CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter begins with a summary of the present study, and continues with a discussion and conclusions based on the research findings, including implications of the findings. Finally, the chapter concludes with recommendations for future research in the area of leadership practices. This study examined the effects of leader behavior on the confidence and performance of individuals they led. Specifically, the major research question addressed: What is the impact of transformational leadership by middle managers on the performance of frontline employees? This chapter presents the conclusion, identifies research limitations that may have influenced the data, and reviews suggestions for future research. This chapter contains three parts. First, a summary of the research will be discussed. Then, limitations of this study will be addressed and finally recommendations for future research will be presented.

The chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations that are the results from the quantitative study of the hypotheses, the literature review on transformational leadership, middle managers and frontline employees’ performance, the survey instruments that were implemented and their data and analyses, and the study’s insights acquired through the current research process. The purpose of this quantitative research study was to measure the impact of transformational leadership by middle managers on the performance of frontline employees at twenty 5-star hotels located in the United States.

The present research examined the transformational leadership skills of middle managers in the business environment that is characterized by the growing separation between employees and management that has arisen from ineffective internal management leadership practices (Ling, Simsek, Lubatkin, Lyon and Veiga, 2008; Erkutlu, and Chafra 2006; Bono and Anderson
2005; Kouzes and Posner, 2002. The literature review identified characteristics and practices of effective middle manager transformational leadership that were believed to offer a model of skills, decisions, and actions that were replicable to aspiring managers and leaders. The adoption of effective management transformational leadership practices were viewed as the avenue for managerial effectiveness, engaging employees while also creating growth and success for the organization. The literature reported on middle manager’s transformational leadership skills and practices to build relationships for engagement and productivity.

**Overview of Chapters 1-4**

The researcher found all four of the dimensions of transformational leadership (TL) to be highly correlated. For this study it appeared as though all four dimensions were rating the same construct. The researcher found the variability of perceived TL behaviors of middle managers as rated by frontline employees to be relatively low. This low variability means it may not be necessary to have three frontline employees rate the TL behaviors of their middle managers. There were no significant differences found in the ratings of subordinates in different age categories, length of time working with the middle manager, or size of the hotel. The researcher found a significant relationship between the TL construct and hotel front desk employee performance.

The quantitative research undertaken in the study adopted the three-pronged approach identified with social investigation: (a) empirical: grounded in the situations, perceptions, and input of the individuals being studied; (b) theoretical: honoring the ideas and the patterns that are shared with researchers for their consideration; and (c) open: designed in a process that
minimizes bias and increases the findings’ acceptance (Neuman, 2003, p. 92). Discussions of the current research investigation, presented in chapters 1 through 4, are summarized below.

Chapter 1 presented the background of the study, aims and objectives, research problem and statement that established the foundation for the present research; the direction for the literature review; the selection of quantitative, descriptive research methods; the selection of the survey instruments and the use of convenience sampling; and the analysis of the collected data. The chapter identified the juncture of the diversity of employee, management, economic, and organizational challenges: ongoing business and culture changes; escalating business needs to improve productivity; competitive concerns driven by products, services, personnel, and fiscal outcomes; increasing demands on middle management performance and staff practices; evidence of increased separation between employees and all management levels because of ineffective internal communication practices; and the business need to develop and retain an engaged, satisfied workforce (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman and Fetter, 1990; Ling, Simsek, Lubatkin, Lyon and Veiga, 2008; Hansen, 2009; Kark, Shamir, and Chen, 2003; Judge and Piccolo, 2004). Further, a compilation of common vocabulary words and phrases in chapter 1 permitted a shared understanding of the fundamental language used in the industry, the literature, and reported in the present research.

