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Leadership, Empowerment, and Motivation: An Analysis of Modern Management

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the role of management in organizations and, specifically, look at the overlap between management and leadership with a particular focus on empowerment. With considerations of previous literature, current examples, and a case study interview, this literature seeks to solidify the importance of leadership by managers in the workplace. Furthermore, it seeks to highlight the role of empowerment, presented by the leader and experienced by followers, in creating a thriving workplace built on culture and trust. Lastly, the literature aims to better understand the motivations of the modern employee to provide potential areas of focus that can improve manager and employee relationships. This is an analysis of modern management looking at the effects of leadership, empowerment, and motivation in the workplace.

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Introduction

In the modern workplace, the power of the employee has shifted since the beginning of the 21st century. For many years, employers were dealt the upper hand in finding, hiring, and retaining talent at their companies. The norm has changed where talented, well-educated employees seek opportunities of growth and development, and want to improve their skills through learning and application. They want to be part of organizations where they feel valued and provide value. In a study by McKinsey and Company, nearly one-third of company senior leaders stated finding top talent is their greatest challenge (Keller & Meany, 2017). The same research suggests by 2020 there will be a shortage of nearly 16-18 million highly skilled workers needed to fill applicable jobs in the United States and European economies (Keller & Meaney, 2017). These factors contribute to an increasingly complex workplace dynamic between executives, managers, and their subordinates (often referred to as direct reports, representatives, or team members).

As this shift continues, the role of a manager is crucial in creating a healthy, culture filled workplace where employees are satisfied with their work, committed to their jobs, and motivated to achieve higher performance levels. The success rate and results of an organization are largely dependent on whether or not these three variables align. Although technology continues to automate and simplify certain processes in the workplace, organizations are only as good as the people within them. The modern manager is given the difficult task of managing employees who are considered more high maintenance and demanding than prior generations. Therefore, successful managers are

expected to be both leaders and managers: two elements that are not the same but can go hand-in-hand.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the role of management in organizations and, specifically, look at the overlap between management and leadership. With considerations of previous literature, current examples, and a case study interview, this literature seeks to solidify the importance of leadership by managers in the workplace. Furthermore, it seeks to highlight the role of empowerment, presented by the leader and experienced by followers, in creating a thriving workplace built on culture and trust. Lastly, the literature aims to better understand the motivations of the modern employee to provide potential areas of focus that can improve manager and employee relationships. This is an analysis of modern management looking at the effects of leadership, empowerment, and motivation in the workplace. The next section will review the role of leadership in organizations, especially in terms of how it differs from management.

Chapter 1: Leadership

When examining leadership from an academic perspective, one must have a firm understanding of its foundations. First and foremost, studying leadership and leaders is not the same. Leadership is a construct. It is not a position, person, or place; it is a vast field of study within psychology that looks to better understand individuals through their decisions, traits, and behaviors. Leaders are the actual individuals who make decisions, take risks, and live out the results. To understand leadership, psychologists look at past, current, and future (emerging or developing) leaders to gain insight to the complexity of their thoughts and choices. There is not a perfect example of a leader, but people tend to identify certain figures such as Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, or Nelson

Mandela. Other people may choose a parent or company CEO. Each of these individuals

are inevitably different in their traits, characteristics, levels of responsibility, and public

recognition, yet each of them display leadership in a unique way. In this manner,

leadership is highly individualized.

The following example provides a tentative definition of leadership: "Leadership

is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common

goal" (Northouse, 2016, p. 6). This is a solid foundation to build upon. In the definition,

the word "process" describes an ongoing endeavor. In some ways, it is string of choices

that develops through actions and reactions. These situations arise in both formal and

informal experiences. Formal leadership is displayed by those who are in structured

organizations. A great example of this is a company executive. A company executive,

who may or not be a great leader, must demonstrate leadership by leading a company to

success by influencing others through motivation tactics, empowerment, careful analysis,

strategic implementation, and strong decision making. Company executives also display

what is known as legitimate power because their authority comes from the formal

position they hold in the organization (French & Raven, 1959). Power, influence, and

leadership are directly related. When used together, they make for a potent combination.

Leadership often arises in informal situations, sometimes as a result of necessity

or in pursuit of task achievement. One important notion is leadership is not a position; it

is a process. People often equate leadership with an assigned position but this is not the

case. Sometimes, the so called "leader" is simply the first person to share their opinion or

take action. In a meta-analysis examining the relationship between five-factor personality

traits and leadership, extraversion and leadership were positively correlated (Judge, Illies,

Bono, & Gerhardt, 2002). A relevant example of an informal leadership scenario is the following: A large group of people are at a music festival with 100,000 attendees. The next set begins at 8:00 p.m. and people want to meet up so they can see the concert together. One member of the group decides it would best if everyone meet 20 minutes prior to the set at a given location. As a result, the group has adequate time to use the restroom, refill their water, and knows exactly where to meet and when. At 7:40 p.m., everyone has arrived and the member who determined the meeting location successfully leads them into the crowd for concert. In this scenario, the member who spoke up and coordinated the meeting point emerged as the leader. Situations like these frequently appear.

Executive Leadership

According to Day and Lord (1988), up to 45% of the variance in organizational performance can be attributed to the CEO. Whether this statistic is directly related to the quality of the sample (aka the type of workers and companies) or legitimately represents the importance of an executive's leadership role in the company is worth further examining. In a smaller company, (less than one hundred employees), an executive's leadership style is closely scrutinized because there are fewer people and therefore upper-level management and associate-level employees interact with higher frequency. Bernhard and O'Driscoll (2011) found that in smaller, family-owned companies, passive and uninvolved leadership styles resulted in negative feelings by employees towards the company. Specifically, employees were less satisfied with their job and did not feel empowered. (A closer look at empowerment will be covered in Chapter 2). In larger companies, particularly those with multiple locations and thousands of employees, an

executive's leadership style is less directly related to the job satisfaction of associate-level employees. This is simply a result of less interaction between upper-level executives and lower-level employees. Executive leadership does play a role in influencing mid-level management style. Although research rarely looks at the direct effect of C-suite leadership on mid-level management, executives serve as role models and mentors so their choices trickle down the chain of command. Executives who emphasize integrity, discipline, and positivity set the tone for the rest of the company. These types of executives are visionaries who lead the company and generate solutions for organizational success. Managers, who are equally important to organizational success, are given expectations and responsibility by executives and must implement techniques to generate success within their teams.

Managerial Leadership

Mid-level managers generally have a closer relationship with lower-level employees because of proximity if nothing else. In a typical enterprise level company, the hierarchy is represented by the following: Board of Directors, President, CEO, Executive Vice Presidents, Regional Vice Presidents, Office Managers, Representatives and Associate-Level Employees. This is where the relationship between leadership and management is formed.

Leadership and management are closely related but are not always displayed together. Oftentimes, there is a disconnect between being a great leader and being a great manager. The role of the manager is to help their team perform well and generate income for the company. Managers focus on achievement using metrics and performance, and often adhere to the status quo in a system to helps other achieve goals (Reh, 2018). The

role of the leader is to influence followers towards success and bring value to the team by

understanding their needs and motivations. Leaders focus on growth and change,

oftentimes using innovative solutions to bring others towards a positive outcome. People

can be amazing leaders and struggle with management, yet they can also be amazing

managers and terrible leaders. When an individual demonstrates the ability to motivate,

empower, and increase employee satisfaction while simultaneously driving revenue,

increasing productivity, and exceeding expectations, this person is a "Power-Play

Leader." The term "power play" is generally used in reference to the sport of hockey

when one team has more players on the ice than the opposing team due to a penalty.

Furthermore, a situation where someone takes measures, some of which may be

unethical, to increase their influence over others in hopes of gaining some kind of power

is also known as a "power play." Each of these examples suggests the use of power as

method for gaining a strategic advantage. Northouse (2016, p. 10) states, "power is the

capacity or potential to influence." Using these examples and the definition, a Power-Play

leader is not someone who is looking to gain an advantage over others using unethical

means or for selfish reasons. Instead, they are an individual who mastered the balance

between leadership and management. Management is generally associated with behaving

in accordance to the status quo; leadership is more associated with change. In the case of

a Power-Play leader, this person is both a manager and leader effectively allowing them

to advance initiatives and spark change while adhering to status quo. This type of leader

creates an advantage for the whole organization.

