

Mediator Regression Analysis. The most common method for testing mediation effects in social science research is based on a four step multiple regression procedure that uses three regression equations to establish a mediation relationship between a predictor variable, in this study the predictor variable is transformational leadership, and an outcome variable, in this study the outcome variable is individual job performance (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002). Given that there are three mediators (political skill, social skill and self-monitoring) in this study, this four step procedure will have to be run three times.

Developed by Kenny and others (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Judd & Kenny, 1981; Kenny, Kashy, & Bolger, 1998), step one (path c) involves being able to show a significant relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome variable. The second step (path a) involves showing how the predictor variable is related to the mediator. The third step (path b) involves showing how the mediator is related to the outcome variable. Finally, the fourth step (path c') involves showing that the strength of the relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome variable is significantly

weakened by the presence of the mediator in the equation. Frazier, Tix, and Barron (2004) do an excellent job of modeling the four step procedure. The model is as follows:

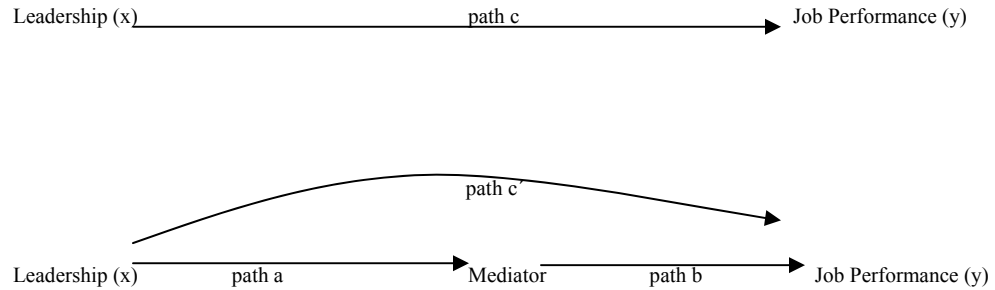


Figure 5. Four-step procedure for assessing the strength of a mediator variable.

Following Neter, Kutner, Nachtsheim, and Wasserman (1996), and using linear regression terms, the four step process is as follows:

Step One/path c: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta X + \varepsilon$ Where Y is job performance, β_0 and β are parameters, X is leadership, ε is random error.

Step two/path a: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta X + \varepsilon$ Where Y is the mediator, β_0 and β are parameters, X is leadership, ε is random error.

Step three/path b: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta X + \beta X^2 + \varepsilon$ Where Y is job performance, β_0 and β are parameters, X is leadership, X^2 is the mediator, ε is random error.

Step four/path c': $\sqrt{b^2 sa^2 + a^2 sb^2 + sa^2 sb^2}$

The result of this equation is the z statistic for testing step four/path c'. In this equation, a and b are unstandardized regression coefficients and sa and sb are their standard errors. The mediated effect divided by its standard error produces a z statistic of the mediator. The z statistic is then referenced in the z chart against 1.96. If the z

statistic is greater than 1.96, the mediator is significant at the .05 level (Frazier et al., 2004).

RESULTS

Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations of the study variables are shown in Table 1. Transformational leader scores were comprised as the average of the following scales: Idealized Influence (Attributed), Idealized Influence (Behavior), Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation and Individualized Consideration.

Hypothesis Tests

Mediated regression results. The use of multiple raters and multiple scales, and an analysis of p-values and R^2 , indicate that multicollinearity is not a problem. Also, tests for normality demonstrated no violations of assumptions underlying the regressions.

Hypothesis 1—Transformational leadership style will be positively correlated with individual job performance. Regression analysis was conducted to assess if transformational leadership style predicted individual job performance. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Results of transformational leadership style predicting job performance were significant, $F(1, 70) = 5.98, p < .05$; transformational leadership style accounts for 6.6% of the variance in job performance of the deans. Table 2 presents the regression coefficients, p-values and correlation coefficients. For every one-unit increase in transformational leadership style, job performance increases by 0.59 units. A Pearson correlation was conducted to examine if a relationship exists between transformational leadership style and job performance. The results indicate that a

significant positive relationship exists between transformational leadership style and job performance, $r = 0.26$; thus job performance scores were higher where the dean's leadership style was scored as transformational.