Chapter 2 introduced the purpose of the current research, research questions and hypotheses, and reported on the literature exploration. The chapter presented a review of the literature on a range of topics pivotal to the understanding of: (a) transformational leadership, (b) leadership models and theory, (c) middle managers, (d) evolution of middle management, (e) frontline employees, (f) organizational performance, (g) theoretical framework, and (h) the relationship between transformational leadership and performance. The transformational
leadership style is characterized in the Full Range Leadership Development Model by four underlying dimensions, all of which are seen by Bass and Avolio (1994) as the most active and effective behaviors of leadership. These include idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration and inspirational motivation and are referred to as the ‘Four I’s’ (Bass, 1990). Yukl (1998) defines Idealized influence (charisma) as behavior that arouses strong follower emotions and identification with the leader. Bass and Avoid (2000) further state that through such idealized influence, leaders become role models for their followers and are admired, respected and trusted. Inspirational motivation includes behavior that motivates and inspires followers by communicating high expectations and expressing purposes in simple ways, which provides meaning and challenge to their followers’ work (Bass, 1997). This inspirational motivation arouses individual and team spirit with enthusiasm and optimism (Yukl, 1998; Bass and Avolio, 2000). Individualized consideration includes mentoring, support, encouragement and coaching of followers (Yukl, 1998; Lagomarsino and Cardona, 2003). Transformational leaders link the individuals' current needs to the organization and new learning opportunities are created (Bass and Avolio, 2000; Mester, et al., 2003). Intellectual stimulation involves leaders stimulating their followers' effort to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems and approaching old situations in new ways (Bass and Avolio, 2000).

Throughout organizational history, middle management has evolved necessarily, demonstrating organizational growth (Buchen, 2005; Huy, 2001; Wellins & Weaver, 2003). Organizations do not develop middle managers as much as middle managers develop organizations (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Caldwell, 2003; Wellins & Weaver). As such, the middle echelon continues to evolve to accommodate the changing needs brought about by changes in market, competition, resources, industry or organizational preferences, and other strategic imperatives. Requisite
competencies grow with responsibilities (Armitage et al., 2006; Buchen). Middle management
development has been equally evolutionary, stemming from supervisor training in the early
1900s and never fully meeting the challenges faced by the leadership group (Bernthal & Wellins,
2003; Newport, 1964b). Shaped by the environment rather than purposefully developed, middle
managers move from one situation to another, managing changing circumstances to affect
productivity and organizational success. Despite years of research focused on requisite middle
management competencies, most development seems to occur largely in response to
organizational factors (Bernthal & Wellins; Caldwell, 2003; Huy, 2001; Kane, 1982; Katz, 1974;
McDermott, 2001). The positive influence on leadership development created by the
understanding of why the work is important facilitates the understanding of how middle
management can succeed despite ad hoc development (Vardiman, 2001). Taking action when
recognizing the need for action, middle managers learn from the process and share the lessons
with peers, seniors, and subordinates and then move on to the next circumstance requiring
attention. Although much has been discussed about the impact of transformational leadership on
the performance of an employee and the importance of middle manager in an organization, not
much has been discussed taking both of these together.

Chapter 3 furnished a discussion of the quantitative research model used in the current
study. The quantitative model and descriptive design were applied to the present research to
undertake the surveying of frontline employees’ experiences and perspectives regarding their
interaction and communication with managers and middle managers’ transformational leadership
skills to identify if middle managers’ transformational leadership influenced frontline
employees’ performance. Further, the present research studied the possible impact of gender and
of employees’ years of service to the organization on employees’ perceptions of middle
managers' leadership practices and the practices' influence on the performance of frontline employees.

Chapter 4 presented the analyses and findings that resulted from the survey research undertaken with middle managers and frontline employees of the twenty 5-star hotels located in various parts of USA. A total of 200 surveys were distributed to these hotels out of which 130 returned; this distribution included a total of 30 surveys of middle managers and 100 surveys of frontline employees. The results of the survey instruments indicated that there was statistical significance to the middle managers’ transformational leadership practices and their influence on the performance of the frontline employees.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research study and the implementation of the survey instruments provided the foundation for the study of middle managers’ transformational leadership practices and its impact on the performance of frontline employees. The quantitative research supplied the opportunity to investigate the perspectives of employees and managers in 5-star hotel environment. The research questions provided the foundation for the hypotheses that were tested in the present survey research. The research questions for the study were:

Main Question:
- What is the impact of transformational leadership by middle managers on the performance of frontline employees?

Sub Questions:
- What is the importance of middle management in the overall productivity of the organization
What is the importance of middle management as a leader?

What is the relationship between leadership and performance?

What is the importance of frontline employees in an organization?

What are the factors to measure performance of frontline employees?

How can a middle manager influence the performance of frontline employees?