Making the Choice to Mentor

Another critical part of managerial leadership is mentoring others. During an interview, I was once asked, "Tell us about a boss, mentor, or coach. What did you learn from them?" My response specified that a boss (or manager) doesn't have to coach or mentor others, but it is in their best interest to do. Research supports this statement and indicates modern employees desire coaching, development, feedback, and a sense of belonging (Comaford, 2018). The needs of employees differ from those of prior generations and thus management styles that focus solely on production/results and minimally on the needs of employees are less effective. Early research in organizational psychology highlighted the concept of a concern for production and a concern for people (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Hemphill & Coons, 1957; Kahn, 1956, Stogdill, 1963; Stogdill 1974). Although these ideas have been discussed for many years, managers frequently struggle with finding a balance between a concern for people and productivity. Not every management position requires leadership or coaching, but in regards to forming and advancing strategic plans, these elements are essential.

Mentoring and coaching are similar in principle, but are not identical. A coach is a person who teaches others (in this case, an employee or subordinate) the techniques to successfully do something. They help another person develop the skills and competence to be successful. At times, they also provide guidance, feedback, and support. A mentor, who may employ some of the same tactics, is someone to look up to and receive advice from. Mentors are family members, professors, or sports coaches, but also are coworkers, bosses, or managers. Mentors provide coaching and feedback, and provide guidance or advice beyond that of a coach. A mentor works to develop someone both personally and

professionally. According to a PWC survey of 3907 workers, 98% of the respondents felt

coaches and mentors were essential to their personal and professional development

(PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2008). Another PricewaterhouseCooper (PWC) study found,

"65% of millennials accepted their current job due to the opportunity for personal

development, and mentoring is the training method they most value from their

employers" (Hansen, 2016, para. 3). Both of these statistics indicate very clear

preferences of employees in regards to mentoring and coaching in the workplace.

In considering these statistics, it is worth examining the interview question in the

aforementioned text. The question specifically asks about a boss, mentor, or coach. The

phrasing of this questions seems to overlook the possibility that a boss (or manager) can

be both a mentor and coach. It separates each of them into their own realm. However, a

great manager can be a great coach, mentor, and leader. It is not necessarily an

obligation, but in relation to employee satisfaction and increased performance, a manager

who spends time developing their subordinates through coaching, skill building, and

feedback is more likely to see widespread success in their organization.

Chapter 2: Empowerment

What is Empowerment?

As a major controversy in leadership and management studies is empowerment.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) defined empowerment as, "A process of enhancing feelings

of self-efficacy among organizational members through the identification of conditions

that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal organizational

practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information" (p. 4). In Industrial

Organizational (I/O) psychology, empowerment is primarily studied in two forms:

Empowering leadership and psychological empowerment. The former focuses on leaders and their behaviors that inspire change and create feelings of autonomy and belongingness. The latter focuses on cognitive feelings experienced by followers. Empowering leadership and psychological empowerment are often studied separately yet go hand-in-hand. A leader who displays behaviors commonly labelled as "empowering behaviors" is not an empowering leader if their followers do not feel empowered. The two variations of empowerment can be examined separately and together to create a firmer understanding of their actual relationship.

Effectiveness of Empowering Leadership

Earlier this year, a meta-analysis of previous literature was published examining empowering leadership. The review found mixed results regarding the effectiveness of empowering leadership (Cheong, Yammarino, Dionne, Spain, Tsai, 2019). It urges psychologists to reconsider previous literature stating a direct relationship between empowering leadership and positive work-related outcomes. Empowering leadership is the choice of leaders to engage in behaviors that allocate greater responsibility and freedom to followers and effectively increase their motivation levels which may ultimately lead to higher levels of success (Cheong et al., 2019). This description highlights important topics like autonomy, responsibility, leader behaviors, motivation, and success. Similar to the aforementioned definitions of leadership and empowerment, it also uses the word "process." As discussed in Chapter 1, this suggests empowering leadership is an ongoing set of behaviors, and for the purpose of this literature, it is.

A single behavior cannot be used to describe empowering leadership. Konczak, Stelly, and Trusty (2000) developed a Leader Empowering Behavior Questionnaire

(LEBQ) that examined empowering leader behaviors using six-factors: *Delegation of Authority, Accountability, Self-Directed Decision Making, Information Share, Skill Development,* and *Coaching for Innovative Performance.* Within the questionnaire, 1309 employees (labelled as subordinates) were asked to rate their managers on a 7-point Likert scale using specific descriptions of each of the six factors. An example question from the Accountability section of the LEBQ states: "My manager holds me accountable for the work I am assigned." Another example, in the Coaching for Innovative Performance section: "My manager is willing to risk mistakes on my part if, over the long term, I will learn and develop." Even though the LEBQ was designed for employees to rate managers, it could be adopted to fit scenarios involving leadership and empowerment outside of the workplace. Still, the results of Konczak and colleagues' study indicate the LEBQ is a sound fit for examining leader behaviors.

One concern with the validity of the LEBQ is response bias. A response bias occurs when extraneous factors such as wording/phrasing, length of a task, or social components affect a person's response to questions (Lavrakas, 2008). Biases also arise from the halo effect, where a person's perception of someone else's qualities such as their sincerity, intelligence, or attractiveness affects their perception of that person's competence or effectiveness (Cherry, 2018). If an employee likes their manager, their ratings will likely be higher. If they dislike their manager; ratings will likely be lower. This demonstrates an employee's opinion of their manager does matter in relation to job satisfaction levels and work behaviors.

Lee, Willis, and Tian (2017) studied this consideration and suggested both "trust in leader and psychological empowerment mediated the relationships of [empowering

leadership] with task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and creativity" (p. 1). The study also suggested feelings of empowerment transfer to the team level and positively impact team performance. Their findings are critical in highlighting the importance of empowering leadership at the individual and team level.

One of the most applicable types of work for examining individual and team performances is sales. Sales is results-driven, achievement-oriented, and requires detailed product knowledge. Employees (and managers) are given a quota and their task is to *achieve plus exceed* those numbers. A great part of sales is the measurability of results, making it an excellent industry to study. Ahearne, Mathieu, and Rapp (2005) performed an empirical study focusing on the effects of empowering leadership on team performance and sales made. Their findings indicated that novice, less-experienced employees benefit from empowering leader behaviors whereas more experienced employees do not experience the same benefits from those behaviors. Less experienced, and often newly hired employees, performed better and demonstrated higher feelings of self-efficacy when their leaders displayed empowering leader behaviors whereas more experienced, proficient employees relied less on empowering leader behaviors to drive higher feelings of self-efficacy and generate more sales. These findings indicate a potential relationship between experience level and need for empowerment.

Building on this potential relationship, Cheong, Spain, Yammarino, and Yun (2016) sought to provide evidence that empowering leadership does lead to desirable outcomes. In order to do so, they developed a model to represent the positive and negative effects of empowering leadership on work role performance:
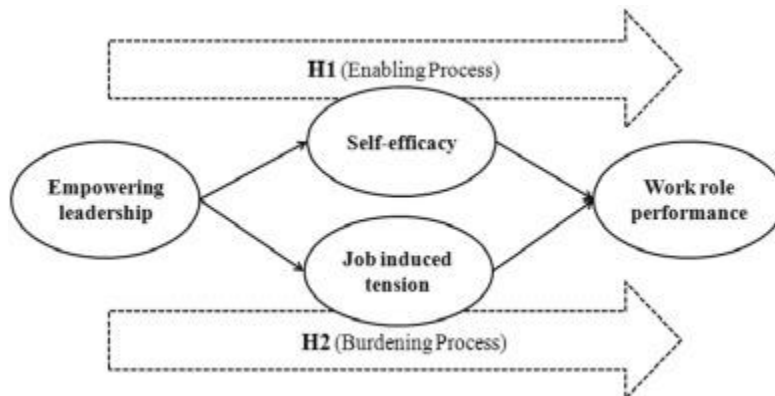
Figure 1. Empowering Leadership and Work Role Performance (Cheong, Spain, Yammarino, & Yun, 2016, Fig.1).

