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Chapter 24

The Conceptual Framework for Leaders Development in Organizations

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1. Introduction

The conditions in which organizations currently operate and the changes they undergo, as well as growing requirements in terms of employees' competence, influence the growing significance of investment in company's human resources. Because many organization accept the role of effective leadership in organizational success as axiomatic¹, leaders development has become a key strategic issue for organizations in the current business environment. There is substantial body of research evidence regarding the importance of leadership (leaders) development to organizational success². This aspect creates interests in leadership and leaders development practices. Developing leaders has become a top priority for many companies, because contemporary organizations need to build leadership capability to meet the evolving demands of diversity and complexity. What is more, all organizations should thinking about their future and what is connected with it about future leaders of an organization.

Organizations can use a wide variety of the leaders development activities, depending on the needs. That is why, it is important that organizations understand their own leaders development needs to choose the best practices for them. The aim of the article is to present the conceptual framework for leaders development in organizations as a field of future research. The article is a result of theoretical studies concerning the leaders development in an organization.

¹ D.J. Campbell, G. Dardis, K.M. Campbell, *Enhancing Incremental Influence: A Focused Approach To Leadership Development*, "Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies" 2003, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 29.

² S.L. Tubbs, E. Schulz, *Leadership Competencies: Can They Be Learned?*, "The Business Review, Cambridge" 2005, Vol. 3, No. 2, p. 7.

2. Approaches to leaders development

The modern leadership theory and practice argued that leadership can be learned³. What is the leaders development? According to Day⁴ there is some distinguish between developing leaders and developing leadership in an organization. In the case of leader development (as an individual-level undertaking), the emphasis typically is on individual-based knowledge, skills, and abilities which are associated with formal leadership role. In case of leadership development (as a social-system undertaking), the emphasis is on building networked relationships which are created through interpersonal exchange. Some approaches, which can be found in the literature, take into account this distinction, but most see them as synonymous terms. This paper, the presented conceptual framework, is focused on developing the individual. It means that both used in this paper terms: leaders development and leadership development should be considered as development of the human capital. According to McCauley et al., in this paper, leaders development is understood as the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes. Leadership roles and processes are seen as those, that facilitate setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment in groups of people who share common work⁵.

Over the past 20 years there was an explosion of interest in leadership development (leaders development) in organizations. Some of the trends in the field of leadership development in past 20 years fall under these two general headings: the proliferation of leadership development methods, and the importance of leader's emotional resonance with and impact on others⁶. Today, effective leadership is commonly viewed as central to organizational success, and more importance is placed on leadership development ever before. The state of leadership development today can be described by several following themes: leadership development increasingly occurring within context of work, critical reflection about the role of competencies in leadership development, revisiting the issue of work/life balance. Hernez-Broome and Hughes show trends that have a major role in our understanding and practice of leadership and leaders development, these trends include⁷:

- leadership competencies will still matter – but they will change as the competitive environment change. The five critical force will shape leadership competencies, such as: global competition, information technology, the need for rapid and flexible organizations, team, and differing employee needs;
- globalization/internationalization of leadership concepts, constructs, and development methods – future leaders will need to be conversant in doing business internationally and conceiving strategy on global basis;
- the role of technology – leading virtually is already a reality, and requirements to lead geographically dispersed units and teams will only increase;
- increasing interest in the integrity and character of leaders;

³ A. Nahavandi, *The Art and Science of Leadership*, Pearson Education International, New Jersey 2009, p. 329.

⁴ D.V. Day, *Leadership Development: A Review in Context*, "Leadership Quarterly" 2000, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 583-586.

⁵ C.D. McCauley, E.V. Velsor, M.N. Ruderman (ed.), *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco 2010, p. 2.

⁶ G. Hernez-Broome, R.L. Hughes, *Leadership Development: Past, Present, and Future*, "Human Resource Planning" 2004, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 25-28.

⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 29-32.

mentor network by fully engaging all managers in mentoring relationships with other employees; ensure active manager participation in the organization's methods of identifying and codifying high potential employees; fully engage managers at all activities for high potentials; ensure a flexible and fluid succession planning process; create organization-wide forums for exposing high potential to multiple stakeholders, including senior executives and board members; and establish a supportive organizational culture through active top management participation in development programs¹³.

The next approach to leader development is focused on problem-based learning, which is predicated upon the belief that learning is most effective when learners are actively involved and learn in a context where knowledge is to be used for a specific purpose. Yeo¹⁴ identified three key factors and three essential activities that determine the success of problem based learning in leadership development. Researcher classified the pertinent characteristics of problem based learning into three distinct phases. The first phase, which consists of problem definition, open communication, and utilization of resources enables to initiate problem based learning. The second phase gives guided action to execute a task. The third phase, which consists of investigation (acting); reflection (thinking); and knowledge sharing (learning) enable to generate strategic action plan in response to the problem based learning problem¹⁵.

Thomas and Cheese¹⁶ proposed the experience-based approach to leadership development. This approach presents a comprehensive way that joins together on-the-job experience, life experience, and specific skill development. This approach consists of the following three major processes: preparing, developing, and preserving¹⁷. These processes together produce skills needed by leaders at all levels, as well as a concept of leadership practice that encourages lifelong learning. Experience-based approach to leadership development links the leadership development activities an organization already has in place with real work assignments and innovative uses of information and communication technology.

The approach proposed by McCauley et al.¹⁸ presented leaders development as a process that requires a variety of developmental experiences and the ability to learn from experience. Developmental experiences and the ability to learn have a direct impact on each other. A variety of developmental activities should contain the elements of assessment, challenge and support. That is, effective leaders development should be rich in assessment information, and thus allow individuals to gauge their current progress and performance against their desired progress and performance. They should also be rich in challenges, pushing individuals to question their strategies, their frameworks, and their skills, and stretching them to learn and develop new capacities. This development should be rich in support, in providing individuals with help in handling the stresses associated with development, and in providing indication that efforts to learn and grow are truly valued.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 256.

¹⁴ R.K. Yeo, *Problem-based Learning: A Viable Approach in Leadership Development?*, "The Journal of Management Development" 2007, Vol. 26, No. 9, p. 886.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 886.

¹⁶ R.J. Thomas, P. Cheese, *Leadership: Experience is the Best Teacher*, "Strategy & Leadership" 2005, Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 24-29.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

¹⁸ C.D. McCauley, E.V. Velsor, M.N. Ruderman (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 4-14.

- pressure to demonstrate return on investment – leadership development is usually expensive, demonstrating and quantifying the impact of leadership development investment is likely to emerge as a priority for organizations committed to building leadership strength;
- new way of thinking about the nature of leadership and leaders development – leadership will be understood as collective capacity of all organization’s members to accomplish such critical task as setting direction, creating alignment, and gaining commitment. Leadership development will require a deeper understanding of the role of organization systems and an organizational culture.

It is argued that as our understanding and definitions of leadership have changed, so the approach to leadership development (leaders development) also needs to change. It is also argued that many approaches to leaders development are not innovative, they are similar to others human resources development undertakings in an organization⁸. Leaders development approaches are mainly view as an intervention where participants could engage in personal growth, skill building, conceptual understanding, or feedback-oriented experiences.

Traditionally, organizations have relied on single-solution and multiple-solution approaches to building leadership capacity. The single-solution approach is based on using one method to build leaders. This approach can be easy to implement, but has many limitations and weaknesses which make it insufficient to build leadership capacity. More evolved approach is multiple-solution approach to leadership development. This solution offers leaders a greater number of development options. Unfortunately, these options are often implemented in a fragmented manner, what it means that their potential value is limited. Many times the multiple-solution approach is not guided by an overall strategy⁹. To avoid such problems, Weiss and Molinaro¹⁰ proposed the integrated-solution approaches to leadership development. This approach brings together many development option and represents a strategic, synergistic and sustainable way for organization to build the leadership capacity. It is strategic because it ensures that all development options help an organization to gain competitive advantage. This approach is synergistic because it select and implement development options in a seamless way so that they add value to one another. Sustainable means that this approach takes a long-term perspective. The successful implementation of an integrated-solution approach needs the following eight steps: develop a comprehensive strategy for integrated leadership development; connect leadership development to the organization’s environmental challenges; use the leadership story to set the context for development; balance global enterprise-wide needs with local individual needs, employ emergent design and implementation; ensure that development options fit the culture; focus on critical moments of the leadership lifecycle; and apply a blended methodology¹¹.