The research questions provided the foundation for the development of the following hypotheses that directed the present research. The hypotheses were:

H1: There is a positive relationship between middle management leadership and organizational performance

H2: There is a significant impact of “communicating the vision” on frontline employee performance

H3: There is a significant impact of “being a role model to subordinates” on frontline employee performance

H4: There is a significant impact of “intellectual stimulation” on frontline employee performance

H5: There is a significant impact of “individualized consideration” on frontline employee performance

H6: There is a significant impact of “mentoring” on frontline employee performance

H7: There is a significant impact of “motivating the employees” on frontline employee performance

H8: There is a significant impact of “achieving group goals” on frontline employee performance

These research questions and hypothesis were tested using statistical tools using SPSS16.0. The result showed that the above hypotheses were true and the transformational
leadership behaviors of middle managers have a significant impact on the performance of the frontline employees.

**Middle Managers’ Influence on the Outcomes**

My findings suggest that the everyday actions of middle managers have important implications for the work outcomes of frontline employees. These actions not only directly affect employee efficacy, but just as important indirectly mediate the implementation of corporate initiatives. Middle managers facilitate the social context in which change occurs. This includes involving employees in decisions that affect their job, encouraging communication in the work place, and encouraging and facilitating contact with customers. These findings support the important roles that middle managers play as relationship builders within and across work units and as communicators (Heraclerous, 2002; Ford and Ford, 1995).

These findings have implications for the theory development and the design and implementation of administrative changes. As noted, these findings contribute not only to our theoretical understanding of the role that middle managers play in emergent change processes, but how coherency is achieved across diverse work units. These findings have implications for the design of future reform initiatives in complex organizations. My research also has implications for how researchers study change within complex organizations. In the following sections, I review both the theoretical and practical contributions of my research.

**Theoretical Contributions of the Study**

Ultimately, my research sheds light on how coherency is achieved across work units and the importance of local controls in achieving coherency. Finally by studying the influence of
middle managers in the change process, my research contributes to our understanding of agency within the complexity science framework.

Work units with high levels of efficacy are work units in which managers have used human resource tools to build upon these values, using corporate tools to facilitate the expression of these values. In addition, as noted earlier, middle managers in high efficacy work units have made sense of corporate strategy in terms of these commonalities. My research suggests that high efficacy work units are those work units in which middle managers lead the change process, using corporate tools such as expectations systems and goal systems to build upon local values. Coordination occurs when middle managers "interpret" corporate strategy in light of work unit and individual values. Despite differing orientations and task requirements, coherency across work units comes from commonly shared individual values such as patriotism, customer commitment or personal responsibility.

Finally, my research also sheds light on how middle managers may resolve the tension between corporate control systems and local values. My findings expand upon the actions of middle managers in facilitating emergent change through the use of corporate tools and engaging in sense-making processes. Middle managers are not simply obstacles to change, but play crucial roles in mediating between local values and corporate goals. In addition rather than solely being implementers of corporate change systems, my findings suggest that middle managers may lead the local change process. These findings suggest that middle managers may play key roles as transformational leaders. In the following section, I review each of these contributions in more detail.


Influence of Middle Managers

These findings have important implications for our understanding of how middle managers influence the change process. Referring back to Petersen's (2002) three layers of management and leadership, my research suggests that coherency within complex organizations occurs through numerous interactions of these three forces. As Floyd and Lane (2000) suggest, middle managers play key roles in linking corporate intentions and local actions.

Middle managers may strongly influence the outcomes of change initiatives, both directly and indirectly. As noted earlier, middle managers directly facilitate the social context which influences employee performance. Middle managers also play an important role in "connecting" the work unit to the organization. They do this by using corporate systems as tools to both promote local interaction and to create a shared sense of meaning of local action. As discussed previously, middle managers make sense of corporate goals, but do so with a primary focus on what those corporate goals mean for local action.

More subtly, my research confirms the emphasis on middle managers as leaders (Petersen, 2002; Wheatley, 1999), as opposed to managers as implementers of corporate policy. These findings are also consistent with Westley's (1990) description of the importance of including middle managers in the formulation of corporate policy. These findings also have important implications for the design and implementation of change initiatives.

Research Limitations

There are several limitations to note about the research described in this dissertation. The sample size for this study was a limitation. The sample size of middle managers and employees provided for insufficient power to show any significant relationship between the control and pilot
teams. This limitation was compounded by the inability of the researcher to link individual member performance metrics with their individual efficacy ratings across time, given their union's request. This roadblock limited the ability to provide more detailed data analysis or the ability to generalize the findings.