In the model, self-efficacy and job induced tension are mediators. When empowering leadership leads to stronger self-efficacy and ultimately a positive work role performance, it is part of the *enabling process*. On the contrary, when empowering leadership creates job induced tension and work role performance is negatively affected, it is known as the *burdening process*. The results indicted empowering leadership does not always lead to positive work outcomes for followers (Cheong et al., 2016). Although the results show more empowering leadership is not always better, these findings build upon a classic paradigm: Too much of anything leads to mixed outcomes. When someone is excessively extraverted, they may come off as arrogant. If a leader is too agreeable, they may have difficulty moving forward with an agenda. Riggio (2013) discusses this idea by suggesting moderation and balance improve leader effectiveness whereas excessive amounts of anything, even personality and skills or abilities, may result in negative outcomes. The same is true with empowering leadership: A leader who provides excessive amounts of support, gives too much freedom, or delegates extra responsibility to a follower might negatively impact their performance. This would be the burdening process.

On the other end of the spectrum, a lack of something can also have a negative effect. A recent study discovered low levels of certain personality traits—honesty, humility, and agreeableness—lead to "negative consequences for employees and organizations" (de Vries, 2018, para. 1). Similarly, a lack of empowering leadership could be interpreted as an absence of trust between the manager and their employees. A lack of trust is commonly associated with a lack of autonomy. Cheong and colleagues (2016) leverage autonomy as one of the main reasons for the burdening process in empowering leadership. The authors refer to a previous literature which suggests individuals who are allocated more independence during task performance must engage in additional cognitive processes and will incur switching costs (Langfred & Moye, 2004). Switching costs are the result of added freedom in choosing how to perform tasks. When these switching costs occur, an employee may undergo increased stress and generate less desirable outcomes for the manager or employee (Langfred & Moye, 2004).

Autonomy

In the Cheong and colleagues' (2016) study, autonomy is mentioned frequently but not specifically defined. Throughout their research, autonomy and responsibility are referenced together, blurring the lines between the two. This understanding of autonomy highlights a common misconception that equates greater autonomy with greater responsibility and/or task delegation by a manger. Autonomy, however, is not synonymous with delegation. In the modern workplace, the working definition of autonomy must be completely reconsidered. Employees certainly want respect and freedom in the workplace, but the assignment of new, more difficult tasks by management does not serve as an explicit example of increasing employee autonomy.

Robertson (2019) stated, "Autonomy in the workplace refers to how much freedom employees have while working" (para. 1). Employee freedom in the workplace varies and some organizations value it more than others, but autonomy is linked to job satisfaction. It is recommended managers take this into consideration when developing leadership and management styles as it will play a large role in employee satisfaction and performance. In the modern workplace, employees do not want to be left on an island. Too much freedom on the way to task achievement can negatively affect work outcomes. Not enough flexibility and employees are more likely to feel they are being micromanaged. A balance between structure and autonomy creates an optimal learning environment for both the employee and the manager. Morgan (2015) proposed that modern organizational success is correlated with a dynamic workplace that supports autonomy. However, in the pursuit of autonomy, it is not recommended that managers leave employees on an island with an absence of information or guidance. Instead, managers and executives can move away from an authoritarian mindset to one of a coach and mentor (Morgan, 2015). Finding the proper balance of structure and autonomy is extremely difficult because the needs and skills of every employee are different. For a less-experienced employee, coaching and mentoring are beneficial. Managers or colleagues who are willing to coach and mentor other employees drastically improve leader-follower dynamics and build a positive culture. Much of the focus in the workplace has shifted towards employee satisfaction, team culture, and learning opportunities. People seek companies that provide high-growth, fast-learning environments, yet also foster creativity, innovation, and freedom at the individual level. In many ways, power has shifted to the employee. Employees have access to vast

resources where they can research company reputation, salary by position or industry, and even read the reviews of other employees. The modern employee is well-informed.

Part of the employee evolution can be attributed to technology. Technology and its prevalence in the workplace are growing at a rapid pace, and companies who lack the strategy and ability to change with it will be left behind. Technology has directly affected hiring procedures where the process of finding qualified and skilled employees can be almost entirely automated. A study by the *Harvard Business Review* closely studied the job application process and found when an algorithm was paired against humans in hiring new employees, the computer outperformed the humans by at least 25% (Kuncel, Ones, & Klieger, 2014). These findings suggest when skilled employees are in the job market, automated talent acquisition tools are extremely effective in matching them with a job. As an employer, this signifies lower turnover rates are essential to building a high performance organization. Technically skilled, communicative, high-potential candidates will not wait around in a position where they are unhappy with their daily agenda or being mistreated by management.

According to an article published in the *Harvard Business Review*, employees jump ship to new jobs for two main reasons: Bad management and unpalatable daily tasks at work (Goler, Gale, Harrington, & Grant, 2018). The article highlighted a few key points about the importance of autonomy and empowerment in the workplace. First of all, low employee satisfaction levels are linked to poor management. Whether it be incompetence or a lack of leadership by managers, employees struggle when they do not get along with management. Second, employees who do not enjoy their work, feel their skillset is being put to good use, or see an opportunity to grow in their current position,

are more likely to leave the company. In a survey conducted at Facebook, analysts found staggering results about employees who were considering quitting but eventually chose to stay. Employees stayed at the company because they found their work enjoyable, believed the strengths were being utilized on a daily basis, and felt they were gaining skills and experiences necessary for their career development (Goler et al., 2018). The results of the survey indicated employees who stayed at the company rated the frequency of each of those factors at rates at least 30% greater than peers who chose to leave their positions. These findings highlight the importance of creating a unique, customized experience for employees. It forms a three-pronged formula managers can implement to improve employee satisfaction: Give them work they enjoy, provide work that builds on their strengths, and provide an environment that fosters growth and development in alignment with personal values (Goler et al., 2018).

Since the skill set of every employee is different, implementing a strategy to put this into action is challenging. By putting forth some effort to better understand employees, the process may become easier. One-on-one meetings are one method for developing a better understanding of individual employees and create feelings of trust between the leader and follower. After all, if the manager fits an employee's strengths into their daily tasks, it is a win-win for everyone. The employee is more productive, enjoys their work, and ultimately feels valued; the manager receives part of the gain from increased productivity and earns the trust of their subordinate. Using this reasoning, it is easier to understand the overlap between autonomy and empowerment.

Psychological Empowerment

Psychological empowerment is a cognitive state perceived by employees who experience a sense of control, perceived competence, and find their values and goals to be increasingly aligned with the goals of the organization (Menon, 1999). The state of empowerment is something experienced by those who are being empowered, in this case, the follower. It differs from empowering leadership which focuses on the leader and their behaviors. Psychological empowerment focuses on the feelings and perceptions of those who are actually being empowered. The feelings and reactions of the follower are equally as important as the decisions of the leader.

Some research found mixed results in determining the effects of empowerment on job performance (Byham, 1998; Macher, 1988; Burke, 1986). These studies do not exclusively rule out the positive effects of psychological empowerment, but challenge the idea and encourage further research. Later research suggests employees who are empowered experience greater levels of job satisfaction (Dawenttink, Singh, & Buyens, 2003). Although this is helpful, it is important to describe the various components that lead to a state of empowerment.

Dawenttink and colleagues (2003) condense empowerment into four main cognitions: Meaningfulness, competence, sense of responsibility, and impact. Each of these are feelings an employee will experience if they are empowered. Competence and sense of responsibility are closely linked to autonomy. Meaningfulness, which can be described as the fulfillment, satisfaction, and purpose someone gets from their work, is a key factor in the modern workplace. Hedge fund owner and billionaire, Ray Dalio, a renowned institutional investor, attributes meaningful work and meaningful relationships

as two of the most important factors for personal success (Marshall, 2017). Dalio is the

founder of Bridgewater Associates, a company based on principle of complete

transparency. The company records almost every conversation in the workplace, yet has

seen tremendous success. His employees are completely bought into the workplace

culture and in return are rewarded with sense of purpose and large compensation.

Meaningfulness is based primarily on the values and culture of a workplace relative to the

values and goals of an employee (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). If they match, an

employee will better identify with their work and find that work to be meaningful. If not,

job satisfaction and ultimately performance will suffer.

The competence of an employee is a monumental factor in employee satisfaction,

performance, and achievement, and in their relationship with management. The most

challenging part of this cognition is understanding the competence of an employee.