Goves¹² suggests the leaders development should be connected with succession planning process through optimal utilization of manager and a supportive organizational culture. To build leadership pipeline organization should execute the following steps: develop the organization’s

⁸ R.J. Boaden, *Leadership Development: Does it Make a Differences?*, “Leadership & Organization Development Journal” 2006, Vol. 27, No. 1, p. 8.

⁹ D. Weiss, V. Molinaro, *Integrated Leadership Development*, “Industrial and Commercial Training” 2006, Vol. 38, No. 1, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰ D. Weiss, V. Molinaro, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 7-10.

¹² K.G. Groves, *Integrating Leadership Development and Succession Planning Best Practices*, “Journal of Management Development” 2007, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 239-256.

In the literature there are other approaches to leaders development, for example: internal process of leaders development proposed by Mac Iver¹⁹; Adair's concept of leaders development²⁰; simulation-based leadership development described by Drew and Davidson²¹; cohort approach to organizational leadership development²²; three-dimensional model proposed by Bolt²³; or leaders development connected with talent management²⁴.

Summary, approaches to leader development are varied, and similar to the multiple models proposed for leaders development in the literature, each organization, human resource professional, academic, and consultant can have their own preferred approach to leader development²⁵.

3. Perspectives influencing leaders development in an organization

Based on the literature study, especially on the approaches to leaders development author proposes to look at leaders development through the following five perspectives:

- process perspective,
- organization perspective,
- subject perspective,
- function perspective,
- object perspective.

Leader development is a process whereby facilitators lead participants through a series of activities or mental exercises, encouraging them to reflect on learning experiences in order to promote transfer of knowledge and skills to work contexts²⁶. Leaders development process used programs to obtain its goals. Such programs focus on self-awareness, changing attitudes, building teams and improving interpersonal interactions. The author assumes that the leaders development program is a purposeful set of activities aimed at increasing the knowledge, skills and abilities, and experiences connected with the performance leader's role in an organizations. Leaders devel-

¹⁹ T.D. Mac Iver, *A Grounded Theory Approach to Build a Practical Model for Developing Leadership within American Information Technology Companies*, Dissertation, Colorado Technical University, Colorado 2000, p. 184.

²⁰ J. Adair, *Kształtowanie liderów. Siedem zasad rozwijania zdolności przywódczych*, Oficyna a Wolters Kluwer business, Warszawa 2010, p. 47.

²¹ S. Drew, A. Davidson, *Simulation-based Leadership Development and Team Learning*, "The Journal of Management Development" 1993, Vol. 12, No. 8, pp. 39-50.

²² J. Sharlow et al., *Learning Together: A Cohort Approach to Organizational Leadership Development*, "Leadership in Health Services" 2009, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 318-326.

²³ J.F. Bolt, *Kształtowanie trójwymiarowych przywódców* [in:] *Lider przyszłości. Nowe wizje, strategie i metody działania na nadchodzącą erę*, (red.) F. Hesselbein, M. Goldsmith, R. Beckhard, Business Press, Warszawa 1997, pp. 173-178.