A critical component incorporated into this research, the use of a field sample, was also one of its chief limitations. Isolating variables of study was difficult given the field setting. Although appropriate isolation was made to control the independent variables, external variables such as history between employees and their managers, changes in policies and procedures within the organization, and personnel changes may have influenced relationships across trials. Further, environmental factors may have influenced the comparisons between the control and pilot groups.

Leaders within this study may have successfully transformed their groups; however, if there are no personal consequences (either positive or negative) attached to performance, employees may have little incentive to accurately appraise their efficacy perceptions (Bandura, 1986; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Wood & Bandura, 1986). One of the tenets of social cognitive theory suggests that individuals participate in activities that they believe will cause personal benefit (Bandura, 1997). It was assumed that participants were committed to the achievement of goals and viewed leadership behaviors as a means of achieving those results. If the participants were not as committed or did not see the benefit of improving their performance, this lack of benefit or commitment may have influenced their perceptions and created a discrepancy in their efficacy-performance relationships. The samples used for this study were unionized employees who required appropriate union representation on performance decisions when speaking with managers. Thus, any negative performance consequences issued by the middle managers were
subdued given contractual obligations with the union. Conversely, reward structures around performance were not established to reinforce new behaviors of managers or the participants' participation in offering solutions to work issues. Such obligations made it difficult to take immediate corrective action on the performance of associates. Potential delay in performance commitment (either positive or negative) may have influenced perceptions.

Because this study took place at hotels in a limited geographical area, the results may not be generalizable to other areas or other industries. Even though anonymity is assured to all participants, some may have felt uneasy about rating their direct supervisors and this may have caused errors in the results. The ability of middle managers in rating the performance of their frontline employees is unknown; therefore rating errors may have affected the performance scores of frontline employees.

Patiar and Lokman (2008) found differences in performance ratings, and Whitelaw and Morda (2004) found small differences in leadership behaviors, based on gender. Gender was not included as a demographic question in this study, and thus these relationships could not be assessed. Ethnicity was not included in the demographic questions either and thus differences between ethnicity and performance or leadership behaviors could not be assessed.

The study collected data from multiple physically separate units from two very similar organizations that provide the same type of services and operate in the same geographic area. This helps to make the units more similar and provides a certain degree of control by minimizing the effects of a number of potential sources of error (Shaw et al., 2005). The level of control obtained by studying similar units is much harder to achieve if the units studied were from multiple highly different organization. The study provides an appropriate test of whether job performance is related to organizational outcomes (specifically, financial performance, ratings of
service quality, and turnover intentions) by examining variables at the unit level. In addition, the study examined these relationships using comprehensive measures of job performance, thus allowing for a direct comparison of the relationships of the job performance dimensions with both antecedents (leadership style) and outcomes (unit performance).

As is the case with all research, the current study does have a few limitations that future research efforts in this area may want to try and improve upon. First, the data used here was collected from two non-profit government organizations. This fact may affect the generalizability of the observed results to for-profit and non-government organizations. Future research should seek to study different types of organizations (e.g., private, public, for-profit, etc.) in order to see if similar results are obtained. On a related note, the present study used two very similar organizations in order to have access to a larger number of units to try and maintain statistical power. If possible, it would be preferable to include only units from a single organization, as that could provide an even greater level of control when comparing units on the variables of interest.

Another limitation is that managers were asked to rate their employees’ job performance as a group rather than to rate each employee individually. This approach was chosen because it was not feasible to ask managers to rate each of their employees individually. Due to the length of the survey instruments used, it would have been very time consuming for many of the unit managers to rate each employee and such an approach would likely have resulted in a lower response rate from the unit managers. As was mentioned in a previous section, this approach has been used successfully in other studies (e.g., Koys, 2001; Ehrhart, 2004). This approach may however result in less accurate ratings of employee job performance, which could have influenced the findings of this study. Future research could try and address this limitation by having managers rate each employee assuming that the number of employees is small enough for
this to be feasible. However, if the number of employees that each manager needs to rate were not fairly small, the use of shortened measurement instruments would likely be required.