Sometimes, people are actually incompetent and cannot do the job they were assigned or

signed up for. Other times, they are competent and struggling. In the latter example, the

manager has to find way to empower the employee. A talented, dedicated, and competent

employee is worth fighting for. However, if this employee is struggling, their

commitment level may vary. One day, they might seek coaching for an hour before work

and stay two hours after work to practice; the next, they might concede to their

frustrations and leave the office to blow off steam. Competence, empowerment, and

performance are closely linked. When employees feel competent, their feelings of

empowerment increase and therefore commitment level increases (Battistelli, Mariani, &

Bellò, 2006). Furthermore, higher levels of perceived competence and job commitment in

relation to empowerment are correlated with better job performance (Oh & Chung, 2011).

An employee's sense of responsibility is tied closely to their autonomy. In the job characteristics model (JCT), autonomy is one of the five core characteristics and is directly related to an employee's responsibility for job outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The JCT suggests when employees are in tune with their responsibility for job outcomes, it leads to higher job satisfaction and work effectiveness. Later research also found the level of freedom an employee has in the workplace is positively correlated with job satisfaction (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). In work environments with greater freedom, employees feel less confined by the expectations of their workplace. Daily routines and tasks become less tedious because the employee can situationally adjust their behaviors and the general workplace fosters an environment that supports the individual. Certain guidelines remain in place, particularly those established by upper-management, but the employee is given the option to personalize specific aspects of their job in a way that builds on their individual strengths and creativity. As a result, employees feel are greater sense of purpose in their contributions to the organization. By giving employees greater levels of freedom in the workplace, the manager demonstrates trust and general confidence in their abilities. This establishment of trust translates into a sense of responsibility where employee feel more responsible for their actions and behaviors. They are seemingly in control of their actions and the result is increased feelings of empowerment.

The fourth empowerment cognition is impact (Dawenttink et al., 2003). Impact is best described as the perceived effect an employee has on the goals and outcomes of an organization. These effects can be recognized at any level of the organization and may include contributions to strategic initiatives and organizational change (Ashforth, 1989).

Exact methods for measuring impact are inconsistent. It is extraordinarily difficult to attribute specific measurements of an employee's contributions to the organization. However, the cognitive perception of an employee regarding their influence on a particular project or initiative is relevant to creating a feelings of empowerment. If employees believe their efforts are influencing the organization in some way, they are more likely to experience feelings of empowerment. When an employee does not feel their actions are having an impact on the organization, they are experience what is known as "learned helplessness." Learned helplessness occurs when employees feel their actions in the workplace have little to no effect and may deem their work outcomes as failures (Martinko & Gardner, 1982). If this pattern continues, an employee is conditioned under circumstances of learned helplessness. This condition is extremely harmful and leads to decreased feelings competence, impact, and empowerment.

Feedback. A brief consideration worth noting is the role of feedback in the empowerment process. Spreitzer (1995) noted a positive correlation between feedback and empowerment. Furthermore, Huang (2012) also found a positive relationship between psychological empowerment, feedback, and trust in one's manager. Feedback contributes to employee learning and development, and feelings of psychological safety. Psychological safety stems from transparency and trust (Edmondson, 1999). Determining the best method for delivering feedback is an individualized process that arises from experience and interpersonal workplace interactions. Employees who desire professional growth are usually receptive to feedback and appreciate the effort by management to polish their skill set.

Psychological empowerment is an important part of establishing a healthy, positive workplace. The role of management is crucial in creating an environment that strengthens job satisfaction, job commitment, and psychological empowerment. They are essentially the captain of the ship and may choose to steer the crew in the right direction or sink the ship. The role of the employees is equally important. Everyone needs to do their part to generate organizational success. One of the biggest components in understanding employee behavior is motivation. Motivation is the driving factor explaining why employees make decisions and feel the way they do. Determining exactly what these factors are can be strenuous. It may be the case where one employee is responsive to autonomy and enjoys a greater sense of responsibility, yet another employee in the same job position responds solely to monetary incentives. Motivation is the link between leadership, empowerment, management, job satisfaction, and job performance.

Chapter 3: Motivation

Motivation Theory

In the contemporary workplace, the evolution of employee motivation has changed in unison the employee. Motivation was first studied in the early 1900s and findings were relatively basic compared to those today. Most managers believed that money was the sole external motivator that influenced employee job satisfaction and performance. As the workplace continued to change, research suggested employees were motivated by their goals and intentions (Ryan & Smith, 1954). Further research emphasized goals and intentions affect employee behavior and thereby are motivational influencers in the workplace (Ryan, 1970). A few years later, Hackman and Oldham

(1976) established the growth needs theory, in which growth needs strength served as an individual difference variable in the Job Characteristics Model. The findings suggest employees are motivated by meaningful work and work that creates growth opportunities at the professional and personal level. These findings are the foundations of motivational theory and shifted the focus towards understanding the cognitive needs and desires of employees.

Although motivation theory is a common topic in I/O psychology and modern business journals, managers still struggle to understand what motivates their employees. Employees are making it increasingly difficult for organizations as their needs grow in complexity. A recent survey found that only 20% of employees firmly believe they are managed in a way that motivates them (Wigert & Harter, 2017). This number is astonishingly low given the amount of resources available to the modern manager. Nevertheless, developing a better understanding of employee motivation is worth examining.

Modern Motivational Factors

One of the most challenging parts of employee motivation is determining the factors that actually drive employees. Money is certainly one of them, but the modern employees desire more than money. Modern employees seek empowerment, growth opportunities, jobs that give purpose, and a positive workplace culture (Yudhvir & Sunita, 2012). To gain a specific understanding of the four components, it is beneficial to analyze each of them.

Empowerment. Building on Chapter 2, employees generally desire managers who empower them. The most prominent component of empowerment as it relates to

motivation is the establishment of trust. Ergeneli, Ari, and Camgoz (2007) reported a

significant, positive correlation between employee trust in managers and cognitive

feelings of empowerment. Employees want to be trusted. Similarly, in relationships

outside the workplace, trust is the foundation of any strong relationship. It is a two-

directional component built upon a mutual agreement to respect one another, provide

valid information, and follow through on your commitments. This translates into the

workplace. When a managers trust employees, they are willing to give them more

responsibility and freedom, and trust employees will perform their job at par with and

beyond expectations. In return, employees are increasingly motivated and the subsequent

outcome is higher levels of job commitment and satisfaction.

Growth opportunities. When employees evaluate companies, one concern is

whether the organization offers adequate growth and development opportunities.

Development can be evaluated on the personal and professional level, and modern

employees consider both elements. They are interested in how they can advance their

careers while simultaneously improving their decision-making skills and cognitive

abilities. Another one of these considerations is the investment of time. By agreeing to

work for a company, people are essentially agreeing to a major time investment to help

the organization. In return, employees expect the company will invest in them. From the

organizational perspective, learning opportunities are essential. These experiences can be

formal or informal trainings, performance reviews and feedback, and other learning

opportunities. The everyday details of the job such as the expectations and procedures set

forth by management also contribute to development opportunities.

The underlying theme of this motivator is learning. Employees seek the chance to learn from their managers, peers, and experiences. Unfortunately, organizations are struggling to elevate growth and development as one of their main initiatives. According to a survey of 763 workers in the United States, 58% of the respondents felt there was a lack of growth opportunities in their current job positions (Southall, 2018). Over half of the sample emphasized a need for greater contributions to their development. This presents a clear area where improvements can be made in the workplace. When employees are engaged and feel their work is contributing to their growth, their motivation levels increase.

Purpose. This element of motivation reflects an employee's belief in the work they are doing. People want to believe what they are doing is good. In general, individuals are motivated by the positive effect their work can have on their family/friends, coworkers, clients, and the world itself. They are also motivated by the effects of a job on their own life. When individuals believe their work creates a better future for their family, they are motivated. Similarly, someone who sells products to their clients wants to believe their product is bettering the lives of their clients. (Whether this is actually true may depend on the product). Nonetheless, a feeling of purpose is the result of passion and care. People *care* about the future (Ergeneli et al., 2007). Purpose is intrinsic motivator because it is determined largely by the desires and values that are embedded within a person.

Positive workplace culture. Culture is essential for creating a healthy, balanced workplace. The main cognition associated with this motivator is a sense of belonging. The modern employee wants to fit in and be part of something authentic. Authentic

people are genuine, real, and generally care about the well-being of those around them. They are willing to learn, understand their motivations, and let their personality shine brightly among others (Joseph, 2016). Managers who demonstrate authentic behaviors are setting the stage for widespread, organizational success. They promote the well-being of their subordinates and encourage people to be themselves. As a result, employees are more comfortable and value their role within the company. They desire success for themselves and the people around them which becomes part of the organizational culture.