Hypothesis 2—Political skill will be positively correlated with transformational leadership. Regression analysis was conducted to assess if transformational leadership style predicted political skill. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Results of transformational leadership style predicting political skill were not significant, $F(1, 70) = 1.41, p = .47$; transformational leadership style did not significantly account for any of the variance in political skill. Table 2 presents the beta coefficients, p-value and correlation coefficient for transformational leadership style predicting political skill. A Pearson correlation was conducted to examine if a relationship exists between transformational leadership style and political skill. The results indicate that no significant relationship exists between transformational leadership style and political skill, $r = 0.04$.

Hypothesis 3—Political skill will be positively correlated with individual job performance. Regression analysis was conducted to assess if political skill predicted individual job performance. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Results of political skill predicting individual job performance were not significant, $F(1, 70) = 0.21, p = .69$; political skill accounted for only 0.2% of the variance in job performance. Table 2 presents the beta coefficients, p-value and correlation coefficient for political skill predicting job performance. A Pearson point biserial correlation was conducted to examine if a relationship exists between job performance and political skill.

The results indicate that no significant relationship existed between individual job performance and political skill, $r = 0.04$.

Hypothesis 4—Political skill will positively mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual job performance. Hypothesis four was examined using mediation analyses established by Baron and Kenny (1986). For this mediation analysis three regressions are conducted. If the three regressions are significant, then a fourth regression was conducted to determine the power of the mediation effect.

The first regression, in which transformational leadership style was used to predict individual job performance, was significant. $F(1, 70) = 5.98, p < .05, R^2 = .06$. In the second regression, transformational leadership style was used to predict political skill. It was insignificant. $F(1, 70) = 0.01, p = .943, R^2 = .001$. Likewise, the third regression in which both transformational leadership style and political skill were used to predict job performance was not significant. $F(2, 69) = 2.98, p = .056, R^2 = .066$ (see Table 3).

Several conditions must be met for successful mediation to stand. Specifically, transformational leadership style must separately influence political skill and job performance (this is tested in the first two regression equations), and political skill must have a unique influence on job performance while accounting for transformational leadership style (this is tested in the third regression equation). Mediation holds if these conditions are met and if there is a reduction in the effect of transformational leadership style on job performance once political skill is added to the equation (this is assessed by comparing the second and third equations). “Perfect” mediation holds if transformational

leadership style no longer has a significant influence on individual job performance once political skill is added to the regression equation.

Significant relationships were not revealed in the second and third regression equations, suggesting that political skill does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership style and individual job performance. The effect size, $z = .189$, was also not significant. Because there was insignificance in regressions two and three, the fourth regression (testing the strength of the mediation effect) was not run.

Hypothesis 5—Social skill will be positively correlated with transformational leadership. Regression analysis was conducted to assess if transformational leadership style predicted social skill. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Results of transformational leadership style predicting social skill were not significant, $F(1, 70) = 0.21, p = .646$; transformational leadership style accounted for only 0.2% of the variance in social skill. Table 2 presents the beta coefficients, p-value and correlation coefficient for transformational leadership style predicting social skill. A Pearson point biserial correlation was conducted to examine if a relationship existed between transformational leadership style and social skill. The results indicate that no significant relationship existed between transformational leadership style and social skill, $r = 0.07$.

Hypothesis 6—Social skill will be positively correlated with individual job performance. Regression analysis was conducted to assess if social skill predicted individual job performance. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Results of social skill predicting job performance were not significant, $F(1, 70) = 1.56, p = .215$; social skill accounted for only 1.7% of the variance in job performance. Table 2 presents the beta coefficients, p-value and correlation coefficient for social skill

predicting job performance. A Pearson point biserial correlation was conducted to examine if a relationship existed between job performance and social skill. The results indicate that no significant relationship existed between individual job performance and social skill, $r = 0.02$.

Hypothesis 7—Social skill will positively mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual job performance. Hypothesis seven was examined using mediation analyses established by Baron and Kenny (1986). For this mediation analysis three regressions are conducted. If all three regressions had been significant, then a fourth regression would have been conducted to determine the power of the mediation effect.

The first regression in which transformational leadership style was used to predict individual job performance was significant. $F(1, 705) = 5.98, p < .05, R^2 = .06$. In the second regression, transformational leadership style was used to predict social skill. It was not significant. $F(1, 70) = 0.21, p = .65, R^2 = .002$. However, the third regression, in which both transformational leadership style and social skill were used to predict individual job performance, was significant. $F(2, 69) = 3.71, p < .05, R^2 = .081$ (see Table 4).