Fourth, the study has fairly low statistical power. Given the sample size of 130, a 0.05 alpha level, five predictors, and an effect size of 0.15, a multiple regression has a power level of 0.617. When three predictors are used (everything else equal) the power level achieved is 0.719. In other words, when using three predictors the study can detect effect sizes above 0.179 with a power of 0.80, and when five predictors are used the effect size needs to be above 0.217 for a power level of 0.80 to be reached given the sample size. Despite best efforts it was not possible to collect data from quite as many units as would have been desirable. This means that relationships are more likely to be found insignificant, even if they do in fact exist. Future research efforts using similar designs should make every effort to try and secure a larger samples in order to obtain a higher level of statistical power.

Prior to taking action on recommendations, limitations are considerations. Possible participant and researcher bias is inherent in quantitative case studies and can influence outcomes. The distinctive organization ownership, demographic participant sample composition, and the researcher’s role within the organization might influence perceptions and results interpretation.

There are several key limitations to the generalizability of the findings from this research. Most of these were known early in the study, before data collection, and are described in chapter 3. However, two additional limitations, the use of questionnaire and the unit of analysis issue, also emerged during the data analysis procedures.

The most important limitation in this study concerns the sample's characteristics. As described in chapter 3, the sample was demographically composed solely of 5-start hotel
employees, who are mostly white, male, over the age of 30, and have an average of 15 or more years tenure. These hotel employees came from only two design units, located in the north-eastern part of the US. These factors certainly limit the generalizability of the study's findings.

As noted in the discussion of the study's results, there are additional and unique characteristics of this sample's work environment which probably further limit the generalizability of the findings. To review briefly, the design engineering environment in this sample is quite complex. Teams are highly named, interdependent with one another, and frequently interact with management as a group. Individuals are often members of three or more informal teams at a time and may play different roles on each. There is a high need for structure, clarity of roles, continuous provision of resources, and based on the findings of this study, reward and recognition behavior from management. While these characteristics may be somewhat common in other high technology firms, they are probably not common across many other types of work environments. Hence, the findings derived from this sample are probably somewhat specific to large engineering design organizations and therefore not a good representation of other types of organizations.

As explained in chapter 3, the performance measures were also a key limitation in this study. The individual performance data was limited to subjective ratings from one source, the middle manager. Further, the individual performance instrument was developed by the researcher for use in this study, based on assessment criteria known to be important to the site organization. Hence, the measures are quite sample specific.

**Implications and Future Research**

One of the reasons leadership research is embraced by management scholars and
practiced is its potential applicability to work-related performance and unit effectiveness. The scope of this study focused on the impact leader behaviors have on their team's confidence and performance. At the beginning of this study, the researcher offered a theoretical framework that identified the relationship leader behaviors and group performance outcomes have on the efficacy perceptions and future performance of associates. This framework served as a guide to interpreting past research between the leader behavior-performance and efficacy-performance relationships. Most studies have implicitly focused on one or the other, while not clearly demonstrating the causality of leader behaviors on subordinate confidence and how subordinate confidence effects on performance. In this model, (a) leader behaviors have an impact on subordinate confidence and performance; (b) subordinates receive extrinsic (leader behaviors) and intrinsic (task-specific confidence based on performance) information that has an impact on their confidence and ability to deliver future performance expectations; and (c) performance results provide a measure of effectiveness and confidence for leaders and themselves. Collectively, this framework was not supported by the study's findings; however, there is some indication that parts of this model can be applied in organization settings.

After environmental factors were adjusted, the pilot intervention for pilot group leaders, which involved providing performance-related feedback and engaging in participative behaviors to achieve performance goals, demonstrated a significant and positive change in the confidence of frontline employees. These findings are consistent with those presented in previous research (Bandura & Cervone, 1983; Locke, Frederick, Lee, & Bobko, 1984; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998) and provide a glimpse to the impact leader behaviors can have on a group performance. Many leadership studies have focused on leader effectiveness on impacting performance, but
given today's wider spans of control and increased emphasis on self-management, future subordinate performance may drop if the effects of leadership behaviors fail to be robust and long-lasting. Although leader behaviors positively influenced collective and self-efficacy perceptions, performance metrics had minimal impact on one's task-specific confidence. This finding is inconsistent with previous research (Lindsley et al., 1995) suggesting that performance feedback has an impact on efficacy beliefs. Factors such as where the research took place (lab vs. field) (Chen & Bliese, 2002; Hoyt et al., 2003) and knowledge of the task (new vs. previous experience) (Gist et al., 1991; Jung & Sosik, 2003) would cause different results. Also of consideration are the types of metrics used to influence behavior. It is possible that not all metrics are created equal, whereby some may influence the confidence and performance of associates more than others. As leaders are expected to sustain positive performance results, while working through their subordinates, future research should focus on the impact leader behaviors have on employees and performance over a period of time in applied settings and on tasks with which subordinates are familiar. In addition, leaders should be mindful of their units of measure that influence behavior.