Culture is built upon a collective set of values and expectations. By establishing a clear set of expectations, employees understand behaviors that do or not align with those expectations. Each member of the organization is responsible for holding others accountable to ensure that people are contributing positively and abiding by the expectations. This applies to management, seasoned employees, and recent hires. Since managers work directly with their subordinates, their behaviors directly affect the behaviors of employees. If manager can abide by the expectations set forth, then so can the other employees. Therefore, the manager's role as a leader is especially important in creating a positive culture.

Trust is the foundation of a healthy organizational culture. Edmondson (1999) highlights the importance of psychological safety in an organization where team members demonstrate interpersonal trust, mutual respect, and are comfortable being themselves. Edmondson's findings suggest teams who foster psychological safety create better environments for learning and increase the opportunity for improved team performance. Managers who build a culture on trust and respect create an advantageous situation for the entire team. When employees trust their managers, they are more likely

to buy into the goals, objectives, and culture of the company. Furthermore, the trust

established between employees and their peers/coworkers is positively correlated with

job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation (Leat & El-Kot, 2009). This research

demonstrates employees benefit from trusting their managers and peers. Once trust is

established, employees can take part in company culture that inspires and supports its

members. Consequently, motivation levels rise due to increased feelings of appreciation

for the group, respect for other members, a greater sense of responsibility, a better

understanding of organizational goals, and higher levels of confidence in themselves and

others (Whipple, n.d.). As motivation levels continue to rise, managers will see increased

job satisfaction and better performance throughout their teams.

Responsibility and Motivation

Responsibility is a difficult component in understanding employee motivations.

The idea of responsibility appeals to some people yet frightens others. People who dislike

increased responsibility are often afraid of being held to higher standards of

accountability. When employees believe their level of responsibility has reached an

excessive level, they are more prone to stress and exhaustion (Paice, Rutter, Wetherell,

Winder, & McManus, 2002). Conversely, when people are stressed and exhausted they

may believe the expectations of their current position are excessive. These feelings vary

by individual as some people enjoy an opportunity to take on greater challenges with

more responsibility.

The main element in deciding whether or not responsibility is motivational is

determined both intrinsically and extrinsically. Only an employee truly knows if they

desire the chance to be part of something more demanding and difficult. Deci and Ryan

(1985) examined this consideration and developed self-determination theory (SDT). SDT

is built on the idea that people are intrinsically motivated in their pursuit of success and

growth. For example, an individual who is determined to become a successful

salesperson and ultimately a manager is motivated by opportunities to improve their skills

and increase their positive workplace outcomes such as generating more revenue or

achieving a promotion. In this case, the intrinsic motivator is to improve their skills and

become a more effective employee. The extrinsic motivator, in the form of a reward, is

added sales. SDT stresses each person is the sole determinant of the things that actually

motivate them. These motivations come from personality and values and play a crucial

role in everyday decisions.

SDT is often summarized into three key factors: Autonomy, Mastery, and Purpose

(Zielicz, 2017). Autonomy, once again, is a critical part of motivating employees as it

leads to psychological feelings of responsibility (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Employees

want the freedom to utilize their creative outlets and take on initiatives in ways that best

fit their skillset. Even in organizations with strict expectations, giving the employees

some flexibility in their everyday tasks will increase their motivation. Mastery is

synonymous with competence. Employees desire to be great at what they do. In general,

people want to excel in their pursuits and to learn to master these pursuits. When

managers are assisting in the growth and development of their employees and the

outcome is improved performance, motivation levels will increase. By combining

perceptions of autonomy and competence, employees feel empowered and job

satisfaction and commitment levels increase accordingly.

Purpose is the last element of SDT and is built on the sense of value employees recognize in the work they are doing. For some people, financial independence may provide meaning. Other people may want to develop leadership skills and therefore make a choice to collaborate with peers and influence them towards goal achievement. Whatever it may be, the purpose employees find in their work is a major motivator. As employees continue to achieve goals and find meaning in their work, perceptions of competence will increase in relation to overall motivation.

By understanding the motivations of employees, managers are better positioned to inspire and lead others effectively. In doing so, managers empower employees and develop a culture of trust, positivity, and success. To support these implications, a case study interview was conducted using applicable examples highlighting the importance of leadership, empowerment, and motivation in the workplace.

Chapter 4: Case Study Interview

Consistent with themes addressed in the reviewed literature, I sought an opportunity to interview Taylor McKenzie and Isabella Zelinger of Paycom in Pasadena about management, leadership, and empowerment in the workplace. Paycom (NYSE: PAYC) is a corporate company that provides a single-database Payroll and HR solution to companies around the United States. At this time of this interview, I was an intern for Paycom taking part in their Jr. Executive Program. After graduation from Claremont McKenna College, I will be working as a full-time Sales Representative for Paycom in Pasadena.

Taylor McKenzie is the 26 year-old Office Manager in the Pasadena Office. She graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Retail Management. Isabella Zelinger

is a 24 year-old Executive Sales Representative. She graduated from Chapman University

with a degree in Business Administration and Management. I am fortunate to work with

both of these outstanding, smart, and inspiring individuals.

The primary focus of these interviews was to obtain tangible examples of

leadership, empowerment, and motivation in the workplace. Each interview was

conducted separately to avoid any bias between respondents. The transcription of

McKenzie's interview is located in Appendix A; Zelinger's in Appendix B. Both

respondents consented to the recording of these interviews. The recordings took place in

April of 2019.

Interview

Prior to the arrival of McKenzie in September 2018, the Pasadena Office was

struggling. Employee satisfaction was low, turnover was high, and the office ranked in

the bottom 25% of the company in sales revenue. Just over six months later, the same

office has reached the top 25% in sales revenue and Zelinger is currently the #1

Executive Sales Representative in the West Region in terms of sales revenue generated

year-to-date. Such improvement prompted a great opportunity to gain insight into the

changes in team culture, empowerment, leadership, and overall job commitment and

motivation.

When initially talking with Zelinger about her experience at Paycom, she voiced

feelings of intense frustration regarding the months leading up to September 2018.

McKenzie adds when she first arrived to the office in September, the environment was,

"Tumultuous. You could feel it in the air... Since then, the culture has done a complete

180." Zelinger agrees a culture shift has occurred in the Pasadena Office and positively

affected the team. Consistent with the findings of Leat and El-Kot (2009), Zelinger and

McKenzie agree that a healthy culture built on trust and transparency is correlated with

higher job satisfaction and motivation.

In speaking with McKenzie and Zelinger, it was evident empowerment is another

factor that contributed to the increased success in the Pasadena Office. In relation to

empowering leadership, McKenzie believes developing others is essential. When

McKenzie started her role as office manager in September 2018, she was forced to

quickly adapt to the new role and hit the ground running. However, her ability to take a

step back, educate her representatives, and trust them to do their job has proved valuable

in her first year as a manager. Goler and colleagues (2018) found employee satisfaction is

much higher when people enjoy their work, feel their strengths are being utilized, and are

given ample growth and development opportunities in the workplace. By teaching

employees the skills they need, and assisting in their personal and professional

development, managers create an optimal work environment. Additionally, empowering

leadership behaviors take place when managers allow employees to apply the skills they

are learning without being overly intrusive in the process.

McKenzie's approach to empowering her representatives involves preparing them

for what's ahead, encouraging them by communicating her genuine belief in their

abilities, and frequently recapping with feedback. To provide an example of empowering

leadership in the workplace, McKenzie shared the following:

> One of the coolest things about managing Izzy over the past 7 months since I've
>
> been here is that she used to need me for backup and she doesn't need me for
>
> backup anymore. I think that is a direct result from letting her do some of the

harder things. Now, she is effectively getting that deal to the finish line pretty

much with me as a mute in the background.

The deal McKenzie is referring to what would be the largest deal the Pasadena office has

closed since its opening in 2016. There have been numerous times where McKenzie

wanted to take the lead on the account, but instead she has, "shared the responsibility

equally with Iz." During the numerous stages of the sales process, Zelinger would call her

and ask, "Are you going to the run the meeting or am I?" Instead of running the meetings

for her, McKenzie helps prepare her for it and then offers back up if needed. The

outcome is tremendous feelings of empowerment experienced by Zelinger.