Several conditions must be met for successful mediation to stand. Specifically, transformational leadership style must separately influence social skill and job performance (this is tested in the first two regression equations), and social skill must have a unique influence on job performance while accounting for transformational leadership style (this is tested in the third regression equation). Mediation holds if these conditions are met and if there is a reduction in the effect of transformational leadership

style on job performance once social skill is added to the equation (this is assessed by comparing the second and third equations). “Perfect” mediation holds if transformational leadership style no longer has a significant influence on job performance once social skill is added to the regression equation.

A significant relationship was not revealed in the second regression equation suggesting that social skill does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership style and individual job performance. The effect size, $z = 1.18$, was also not significant. Because there was insignificance in regression two, the fourth regression (testing the strength of the mediation effect) was not run.

Hypothesis 8—Self monitoring will be positively correlated with transformational leadership. Regression analysis was conducted to assess if transformational leadership style predicted self monitoring. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Results of transformational leadership style predicting self monitoring were not significant, $F(1, 70) = 0.09, p = .758$; transformational leadership style accounted for only 0.1% of the variance in self monitoring. Table 2 presents the beta coefficients, p-value and correlation coefficient for transformational leadership style predicting self monitoring. A Pearson point biserial correlation was conducted to examine if a relationship existed between transformational leadership style and self monitoring. The results indicate that no significant relationship existed between transformational leadership style and self monitoring, $r = 0.20$.

Hypothesis 9—Self monitoring will be positively correlated with individual job performance. Regression analysis was conducted to assess if self monitoring predicted individual job performance. The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met.

Results of self monitoring predicting individual job performance were not significant, $F(1, 70) = 0.01, p = .92$; self monitoring accounted for none of the variance in job performance. Table 2 presents the beta coefficients, p-value and correlation coefficients for self monitoring predicting job performance. A Pearson point biserial correlation was conducted to examine if a relationship existed between self monitoring and job performance. The results indicate that no significant relationship existed between self monitoring and job performance, $r = 0.01$.

Hypothesis 10—Self monitoring will positively mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual job performance. Hypothesis ten was examined using mediation analyses established by Baron and Kenny (1986). For this mediation analysis three regressions are conducted. If all three regressions had been significant, then a fourth regression would have been conducted to determine the power of the mediation effect.

The first regression, in which transformational leadership style was used to predict individual job performance, was significant. $F(1, 70) = 5.98, p < .05, R^2 = .06$. In the second regression, transformational leadership style was used to predict self monitoring. It was not significant. $F(1, 70) = 0.09, p = .76, R^2 = .001$. Likewise, the third regression in which both transformational leadership style and self monitoring were used to predict job performance was not significant. $F(2, 69) = 2.98, p = .06, R^2 = .066$ (see Table 5).

Several conditions must be met for successful mediation to stand. Specifically, transformational leadership style must separately influence self monitoring and job performance (this is tested in the first two regression equations), and self monitoring must

have a unique influence on job performance while accounting for transformational leadership style (this is tested in the third regression equation). Mediation holds if these conditions are met and if there is a reduction in the effect of transformational leadership style on job performance once self monitoring is added to the equation (this is assessed by comparing the second and third equations). “Perfect” mediation holds if transformational leadership style no longer has a significant influence on job performance once self monitoring is added to the regression equation.

Significant relationships were not revealed in the second and third regression equations, suggesting that self monitoring does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership style and job performance. The effect size, $z = 0.20$, was also not significant. Because there was not significance in regressions two and three, the fourth regression (testing the strength of the mediation effect) was not run.

Post Regression Analysis

To recap, a review of the literature and an analysis of prior research studies suggested that there may be a link between the three mediators in this study (political skill, social skill and self monitoring) and individual job performance. Indeed, hypotheses three, six and nine were set up to measure such a relationship. However, in this study, there were no significant findings to suggest that any of the mediators had an impact on individual job performance. Given the contradictory results, post regression analysis was done on each mediator and its individual relationship with the seven constructs that made up the job performance scale.

Step 1—Cronbach's alpha. The job performance scale used in this study was the Administration Effectiveness in Higher Education (AEHE) survey. The survey consists of seven constructs as described in the methods section. A Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each of the seven underlying constructs that make up the AEHE survey. Cronbach's alpha is an index of reliability associated with the variation accounted for by the true score of the "underlying construct" (Cronbach, 1951). Alpha coefficient scores range in value from zero to one, with a higher score indicating higher reliability and acceptable reliability coefficients are often .70 or higher (Nunnally, 1978). Cronbach's alpha for all seven constructs were extremely high, .97 or above (see Table 6).