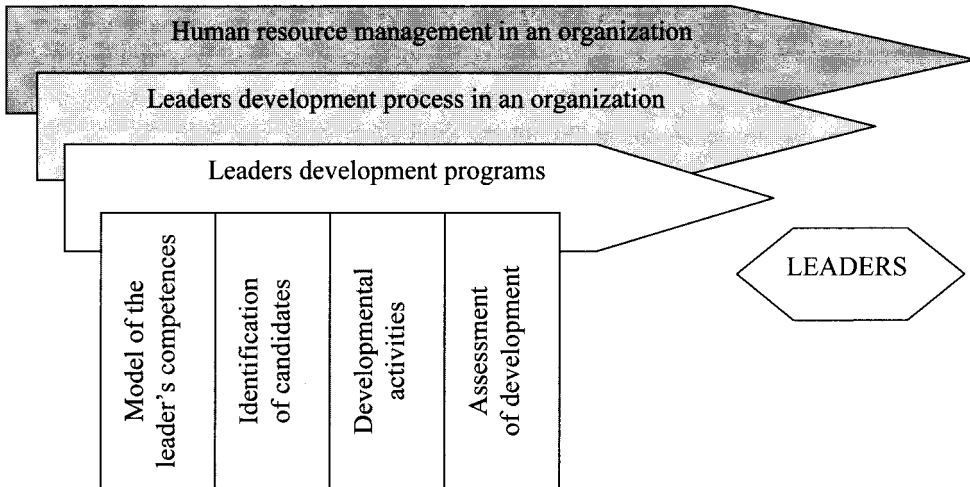
²⁴ D. Miller, S. Desmarais, *Developing Your Talent to the Next Level: Five Best Practices for Leadership Development*, "Organizational Development Journal" 2007, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 6-7.

²⁵ A.J. Allen, N.S. Hartman, *Leader Development: An Exploration of Sources of Learning*, "Organization Development Journal" 2008, Vol. 26, No. 2, p. 81.

²⁶ V. Burke, D. Collins, *Optimising the Effects of Leadership Development Programmes: A Framework for Analysing the Learning and Transfer of Leadership Skills*, "Management Decision" 2005, Vol. 43, No. 7, p. 976.

opment programs are tools used in the leaders development in an organization (Fig. 1). Leaders development should be regarded as a process associated with the overall policy development of human capital in an organization. This process is not exclusive to leaders development, in that it typically is also associated with many management development undertakings. But according to leaders development, programs used by this process should consists of the element which were presented at figure 1, such as: model of the leader's competences, identification of candidates, developmental activities, and assessment of development. In this process, organizations can create programs adapted to their current and future needs.

Figure 1. The components of leaders development programs



Source: own work based on literature studies.

A basic condition for successful leaders development is a precise understanding of the essence of leadership in the context of an organization. Therefore, each organization should determine the profile of a leader corresponds to its needs. In addition, it should be emphasized that the profile should be modified in relation to the changing conditions of functioning businesses. Then, within this profile, organizations can create models of leader's competencies²⁷, which define competencies (knowledge, abilities and skills) needed to serve as leaders at various levels of management or areas of an organization.

Organizations should have leaders at all levels of the organization to gain competitive advantage. That is why, the good practices is to look for potential leaders at all level of management. Organizations may undertake development activities aimed both at people who already play the role of leader, as well as people who can play such a role in the future. Leaders should constantly

²⁷ D. Berke, M.E. Kossler, M. Wakefield, *Developing Leadership Talent*, Pfeiffer, San Francisco 2008, pp. 107-110; R.K.C. Ryan, *Leadership Development. A guide for HR and Training Professionals*, Elsevier, Oxford 2008, pp. 106-126; W.A. Gentry, J.B. Leslie, *Competencies for Leadership Development: What's Hot and What's Not When Assessing Leadership-Implications for Organization Development*, "Organization Development Journal" 2007, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 39-40.

upgrade their skills. It is often associated with a competence gap associated with the emergence of new challenges as a result of changes in the conditions of the business environment.