My discussion with Zelinger revealed examples that align well with the four main

empowerment cognitions—meaningfulness, competence, sense of responsibility, and

impact (Dawenttink et al., 2003). When asked, she cited a recent example of when she

felt empowered in the workplace:

Well, we could take the deal that I'm closing today. I've pretty much done this

whole account on my own and my conversations with Taylor have been more

about "How do I tee this up…?" They've been more strategic. I haven't asked her

to do any of the work leading up to it, I've asked her to help strategize. So, I'm

learning from strategizing with Taylor which is thus teaching me how to do that

on my own.

As a manager and leader, McKenzie has done an excellent job of allowing Zelinger to do

her job while still coaching and providing strategy as needed. In doing so, McKenzie is

empowering her representative and Zelinger feels empowered. At the same time,

McKenzie is also increasing the sense of responsibility felt by her employees. Zelinger,

who "always want to be in the top tier of whatever I'm doing," experiences a greater sense of responsibility and competence as she goes through sales process largely on her own.

Regarding meaningfulness and impact, the example given by Zelinger is still applicable. Impact refers to the perceived effect an employee has on an organization (Ashforth, 1989). As a successful Executive Sales Representative, her impact on both the company and team are clear. Every time she closes a deal, she is earning revenue for Paycom and helping the Pasadena Office reach their quota. These are direct impacts her efforts are having on the organization. In terms of meaningfulness, she cites financial freedom and the pursuit of excellence as two of her main reasons for working. At Paycom, she has been able to achieve both of those. Furthermore, other components of meaningfulness include job satisfaction and fulfillment. Zelinger has personally described to me the excitement and energy she gets not only from selling, but knowing she can help her clients make real and tangible improvements in their organizations.

Zelinger's success and personal anecdotes support McKenzie's effectiveness as an empowering leader. Research by Ahearne and colleagues (2005) indicated that less-experienced employees benefit from empowering leadership. Zelinger, though a quick learner, is still in her second year at Paycom. Therefore, she is benefiting from empowering leader behaviors demonstrated by McKenzie. Another study found that psychological empowerment and trust in a leader are mediators between empowering leadership and task performance (Lee et al., 2017). When asked about the role of trust in her role as manager, McKenzie states:

> I think respect and trust are two of most important things you have to have
>
> between a manager and a rep. They got to trust that you would never steer them in
>
> the wrong direction and the manager has to trust that they are executing and have
>
> the best interest at heart.

She believes trust is essential in forming strong relationships with her representatives. In

support this belief, Zelinger attributes some of her success to, "Having honest, open

communication with your leaders and managers really helps because they know

everything that is happening with your territory at work." When asked if trust is

important in the relationship between a manager and representative, she responds with a

simple, "100%. Yes."

As part of the interview, I also wanted to understand McKenzie's view of

leadership. Her response ties back to an earlier section of this literature describing the

difference between management and leadership:

> Leadership is just so complex. Leadership is different than management and
>
> different than being a boss. The word that comes to mind is inspiring people.
>
> Everyone is motivated and inspired by different things. Leaders must identify
>
> what these things are; what gets them out of bed in the morning? What makes
>
> them feel important? What makes them feel successful…Inspiration is a really big
>
> part of it. You're taking people to where they want. You're taking them to where
>
> they're trying to go. What's going to motivate them to get there? How do I help
>
> them get there?

Her description of leadership incorporates motivating and inspiring followers in their

pursuit of achievement. In some ways, she is emphasizing the interpersonal aspect of

leadership that is necessary to successfully influence individual and group outcomes.

Leaders are more effective when they understand what their followers are trying to

achieve and uncover their reasons for doing so. McKenzie discusses motivation in her

definition of leadership but also includes a personal touch by incorporating inspiration.

She believes leaders are supposed to inspire followers and contribute to their success.

Management is different because it focuses less on the process of achieving an outcome

and more so on the end result.

When asked about the qualities that have aided in her success, McKenzie

attributes grittiness, positivity, a desire to learn, and accountability. These qualities are

applicable to both management and leadership, but are mainly a reflection of her personal

skill set and motivations. One of her biggest motivators is a burning desire to be the best

and to always be better than the day before. Her personal ambitions and willingness to

learn, listen, and implement new strategies are key factors that have contributed to her

success as both and manager and leader.

Overall, McKenzie has taken a very mature outlook to leadership. First, she

suggests that, "As a leader, you can't take credit for anything." Her reasoning stems from

the idea that by giving credit to others, one day they will have the skills and confidence to

take on a role like hers. Second, McKenzie stands firmly by the notion that leadership

and management are not the same:

> The most impactful thing I've learned as a manager, is when to manage and when
>
> to lead. They are totally polar opposite roles. I've worked on being able to
>
> identify "this is when I manage and this is when I lead." Sometimes managing is

> bring the hammer down and saying this is unacceptable and that's hard for me to
>
> do sometimes.

By being aware of when to manage and when to lead, she strengthens her ability to

effectively empower and motivate the representatives. Lastly, McKenzie understands the

importance of her team in the overall success of the office:

> I need my people more then they need me. If I went on vacation for a week, this
>
> office will run like a well-oiled machine. The meetings with still be set, sales still
>
> brought in, prep work will still be run. If my people are on vacation for a week,
>
> there is no way.

McKenzie's leadership philosophies will serve her well. Particularly in the appreciation

of her representatives, she will experience empowerment of her own. With this in mind, it

brings me to a final topic worth considering: the feedback loop of empowerment.

Conclusion

Future Research: Feedback Loop of Empowerment

The empowerment feedback loop and its prevalence in the workplace has not

been examined in previous literature I am aware of and further research on the topic is

recommended. One study examined the use of feedback loops in empowering residents

and primarily focused on change in residential communities (Jackson, Burgess, Toms, &

Cuthbertson, 2018). Most empirical research has looked at empowerment at the one

directional, individual level but there are few studies that have developed a multilevel

approach. Sibert, Silver, and Randolph (2004) developed a multilevel model of

empowerment where psychological empowerment is a mediator between empowerment

climate (work-unit level) and individual performance and job satisfaction. Empowerment

climate is defined as the "employees' shared perceptions of managerial structures,

policies, and practices related to empowerment" (Sibert et al., 2004, p. 2). A model that

provides a visual aid for understanding the multilevel model of empowerment in teams

was developed by Chen, Kanfer, Kirkman, Allen, and Rosen (2007). Their research looks

at both team empowerment (team level) and individual empowerment (individual level)

as mediators between leadership climate (team level) and leader-member exchange
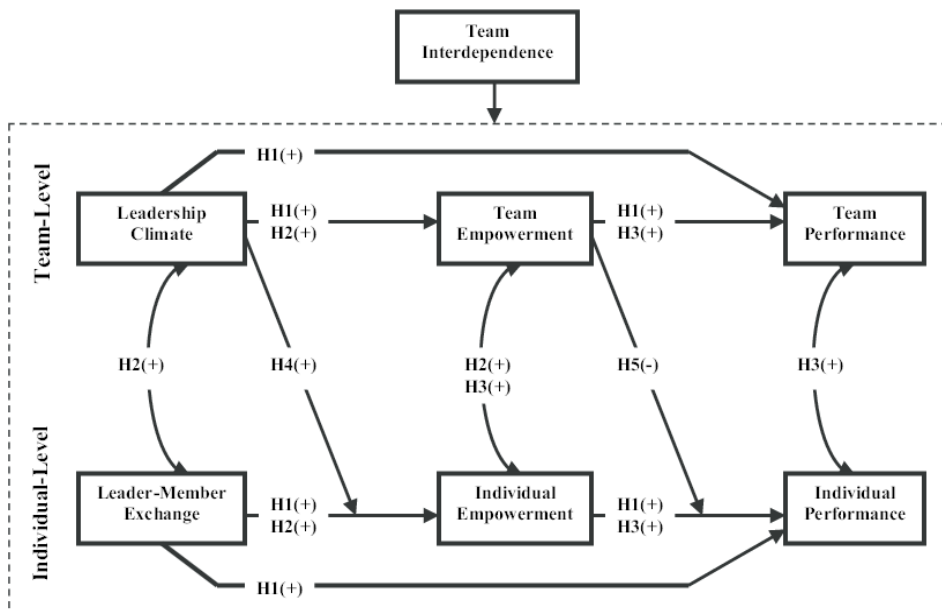
(individual level) on performance.

Figure 2. Multilevel model view of empowerment in teams (Chen et al., 2007, Fig. 1).