Step 2—Regression analysis. Once it was determined that there was high internal reliability among the AEHE constructs, the next step was to run individual regressions to test for significance between each of the mediators (there are three) and each of the constructs (there are seven); a total of 21 regressions were run (see Table 7). The generic form for each hypothesis in *Step 2* is as follows: "Mediator X is positively correlated with individual job performance construct Y."

Only two of the 21 regression iterations were found to be significant. The two significant regressions were: 1) social skill was positively correlated with vision and goal setting and 2) social skill was positively correlated with management of the unit. All other regression iterations were found to be insignificant.

DISCUSSION

As business continues to become more global in nature and the complexity of organizations increase, leaders are asked to get more and more out of their followers.

Indeed, it is the leaders who are able to identify and address the challenges faced by their followers, as well as adapt to the many different types of people, who stand the better chances of success. It follows that leaders with this adaptive, people-centric style of leadership (transformational leaders) are better leaders than those who are not. In fact, there have been numerous studies supporting the correlation between transformational leaders and individual performance (Avolio, 1999). What remain unclear are the different characteristics that separate good transformational leaders from great transformational leaders.

Following a call for research by Bass and his colleagues (2003) and Yukl (1999), the goal of this dissertation was to address the lack of studies on the variables that mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and individual performance. Political skill was selected due to the innately political nature of many organizations. Further, leaders may be able to transfer training and creativity into actionable, performance-oriented outcomes due to their social skill. For this reason, social skill was thought to be an important mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and individual job performance. Finally, Day and her colleagues (2002) found that leaders who were high self-monitors find it easier to initiate conversations, have rewarding interactions with groups, discern the needs of other people, gain the acceptance of others and have high referent power. These characteristics of effective leadership were thought to influence individual job performance, thus self-monitoring was identified as a potential mediator. Given the above, it was hypothesized that political skill, social skill and self-monitoring would have a positive impact on the individual performance ratings of transformational leaders.

As hypothesized, transformational leadership was found to be positively correlated with individual job performance. However, the mediation relationships for each of the three mediators were not as clear—social skill showed the most promise. Despite this, I believe these results have interesting implications, and discuss below what I see as the key contributions and limitations of the study, as well as directions for future research.

Contributions to Theory and Research

The majority of current studies regarding transformational leadership are based on the work of Bass in which a transformational leadership style has been shown to be effective across leaders, across management hierarchies, across organizations, and across cultures (Bass, 1985, 1997). However, never has this research been conducted in academia with a population focus on the unique relationship between a dean (leader) and his/her department heads (followers). As research on transformational leadership began to increase, a host of studies focused on its relationship with performance. Much of this research concluded that job performance was greater in followers of transformational leaders (Bono & Judge, 2003). I also argued that in this study, with its unique population set, transformational leadership would be positively correlated with job performance. Indeed, this was the case, further strengthening the research on transformational leadership and performance.

While many studies have examined politics in the organization, little research has been conducted on the political skill of the leaders (Perrewe, et al., 2004). Given the political nature of most organizations, effective leaders need to possess the ability to

sway, win over and influence their followers. Ahearn et al. (2004) argued that effective leaders know which situations require the use of their political skills; those with such skills positively influence performance (Thomas, 1995). When it comes to leader performance that separates some leaders from others, it is the leader's political skills that "are the secret weapon of winning leaders" (Peled, 2000: 20). Answering a call to research on variables that mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance, it was my contention that political skill would be effective. When measuring the influence of political skill on transformational leadership and individual performance, political skill exhibited an effect, but the effect size was not significant. In isolation, political skill did not have a significant relationship with transformational leadership ($p=.47$) or job performance ($p=.69$). However, when tested as a mediator for the two constructs, there was some correlation, though the size of the effect of political skill as a mediator was not large enough to be significant ($p=.056$). These results indicate potential for political skill and suggest it has utility for the transformational leader.