In work settings, as associates gain more experience, their confidence and performance expectations may be influenced by their past performance, thus making it more difficult for them to change their expectations in the future. Future research should focus on the impact performance feedback at the start of a task has on the confidence and expectations of associates in a longitudinal study. Such research may influence the way in which managers provide coaching and feedback to employees on new and repetitive tasks in order to ensure that their confidence and expectations are not negatively influenced early in their career.

It is difficult to imagine how one could develop the leadership behaviors required to
successfully influence performance in the context described in this study without taking into consideration the characteristics of the performance environment. As experienced in this research, the application of positive manager behaviors found in lab settings or new tasks did not provide similar expectations in the field or tasks that have been completed previously (Chen et al., 2002; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). With results across trials showing increases in the perception of manager effectiveness and minimal performance increase, organizational norms and extraneous variables (e.g., policies and procedures, structure, and technology) may influence perceptions of effectiveness and efficacy regardless of the intentions of the leader. Unlike the case for traditional lab settings that may be restrictive in their implications, when implementing initiatives in an applied setting, leaders often encounter conflicting factors that may negatively influence well-intended actions. As leaders consider behaviors intended to improve associate performance and confidence, it is critical for them the overall environmental context in which they are operating and to consider any necessary actions to support and sustain performance and confidence, in addition to the programs they are initiating.

Consequently, the findings of this study may offer some initial insights regarding the type of leadership behaviors that contribute to enhancing the subordinate performance, while factoring in the performance environment. Future research should continue to focus on uncovering the true relationship between leadership behaviors and employee performance in applied settings.

In order to increase response rate, researchers should follow similar methods used in this research study. The researcher followed recommendations made by Ravichandran and Arendt (2008) in this study. The researcher contacted the general manager ahead of time to receive commitment, used letterhead paper to make the surveys look more presentable, and hand
delivered and retrieved questionnaires. All of these measures may have led to the high response rate in this study. Out of the four general managers that committed to the study when the researcher stopped by the hotel, only two completed the surveys. Even though the numbers are lower, it still appears that the initial phone contact resulted in a higher response rate. Contacting key figures, such as the general manager, prior to visiting or sending questionnaires is recommended.

The performance tool used in this study was found to be reliable. The tool measures performance by addressing the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed in a front desk employee. These knowledge, skills, and abilities also align well with the job description of a typical front desk employee. A similar tool should be used by future researchers when attempting to measure the performance of hotel front desk personnel. Demographic questions regarding gender and ethnicity, both of which could have an effect on leadership or performance, should be added to the questionnaires.

The relationship between TL behaviors and performance was found not to be significant in this study; it does not mean the relationship does not exist. Future researchers in this area should look at educating supervisors about how to accurately rate the performance of their subordinates, this is one way to reduce rater errors (Noe et al., 2007). This includes at least making supervisors aware of the possible rater errors. Also recommended by Noe et al. (2007), supervisors should be provided with examples and types of performance so they know how to use the 5-point rating scale.

Another possible way to reduce the error would be to try and calibrate the supervisors in how they rate subordinates, in order to make all ratings comparable. Calibration of the supervisors would be a very extensive process, but something that could greatly increase the
reliability of the results. One way to calibrate the supervisors would be to give descriptions of behaviors of an employee to each supervisor and see how they would rate that employee. Next you would need to coach the supervisors on possible differences in ratings. Reminding supervisors to use the entire scale, not just the top half, could also lead to more reliable results.

TL behaviors were not found to be significantly related to performance in this study; perhaps another type of leadership would be more apt to increase performance of front desk employees. Future researchers should include the transactional leadership and laissez-faire statements in order to see if they are significantly related to employee performance. It may also be beneficial to have the supervisors fill out the self-rated form of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and compare the results to those of the subordinate.