As the model demonstrates, leadership climate and team performance are mediated by

team empowerment. Interestingly, the model suggests team empowerment can affect

individual empowerment, or vice versa. The same is true with team performance and

individual performance, and leadership climate and leader member exchange.

Chen and colleagues' model focuses on team interdependence and the role

empowerment plays on team performance. Although their approach is interesting, it is not

applicable to the type of empowerment I am suggesting. The model I am suggesting

could involve team dynamics but focuses almost exclusively on the relationship between a manager (who is a leader in this case) and their direct reports/employees. According to previous literature, empowering leadership is mediated by psychological empowerment, and psychological empowerment contributes to task performance, job satisfaction, and motivation (Aherne et al., 2005; Dawenttink et al. 2003; & Lee et al., 2017). With this in mind, I am proposing subordinate outcome variables ultimately act as empowering behaviors that redirect back to the leader and create feelings of leader psychological empowerment. As a result, leader psychological empowerment reinforces empowering leader behaviors and the empowerment cycle continues. *Figure 3* demonstrates the proposed theory:
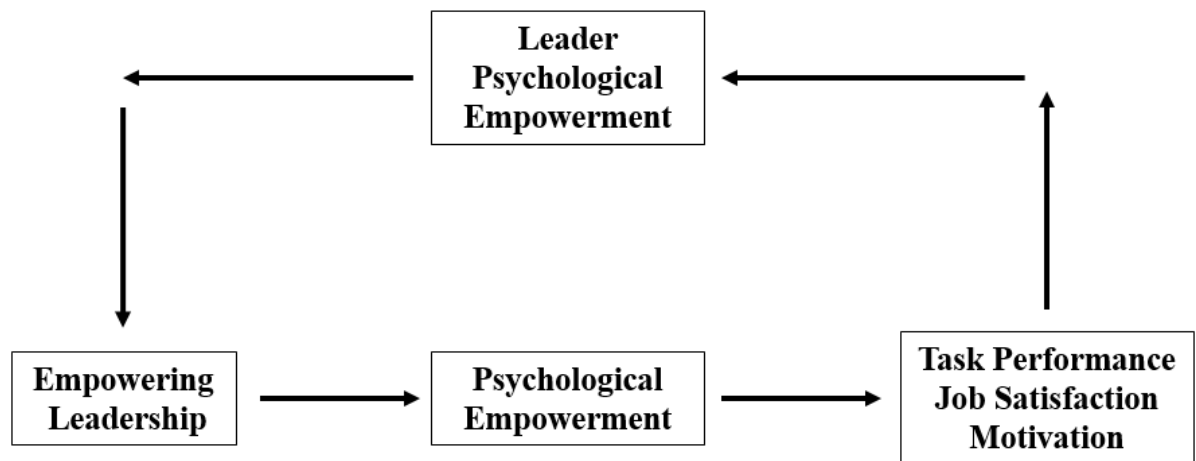
Figure 3. Empowerment Feedback Loop.

Figure 3 represents the empowerment feedback loop between a manager and an employee. Previous theory has looked solely at the effect of empowering leadership on psychological empowerment and subordinate outcomes, but has not taken into consideration the effect subordinate outcomes (task performance, job satisfaction, and motivation) have on the cognitive state of the leader. It is recommended future research

explores the considerations of the empowerment feedback look as it gives a more wholesome approach to the genuine importance of empowerment in the workplace. Furthermore, research should aim to conduct interviews with empowering leaders regarding their feelings on subordinate outcomes and look at the overall effectiveness of employee behaviors on the perceived cognitive state of empowerment felt by leaders and managers.

Practical Implications

In regards to this review, numerous practical implications can be employed that serve as beneficial tools in management and leadership. First and foremost, though management and leadership are different, the most effective managers put an emphasis on leadership. These managers are willing to make changes in an organization (a hallmark of leadership) that better serve their team and initiatives and may not entirely abide by the status quo. This does not mean completely abandoning the practices put in place by upper level executives and management, but it does encourage creativity, innovativeness, and interpersonal authenticity between managers and their employees. Managers who are leaders increase their ability to generate success in terms of managerial responsibilities and expectations, and excel in their leadership roles as they earn the respect, trust, and commitment of their employees.

Secondly, empowerment is an essential part of forming a healthy workplace. Managers who demonstrate empowering leadership behaviors by encouraging, supporting, and teaching their employees set the tone for a work environment that fosters growth, development, and culture. In making the choice to build the confidence of their employees, the outcome is perceived competence, meaningfulness, impact, and

responsibility (Dawenttink et al. 2003). Each of these four cognitions contribute to employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance which are both a reflection of an employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities, and a managerial leader's ability to successfully prepare their employees for the duties, tasks, and expectations of the job.

By 2020, roughly 50% of the workforce will be composed of Millennials (Emmons, 2018). The modern employee is needier than ever and managers have to adapt to succeed in the modern workplace. This doesn't imply a legitimate need to meet every request made by employees, but it is important to actively listen and be receptive to their goals and individualized concerns. Managers communicate receptiveness by making the choice to mentor, providing adequate coaching, and sharing feedback. A large part of this relates back to the study performed by Goler and colleagues (2018) emphasizing the ways managers increase job satisfaction and reduce turnover in their workforce: Give people work they enjoy, ensure the work is utilizing employee strengths, and form an environment focused on employee growth and development. Additionally, modern employees are resourceful and reputation is important. With access to resources such a Glassdoor, Indeed, and other job sites, reviews are updated frequently and may reflect (accurately and inaccurately) on company and/or office culture, management style, and overall employee satisfaction. Positive reviews of management will reduce turnover, retain highly skilled worker, and solidify further opportunities to excel as an individual, team, and organization.

Closing Remarks

Management is a challenging task and every role creates unique differences. There is not a perfect formula for optimal management style, but using the tools and information discussed in this review may prove useful for making improvements. Ultimately, the most effective managers are leaders and engage in empowering leader behaviors. Employees generally respond positively to these behaviors and are more likely to experience feelings of the psychological empowerment. The effect of empowerment is higher job satisfaction, motivation, and better task performance—all of which reflect positively on the organization. As trust and respect become solid aspects of the culture, everyone can be themselves and fully contribute to shared values and goals. The eventual outcome is a beautiful workplace dynamic between managers and employees where the entirety of team is given an opportunity to pursue excellence and find success.

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Appendix A

Opening: Please state your name, company, and position.
Taylor McKenzie, Paycom Payroll, Pasadena, CA.

Do you consent to the recording of this interview as part of my Senior Thesis at Claremont McKenna College?
Yes.

At only 26, you're the office manager at a corporate company. What skills and traits have helped you find success?
It boils down to four main qualities.
1. The first one, undoubtedly, is grittiness. Being persistent, rolling with punches [in sales and leadership positions]. There are lots of ups and downs, so having grit is a huge piece of it all.
2. Positivity is at the core of who I am. I do believe that I look at every situation that way. I do believe that has helped me stay so focused and committed through my entire tenure at Paycom.
3. A desire to learn. Overall curiosity. Every day I am committed to being better than I was the day before. Constantly growing. I truly am obsessed with being the best. Doesn't always mean being number 1, it means being the best I can possibly be. I think the only way to do that is getting better every single day. My overall attitude towards learning and growth.
4. Holding myself accountable. One of my biggest strengths is doing what I say I am going to do. Doing what needs in my day to day, in conversations with my reps, and with the accounts that I am working on.

Regarding management, when did you know you first wanted to pursue management?
My dad always teases me that I was born to be a leader. I think I've always had an interest in being a leader whether I knew it or not. I think back to when I was in dance class or having friends over. I was always leading the pack. I was the captain of the cheerleading team and had leadership positions in my sorority… At one point, I sat down with my dad to discuss what I really want to do. What I really want to do is lead people. It wasn't until after college that I really made the decision that I wanted to lead my own team in a sales environment.

Did anyone inspire you to want to become a manager?
Yes, my dad. Biggest role model in my life. He's an outstanding leader in the restaurant franchise industry and home building business. He has a company with his twin brother.

What is your definition of leadership?
Leadership is just so complex. Leadership is different than management and different than being a boss. The word that comes to mind is inspiring people. Everyone is motivated and inspired by different things. Leaders must identify what these things are; what gets them out of bed in the morning. What makes them feel important. What makes them feel successful.
Cater leadership style to what they need. Inspiration is a really big part of it. You're taking people to where they want. You're taking them to where they're trying to go. What's going to motivate them to get there? How do I help them get there?