How one interacts socially with one's peers is relevant in almost every job in today's business environment (Hogan & Shelton, 1998). The same should be true in an academic or non-profit setting. Social skill has been referred to as a facilitator between personality and job performance (Hogan & Shelton, 1998). Wayne et al. (1997) studied over 1400 individuals in a variety of different positions and found that social skill served as the single best predictor of performance. Further, social skills help leaders set organizational goals to evaluate effectively both self and others (Schmeck, 1988). Citing Ferris et al. (2001), those high in social skills are more apt to influence and motivate, all of which directly affected the leader's performance. It followed that in my study, a

dean's ability to be socially adept would pay dividends in his/her performance, as rated by the department heads. Not surprisingly, this was the case. In fact, social skill was the only mediator to have significance; however, the individual relationships between social skill and transformational leadership were not significant enough to test the strength of the mediator. This seems to indicate that social skill does have some marginal effect as a mediator. Future research on what makes transformational leaders high performers should include social skill as a mediator and focus on a methodology that measures the strength of the mediation effect through further analysis.

Research on self-monitoring has indicated its relevance in a number of different organizational contexts. Work by Day et al. (2002) suggests that self-monitoring may be one of the many factors that play a key role in the effectiveness of a leader. It is the effective leader who is able to predict the needs of the organization and modify his/her behavior to reflect these needs. Self-monitors are able to adapt their behavior to others, which has important implications in organizations since employees are more likely to follow leaders whose personalities closely resemble their own (Keller, 1999). Self-monitors also have the ability to adapt to the personalities of others. This may have an impact on transformational leaders as they are able to consistently project self-confidence, a strong will to succeed, and the importance of their values and beliefs (Sosik & Dworakivsky, 1998). Research on self-monitoring and its impact on performance has shown a positive correlation, with high self-monitors able to show superior performance over low self-monitors (Holland, 1985; Snyder, 1987). With this in mind, my study focused on the dean's self-monitoring ability and a hypothesis that positioned self-monitoring as a mediator between transformational leadership and individual job

performance. While there was a weak correlation, the effect size of self-monitoring as a mediator was not significant ($p=.06$). As with political skill, there may be potential for self-monitoring as a mediator.

Post-regression analysis was conducted to try and learn more about the potential relationship between individual job performance and the mediators: political skill, social skill and self-monitoring. There were seven constructs that comprised the job performance scale. Each construct was regressed against each mediator to investigate for significance in these relationships. With the exception of two iterations, the mediators did not have a significant relationship with the job performance constructs. The first exception was found in analyzing the mediator social skill. It was positively correlated with vision and goal setting, confirming my belief that a transformational leader's ability to motivate his/her followers to align with his/her vision for the organization has an impact on that leader's individual performance.

In this analysis, the only other exception was again with the mediator social skill. It was positively correlated with management of the unit. This was not unexpected, as a transformational leader's ability to connect with his/her followers should make it easier for that leader to convince his/her followers of the value in that leader's style and in the way that leader operates the department/unit/college. Belief in, and agreement with, the way the leader is running the unit would positively influence individual job performance.

Limitations and Future Research

Although the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance has been well substantiated, one of the limitations of this study was the lack

of research on what mediates this relationship and the lack of measurable constructs that had been examined. This left the door wide open for mediator selection and it was beyond the scope of this study to examine all potential candidates. Thus, the mediators selected would play a critical role in the success of this study. While a review of the literature indicated promise for political skill, social skill and self-monitoring, these mediators proved to be insignificant. I recommend that researchers conducting future studies examine a broader set of mediators to see what other variables may have mediating effects on the relationship between transformational leadership and individual job performance.

The inclusion of other performance-related variables as controls should also be considered. Future conceptual work incorporating how different leaders, all scoring as transformational, vary in their job performance will be critically important in this area of research. There is little understanding as to why leader A and leader B, both equally transformational in their leadership styles, can have widely differing individual performance ratings from their respective followers.

Another limitation is that political skill, social skill and self-monitoring are measured only through self-reported assessments. Although this procedure might be acceptable as an initial test of these ideas, future efforts should include additional assessments, such as peer perspectives, in order to ensure the mediators are being captured in the most valid manner possible.

Finally, the unique nature of the population selected in this study may have been a limitation. To some extent, I was constrained by the parameters of the data collection scenario and had to limit the amount of information that could be collected. Specifically,

a multi-phase study, completely contingent on the response rate of phase one played a key role in the amount of data collected. A larger sample with a higher power might have provided better significance, especially with political skill and self-monitoring, where the significance levels were $p=.056$ and $p=.06$ respectively. Further, very few studies use academics as their population. To my knowledge this was the first attempt to measure four different attributes of a dean in an AACSB accredited college of business and correlate those attributes with an independent assessment of that dean's individual job performance. In addition, the AACSB accreditation process encourages transformational leadership behaviors. The activities the colleges must engage in to remain accredited are clearly spelled out and such activities lend themselves to and may benefit from transformational leadership. In a more traditional business setting, the business leader often does not have a checklist of what to do and how to do it (e.g., retaining accreditation). While it was posited that the relationship characteristics between a dean and a department head in academia would be generalizable to that of a supervisor and a subordinate in other organizations, future research should either attempt to confirm this generalizability or focus on more traditional business environments and populations.