The results show that the leadership style of managers can and does affect the job performance of employees, which in turn is related to organizational outcomes, though limited evidence of mediating effects were found using overall measures. These findings are of interest to researchers and organizations alike. From an organization’s perspective the results indicate that time and effort spent on better management practices are worthwhile. Of specific interest are the results from the exploratory analysis that indicate that certain sub-dimensions of leadership may be especially important when it comes to both employee job performance and organizational performance. From an academic standpoint the results suggest a number of avenues for further research and that some clarification may be needed with regard to the variables studied here. The additional analyses performed also suggest that focusing on the sub-dimensions of leadership and job performance may be a fruitful way to move forward.
Recommendations, Future Research, and Limitations

Recommendations based on the findings of the current research provide options for the current study organization to make improvements to the development of potential managers. Recommendations for future research follow the recommendations for the current study organization. Limitations are identified for consideration in acting on recommendations.

Recommendations for the Current Study Organization

The current research conclusions suggest that the current study organization might increase managerial awareness and performance by regularly communicating the organization’s vision and progress via multiple available communication channels. The organization might improve managerial development as well as performance by aligning systems, ensuring the systems support the vision and mission, and communicating system alignment to managers through local leaders and comprehensive development efforts. The organization might improve organizational and managerial competence and performance through purposeful investment in the mid-level manager preparation, including establishment of a corporate development priority as well as a comprehensive framework that delineates standards, expectations, and accountability.

Widely communicating the organization’s vision and mission might ensure information availability and consistency. With an understanding of the vision, including progress toward vision achievement, managers might more readily acquire a strategic perspective. Vision communication might create a sense of purpose and value that could increase awareness and positively influence development. The executive leadership team might consider review of the organization structure, rewards, processes, business model, and other organizational systems for
alignment that supports the vision and the mission. Articulating how the elements work together could facilitate greater understanding and increase alignment effectiveness.

The organization’s leaders might increase the connection between the declared development philosophy and the enacted one. Linking disparate elements into a congruent effort might create a comprehensive framework that could support corporate standards and regional nuances. Incorporating internal and external resources into a single developmental effort, to include availability and understanding of the use of tools and partners, could increase effectiveness. Articulating the development purpose relative to the organizational vision and strategy might facilitate greater understanding of talent as a commodity and increase local leader support of corporate efforts.

Leadership Competency of Middle Managers

Many leadership experts assume that all effective leadership behaviors are applicable across the different levels of managerial positions (Bass, 1990; Dopson & Steward, 1990; Lee, 1981). But, overwhelming evidence shows that to be effective, different hierarchical positions require different managerial behaviors (Kraut, Pedigo, Mckenna, & Dunnette, 1989). This section contains a discussion of the leadership competencies exclusively found among middle managers.

Intensive research studies have been conducted on middle managers, including studies exploring the roles of middle managers (Currie & Procter, 2001; Fenton- O’Creevy, 2000; Peters, 1987, 1992; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Wheatley, 1992), the relationship between employee involvement and middle managers (Fenton-O’Creevy, 1998), HR and middle
managers (Currie & Procter, 2001) and so on. For the purpose of this study, the studies on the leadership competency of middle managers were reviewed.

Floyd and Wooldridge (1992) conducted a study of the strategic roles of middle management, developed an instrument that would measure these roles, and examined their effects on the substantive strategy of the firm. To achieve the goal, first, drawing on previous clinical research, a theoretical typology of middle management roles in strategy was developed. Then, to examine the validity of the typology and its relationships to strategy in a relatively general context, they offered an MBA course that allowed participants to gain access to an organization, collect company documents, interview top and middle managers, and administer a middle management survey. From these sources, student investigators developed cases that focused on strategy content, strategy process, and organizational structure. All 25 projects were conducted according to a strict timetable, adhered to a detailed table of contents and were conducted at the business-level. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to examine the overall association among the four types of middle management strategic involvements and the organization’s strategic type. Results suggested the usefulness of measures for each role in assessing both the level and type of middle management strategic activity. In addition, the findings showed that middle managers reported significantly higher levels of upward mobility and divergent forms of strategic involvement than those who were viewed as analyzers and defenders. The findings suggest that middle managers’ strategic influence arises from their ability to mediate between internal and external selection environments.