Empowerment can be defined as the process of enhancing the self-efficacy of organizational members. What are some leadership behaviors believes that you believe contribute to enhancing the self-efficacy of your employees?
I know that I can do a demo well, can place a half call, and run a first meeting. But that's not sustainable or scalable. I'm only one person. Being able to take a step back and teach someone else.
1. Prepare them what's ahead (potential obstacles, agenda).
2. I believe in you.
3. Recap after.
    a. Let me give you a little bit a feedback. Based on what I've told you, apply these changes and implement them. I believe in you.
4. Another thing I've learned: As a leader, you can't take credit for anything…One day, I hope they have the confidence take on a role on mine.

Can you please provide an example of when and where you've used empowerment and how it positively affected that individual and the organization?
I think there are examples almost every single day.
1. We are about close the biggest deal Pasadena has ever closed. As much as I've wanted to take the reins on the account, I've pretty much shared the responsibility equally with Iz. And every time we are going give them a call or go into the meeting, she asks me "Are you going to run the meeting or am I?" And I'll help prepare her for it and get her ready, but I tell her that she's going to run the meeting. I will be here for back up if you need it."
2. One of the coolest things about managing Izzy over the past 7 months since I've been here is that she used to need me for backup and she doesn't need me for backup anymore. I think that is a direct result from letting her do some of the harder thing. Now, she is effectively getting that deal to the finish line pretty much with me as a mute in the background. And that's exciting, because that is

going to be the biggest deal our office has ever closed and she's going to have done a lot of it on her own.

Is there an example where you used empowerment and it did not work? Please elaborate.

As much as I'd like to say that my reps have autonomy, I still got my hand in the pot. You know our team, we've got such a sharp group of individuals and I really don't have those moments often. You know me Patrick, I'm the most upbeat, positive person ever, but there are times where I have to put my foot down and bring the hammer down and have really hard conversations.

1. I had a really hard conversation back in January with someone who was not living up to their potential, at all. We had a conversation about how to bounce back from it and gave them a really good game plan and you just have to execute on it and I know you can. And it sucks but they came into my office two day later and they quit.
2. I think that is a really hard thing in management is that when you do bring the hammer down there are people that can't handle it.
3. I tried to make her feel empowered, but I'm a new manager. I identified areas where I could have done better in that conversation but I also had to accept that she wasn't willing to take on the challenge.

On your path to your current position, were their people who empowered you?

There's been a lot of people. Rob Magnis, my regional from Chicago West. He believed in me and pushed me from the second he met me. It was nonstop. He was pushing me, telling me you're going to be promoted in a year. You're going to be an amazing manager. You're a great [badass] sales person. He instilled a lot of confidence in me and put a lot of faith in me to be a top sales rep out of that office. And because he did that, I felt like I could not let him down. I owe a lot of my success as a sales rep to Rob putting that faith in me.

What role does trust play your relationship with your employees?

I think respect and trust are two of most important things you have to have between a manager and a rep. They got to trust that you would never steer them in the wrong direction and the manager has to trust that they are executing and have the best interest at heart.

What are some of the things that motivate you?

Depends on what area you're talking about…

1. I'm obsessed with being the best. It's a personal competition with myself. Being better than I was the day before…

2. My role models, leaders, parents, and coaches motivate me... And I want to be that for someone someday. I'm motivated by that a lot. I want to change people's lives. I know a lot of people say that, but even if it was on a micro scale, or just one person, I would love to change their lives.
3. My future family. I've already started college funds for my future kids.
4. My lifestyle motivates me.

What are some of the things that you believe motivate other people?
It is different for everybody.
Some of the example she listed:
1. Making a difference in people's lives
2. Being #1
3. Making your boss proud
4. Making parents proud
5. Sometimes, maybe, you come from nothing and want to change your lifestyle.

How important is culture in the success of an organization?
It is a critical component. When I arrived in the office in September, it was tumultuous. You could feel it in the air. Since then, the culture has done a complete 180. A lot of that has come transparency. A lot from having fun everyday. If you're not having fun where you are, eventually you're going to move on. Culture is one of the most important piece, without a doubt.

What is the most important thing you've learned so far as a manager?
1. The *most impactful thing* I've learned as a manager, is when to manage and when to lead. They are totally polar opposite roles. I've worked on being able to identify this is when I manage and this is when I lead. Sometimes managing is bring the hammer down and saying this is unacceptable and that's hard for me to do sometimes. Really learning the opportunities where I need to lead and manage.
2. I need my people more then they need me. If I went on vacation for a week, this office will run like a well oiled machine. The meetings with still be set, sales still brought in, prep work will still be run. If my people are on vacation for a week, there is no way. Meetings won't be set, deals won't be sold, and work will not be done. There is just not enough time for me to do what 7 people can do.
3. My people are always watching me. If I'm upset about something outside work, the reps will think something is wrong.

In your role a leader and manager, do you believe it is also your job to mentor?

1. It's important. I think it is extremely impactful. The area where you have to be careful… I would like to think I'm a mentor to Emily. You have to be very careful between blurring the lines of being their friend and being their mentor that is helping them through their relationships, situations with their friends, or sticky situations with their parents and being a mentor in the workplace. Being a mentor is really important and creates a bond, but you have to be careful not to let those two lines blur too far together.
2. I've never felt like I needed to be somewhere more than I felt in this role. I feel like I belong in this role. And I feel like true leaders when they get into true leadership, while they will fumble a little bit and mess things up, it's just a feeling that I know where I am supposed to be.
3. Leaders, when they get in that role, they are going to know if they were meant for leadership or not. If they're facing a ton of obstacles with their people there is probably some underlining qualities that don't necessarily make them the best candidate for leadership.

Appendix B

Opening: Please state your name, company, and position.
Isabella Zelinger, Paycom, Executive Sales Representative.

Do you consent to the recording of this interview as part of my Senior Thesis at Claremont McKenna College?
Yes.

What are some of the skills and traits that have helped you find success?
1. I feel like I have a lot of fun…So I don't take anything too seriously. I think that helps.
2. I'm also very competitive. That naturally drives me but I'm not necessarily competitive from a team perspective, I'm competitive personally. I'm my toughest critic. If I feel like I'm lesser than my best I can't sleep at night.
3. Having honest, open communication with your leaders and managers really helps because they know everything that is happening with your territory at work [referring to Zelinger's assigned sales territory].

Can you give me an example of when you current manager has empowered you in the workplace?
1. Well, we could take the deal that I'm closing today. I've pretty much done this whole account on my own and my conversations with Taylor have been more about "How do I tee this up…" They've been more strategic. I haven't asked her to do any of the work leading up to it, I've asked her to help strategize. So I'm learning from strategizing with Taylor which is thus teaching me how to do that on my own.
2. Now I know how to negotiate. I don't need to ask for Taylor's help to negotiate because I already know what I can and can't say from previous experiences which is obviously empowering me to keep doing that in the future.

Do you think that trust is important in the relationship between a manager and employee/representative?
1. 100%. Yes.
2. If I have a client cancel on me or my pipeline is not reflecting the way I want it to, I am always very transparent with all of that. I never fabricate because if I fabricate I am just going to end up getting in trouble down the line. I'd rather be up front with the communication so we can make a plan to get better than delaying the inevitable.

What do you think has contributed to the positive changes in the Pasadena Office?

1. I think we've had a culture shift. We're all goofier, having more fun, and not taking things too seriously. We're all her because we love to sell and if we're not selling, we're obviously feeling that so why harp on it? We want to be better.
2. We're a team as well. I want everyone else on the team to sell as much as I want to sell, myself. That shows. There is not a competitiveness or vindictiveness among our team. We're all really supportive of one another.

What are some things that motivate you personally and professionally?

1. I hate feeling average or mediocre. So that inspires me because I never want to be in the "middle". I always want to be in the top tier of whatever I'm doing.
2. My dad inspires me. He'll send me emails… He's a hunter too. When I see my Dad is still hunting that fires me up because I'm a hunter too and I love that we're both doing this together.
3. I like having the financial freedom. I like that bought a ticket to Stagecoach last minute and I'm not stressed about it… I can do what I want to do and live my life how I want to live my life. And I'm grateful that Paycom has given me the tool to do that.