Implications for Practice

The results of the present study provide some interesting implications for practice. First of all, this study provides further support for leaders who are transformational in their leadership style. Transformational leadership continues to correlate well with individual performance. As future leaders continue to develop their leadership skills, it

appears that efforts to be transformational leaders may assist these individuals with their success.

Whether the mediation effect size was insignificant (e.g. political skill, self-monitoring) or significant (e.g. social skill) the results of this study indicate that leaders can benefit from having these skills in their toolkit. Skills such as the ones mentioned above may help leaders be better as measured by job performance. With so many different generations in the workplace (baby boomers, generation X, generation Y and the millennials), successful leaders will need to draw on a variety of skills to perform up to organizational expectations—expectations that only become higher as one's career progresses. This study, with its focus on political skill, social skill and self-monitoring, makes a case for three such skills.

Conclusion

I want to emphasize the importance of efforts to continue to define and develop mediators that have proven effects on the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance. The job performance literature seems to suggest that these three mediators may have merit when examined in a transformational leadership context. However, research has yet to fully examine the wide range of potential mediators that influence this relationship (Yukl, 1999; Bass et al., 2003). Research on mediation effects is complex and needs to be conducted carefully, effectively and evaluated systematically. It is simply not enough for one to run multiple regressions, obtain significance and declare that a variable is a mediator. Studies that truly advance this area of leadership will also strive to determine the effect size of the mediator. This

study provides evidence in support of using social skill as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and individual performance. Further, political skill and self-monitoring exhibited an effect, and while the size of that effect was not significant, these constructs warrant future consideration as well.

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Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations and Intercorrelations of the Study Variables^a

Variable	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1) Transformational Leaders	3.59	0.91											
2) Political Skill	4.26	0.48	-0.04										
3) Social Skill	3.66	0.49	0.07	0.54									
4) Self-Monitoring	1.62	0.13	0.20	0.16	0.32								
5) Job Performance	3.88	0.92	0.26	0.04	0.02	0.01							
6) Vision & Goal Setting	3.86	1.15	0.29	0.08	0.17	0.01	0.97						
7) Management of the Unit	3.86	1.09	0.26	0.09	0.16	-0.01	0.96	0.93					
8) Interpersonal Relationships	4.00	1.10	0.31	0.09	0.13	0.02	0.96	0.91	0.93				
9) Communication Skills	3.86	1.15	0.33	-0.01	0.13	0.00	0.96	0.92	0.92	0.90			
10) Research/Professional/Campus Endeavors	3.74	1.19	0.37	-0.03	0.06	0.03	0.92	0.85	0.83	0.86	0.88		
11) Quality of Education in the Unit	3.94	1.09	0.34	0.00	0.12	0.02	0.96	0.93	0.90	0.89	0.91	0.88	
12) Support for Institutional Diversity	3.82	1.18	0.25	-0.03	0.00	0.01	0.87	0.81	0.80	0.80	0.78	0.84	0.85

^aCorrelation coefficients of .20 or greater are significant at $p < .01$. Correlation coefficients that are greater than .16 and less than .20 are significant at $p < .05$. $n=70$

Table 2

Regression Coefficients, P-values and Correlation Coefficients

Predictors	B	SE	B	T	p-value	r
Transformational Leadership Style Predicting Job Performance	0.59	0.24	0.26	2.47	.017*	.26
Transformational Leadership Style Predicting Political Skill	0.01	0.13	0.01	0.07	.943	.04
Political Skill Predicting Job Performance	0.08	0.20	0.04	0.39	.696	.04
Transformational Leadership Style Predicting Social Skill	0.06	0.13	0.05	0.46	.646	.07
Social Skill Predicting Job Performance	0.25	0.20	0.13	1.25	.215	.13
Transformational Leadership Style Predicting Self-Monitoring	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.31	.758	.20
Self Monitoring Predicting Job Performance	0.01	0.75	0.01	0.10	.925	.01