Used by organizations developmental activities, also called sources of learning, are simply instruments to help in the process of leaders development. Organization can use a wide variety of leadership development activities²⁸. Many of these activities are offered in combination. There is no single method appropriate at all times. Sources of learning are matched depending upon the objectives of initiative. The need depends on money, time and the skill level of facilitators. The success or failure certain developmental activity and its impact on an individual is difficult to predict. An individual's age, learning style, organizational role, development level, motivation, and self-efficacy all determine the level of impact²⁹.

Leadership development initiative cannot be successful unless it clearly targets business objectives. It means that all leadership development effort should be grounded in business needs (for example, building a bench-strength of leadership talent, using leadership development to transform the business, helping leaders become more effective, helping leaders through critical career transitions)³⁰. Nowadays it is important to link leadership development to the organization's strategy³¹. What is more leadership development will require a deeper understanding of the role of organizational culture and system.

Pernick describes nine essential tasks which decide about success of leaders development programs³².

These tasks are as follows:

- create program selection criteria,
- define leadership competencies,
- establish an application process,
- assess current leadership skills,
- provide developmental activities,
- align structures to reinforce program,
- develop leaders in context,
- plan for the next generation of leaders,
- evaluate the leadership development program.

²⁸ See an overview of basic methods used by organizations in: A.J. Allen, N.S. Hartman, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-80; L. Carter, D. Ulrich, M. Goldsmith, *Best Practices in Leadership Development and Organization Change*, Pfeiffer, San Francisco 2005, pp. 446-447; A. Nahavandi, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-337.

²⁹ A.J. Allen, N.S. Hartman, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

³⁰ J. Moore, *Where Do You Start with Leadership Development?*, "Development and Learning in Organization" 2004, Vol. 18, No. 7-9, pp. 7-8.

³¹ R.M. Fulmer, S.A. Stumpf, J. Bleak, *The Strategic Development of High Potential Leaders*, "Strategy & Leadership" 2009, Vol. 37, No. 3, p. 17.

³² R. Pernick, *Creating a Leadership Development Program: Nine Essential Tasks*, "Public Personnel Management" 2001, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 431-442.

Table 1. Summary description of the five perspective influencing leaders development in an organization

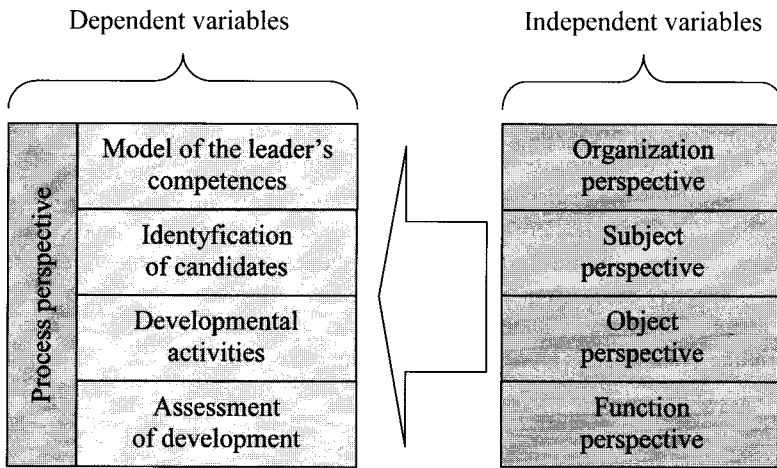
1.	PROCESS PERSPECTIVE	
	Model of leader's competences Identification of candidates Developmental activities Assessment of development	
2.	ORGANIZATION PERSPECTIVE	
	Linking the leaders development with strategic challenges of an organization Creating personal strategy focused on the leaders development in an organization Linking the leaders development with other processes in the area of human resource management in an organization Linking the leaders development with an organizational culture Defining the profile of leaders Providing the support from top management Defining the aims of the leaders development in an organization Providing suitable and sufficient resources	
3.	SUBJECT PERSPECTIVE	
	Subjects covered by the development Senior managers Mid-level managers Line managers Specialists Executive staff	Implementers of the development Board Top management Head of HR HR department Leaders development specialist Direct superior Internal trainer External trainer Personal adviser
4.	FUNCTION PERSPECTIVE	
	Decision function Executive function Consulting function Monitoring function	
5.	OBJECT PERSPECTIVE	
	360-degree assessment Action learning Assessment center Coaching Degree programs E-learning External trainings Fellowships Games Group reflection Individual assessment Individual reflection Internal trainings	Interview Job enlargement Job enrichment Job rotation Mentoring Networking with senior executives Observation Participations in developmental projects Personal development plans Self-development Stimulation SWOT analysis Teambuilding

Source: own work based on literature studies.