In 1998, the Conference Board of Canada studied the changing role of middle managers in five organizations in early 1998 (Farquhar, 1998). The purpose of the study was to explore the changing roles of middle managers and how organizations need to support them in taking on new
roles and significant challenges that come with the roles. The methodology used was qualitative. Five companies—IBM Canada, Imperial Oil Limited, Canadian National, Consumers Gas and CIBC—that were facing dramatic changes in their industry and recognized the importance of middle management were selected to provide a cross-section of industry and organizational structure. Structured interviews were conducted with select senior management, middle managers and human resources practitioners in these organizations. In total, more than thirty interviews were conducted.

Study findings revealed the following results. Middle managers in these five organizations assessed where they spent their time and devoted their efforts. Five distinct roles of middle managers were found: (1) focusing on strategy implementation; (2) acting as a change agent; (3) brokering opportunities for innovation and collaboration; (4) ensuring communications; and (5) providing expertise and project management. Also, the results showed that companies needed to support their middle managers in taking on these new roles and the significant challenges that attend them: provide management development and training resources; create opportunities for growth and learning; and recognize middle managers for their contributions to the organization. This transformation reflected the competitive environment for all organizations and the need to respond more quickly, with better expertise and the commitment of everyone in the organization to these changes. It also demonstrated that middle managers failed to completely understand their vital role in the early part of the decade.

The study conducted by the Conference Board of Canada in 2002 was titled Leading from the Middle. The aim of the follow-up study was to examine the evolution of the middle manager role and identify essential skills and competencies. The report was based on practical information and insight gained through more than 50 hours of one-on-one interviews with
middle managers, senior executives, and HR specialists in four major Canadian organizations: Dofasco, TELUS, Fairmont Hotels and Resorts, and RBC Royal Bank (RBC). Additional insight was sought from middle managers in two federal organizations.

The report pointed to a new set of roles for successful middle managers. These were: executing strategy and delivering results; leading, motivating and inspiring people to perform exceptionally; managing, developing and retaining key talent; and building relationships and influencing others. The organizational supports considered critical for current and potential middle managers to make an effective contribution were: (1) organizational environment (vision and values, culture and leadership); (2) structure, systems, and processes; (3) leadership and communication initiatives; and (4) learning and leadership development.

This report examined the experience of leading organizations in supporting their middle managers as they carried out these five roles. It also explored the emerging roles for middle managers as they and their organizations anticipated increasing workloads and time demands, while facing the growing complexity of issues and a premium on retaining the right talent. In conclusion, studies showed that successful middle managers needed to take on strategic roles. There were special leadership competencies that were suitable for middle managers.

Conclusion

Research on leadership continues to be a relevant topic of organizational focus in today's environment. Leaders who are able to get the most out of their subordinates in order to achieve business results are often promoted, revered, and emulated throughout an organization. In order to achieve these results, leaders must work through their subordinates; thus, the actions and skills of the subordinate are critical to a leader's perceived success. In addition to their perception of
their own success and skills, subordinates are influenced by their leader's behavior. This study set out to determine the effect leader behaviors have on a team's perceptions of their leader, collective and self-efficacy and how these behaviors exert an impact on associate performance.

Overall findings from this study differed from previous research as transformational leadership by middle manager had little, but significant impact on the performance of frontline employees. Consistent with previous research, however; the findings highlighted the impact leaders have on their staff. Given the impact leaders and managers have on their staff's personal and collective attitudes and performance, it is important to continue research in this area. Continued focus on field application from laboratory settings can assist leaders and organizations toward enhancing methods for selecting, training, and promoting leaders and improving the overall effectiveness of work teams.

Leadership behaviors, which affect individual performance, heavily influence business success. However, a leader's influence and individual performance are mutually interdependent. If one is missing, the impact of the other will be ineffective. A leader's behavior is not enough to develop high-performance results; leaders' exuding these behaviors only provide the potential that their associates may deliver high performance. Organizational environments can positively (or negatively) foster a situation in which a leader can effectively manage their associates' performance and confidence. Together, the leader's behaviors and environment provide an effective way for companies to drive associate performance and confidence.

This study has expanded findings of the middle manager’s transformational leadership behaviors have on frontline employee’s efficacy and performance in field settings. The focus on leadership behaviors impacting efficacy and team performance reinforces the interdependence of behaviors and environment in impacting confidence and performance. Rather than the use of
extrinsic and intrinsic incentives, leaders may help employees develop their confidence to achieve goals through performance feedback and participative management behaviors.