*Significant at $p < .05$

Table 3

Summary of Regression Analyses for Transformational Leadership Style and Job Performance Mediated by Political Skill

Criterion	Predictors	B	SE	β	p-value
<i>Equation 1</i>					
Job Performance	Transformational Leadership Style	0.59	0.24	0.26	.017*
<i>Equation 2</i>					
Political Skill	Transformational Leadership Style	0.01	0.13	0.01	.943
<i>Equation 3</i>					
Job Performance	Transformational Leadership Style	0.59	0.24	0.26	.056**
	Political Skill	0.04	0.20	0.02	

*Significant at $p < .05$; **significant at $p < .10$

Table 4

Summary of Regression Analyses for Transformational Leadership Style and Job Performance Mediated by Social Skill

Criterion	Predictors	B	SE	β	p-value
<i>Equation 1</i>					
Job Performance	Transformational Leadership Style	0.59	0.24	0.26	.017*
<i>Equation 2</i>					
Social Skill	Transformational Leadership Style	0.06	0.13	0.05	.65
<i>Equation 3</i>					
Job Performance	Transformational Leadership Style	0.59	0.24	0.26	.023
	Social Skill	0.23	0.19	0.12	

*Significant at $p < .05$

Table 5

Summary of Regression Analyses for Transformational Leadership Style and Job Performance Mediated by Self Monitoring Ability

Criterion	Predictors	B	SE	β	p-value
<i>Equation 1</i>					
Job Performance	Transformational Leadership Style	0.59	0.24	0.26	.017*
<i>Equation 2</i>					
Self Monitoring	Transformational Leadership Style	0.01	0.04	0.03	.76
<i>Equation 3</i>					
Job Performance	Transformational Leadership Style	0.59	0.24	0.26	.06**
	Self Monitoring	0.15	0.74	0.02	

*Significant at $p < .05$; **significant at $p < .10$

Table 6

Correlation Coefficients and Internal Consistency Coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	Correlation (r)	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Vision & Goal Setting	.97	.98
Management of the Unit	.96	.97
Interpersonal Relationships	.96	.98
Communication Skills	.96	.97
Research/Professional/Campus Endeavors	.92	.97
Quality of Education in the Unit	.96	.98
Support for Institutional Diversity	.87	.97

Table 7

Regression Mediator “X” Predicting Job Performance Construct “Y”

Regression Iteration	F-Table: F, .05(1,70)	F-Stat Value	Sig. at p<.05	Correlation (r)
Political Skill predicting Vision & Goal Setting	3.98	4.29	No	.08
Political Skill predicting Management of the Unit	3.98	2.94	No	.09
Political Skill predicting Interpersonal Relationships	3.98	3.56	No	.09
Political Skill predicting Communication Skills	3.98	1.49	No	-.01
Political Skill predicting Research/Professional/Campus Endeavors	3.98	2.67	No	-.03
Political Skill predicting Quality of Education in the Unit	3.98	2.78	No	.00
Political Skill predicting Support for Institutional Diversity	3.98	3.28	No	-.03
Social Skill predicting Vision & Goal Setting	3.98	2.00	Yes	.17*
Social Skill predicting Management of the Unit	3.98	2.05	Yes	.16*
Social Skill predicting Interpersonal Relationships	3.98	2.34	No	.13
Social Skill predicting Communication Skills	3.98	1.97	No	.13
Social Skill predicting Research/Professional/Campus Endeavors	3.98	1.55	No	.06

Social Skill predicting Quality of Education in the Unit	3.98	3.40	No	.12
Social Skill predicting Support for Institutional Diversity	3.98	1.23	No	.00
Self Monitoring predicting Vision & Goal Setting	3.98	4.38	No	.01
Self Monitoring predicting Management of the Unit	3.98	1.58	No	-.01
Self Monitoring predicting Interpersonal Relationships	3.98	2.72	No	.01
Self Monitoring predicting Communication Skills	3.98	3.68	No	.00
Self Monitoring predicting Research/Professional/Campus Endeavors	3.98	1.66	No	.03
Self Monitoring predicting Quality of Education in the Unit	3.98	1.00	No	.02
Self Monitoring predicting Support for Institutional Diversity	3.98	2.90	No	.01

*Correlation coefficients of .20 or greater are significant at $p < .01$. Correlation coefficients that are greater than .16 and less than .20 are significant at $p < .05$. $n=70$