4. Conceptual framework for leaders development in an organization

The building of this framework can be justified by the occurrence of certain common elements and solutions, which are presented in the literature on the leaders development. The conceptual framework consists of five perspectives, which are the basis of constructing framework. The following perspectives were distinguished: process perspective, object perspective, subject perspective, function perspective, and organizational perspective.

Figure 2. The dependent and independent variables of the conceptual framework



Source: own work.

In this framework, as dependent variables were accepted the process perspective components, that is: the model of the leader's competences, the identification of candidates, the developmental activities, and the assessment of development. As the independent variables were accepted the remaining four perspectives (Fig. 2). This marks, that the form of process perspective components depends on the shape of object perspective, subject perspective, function perspective, and organizational perspective.

The application of conceptual framework can be seen as/looked through the lens of two aspects. First one, the structured/constructed pattern may find its application in practice as reference point for these organizations which are active in the leaders development and these organization which want to take such action. In reference to the organizations that developing leadership abilities of its employees this framework may allow these organization to analyze its activities from five different perspectives and indicate possible directions for future improvement of the leaders development. In reference to organization that currently don't develop leadership abilities or just take such initiative, this framework may provide the basis for designing the components of leaders development programs (such as: model of the leader's competences, identification of candidates, developmental activities, and assessment of development). Second one, this pattern can have its application in the empirical research as a research framework and reference point for

the research. In this case, five perspectives included in the conceptual framework can be seen as five research fields. Each of research areas (perspectives) creates the research questions.

Process perspective research questions are as follows:

- What are the components of the leaders development programs?
- How are developmental needs/areas of the leaders development defined?
- How are candidates for the leaders development identified?
- How are developmental activities selected?
- How are the leaders development programs assessed?

Organization perspective research questions are as follows:

- Whether and how is the development linked to strategic business challenges?
- Whether and how is the leaders development included in the personal strategy of the organization?
- Whether and how is the leaders development associated with the processes in the areas of human resources management in an organization?
- What are the aims of the leaders development in an organization?
- Whether and how is the profile of leaders defined in an organization?
- Whether and how is the leaders development supported by the top management?
- Whether and how is the leaders development linked to the organizational culture?
- What resources are required for functioning of the leaders development in an organization?

Subject perspective research questions are as follows:

- What subjects and on what levels of management are covered by the leaders development?
- What are internal subjects involved in the leaders development?
- What are external subjects involved in the leaders development?

Function perspective research questions are as follows:

- How do subjects participate in the leaders development?
- How does the realization of the decision function look?
- How does the realization of the executive function look?
- How does the realization of the consultative function look?
- How does the realization of the control function look?

Object perspective research questions are as follows:

- What are developmental activities used in the leaders development?
- Which developmental activities are the most preferable?

questions, the empty spaces in the table will be filled by placing some sign. Firstly, the components of leaders development programs should be recognized. Then for each elements of process perspective, the correct characteristic of the four left perspectives should be assigned. Because each leaders development program should be seen as project they may be more different programs in an organization.

5. Conclusion

Contemporary organizations face with challenges to find out qualified leaders. They have a number of options such as improving their process for identifying leaders, strengthening leader development programs, ramping up succession management systems. Making these changes is not always clear, so organizations often look for best practices for help³³. This paper has presented that there are many approaches from which organization can make a choice.

The new paradigm of leaders development is not limited by time, space, and matter, and is focused on learning as an action-oriented, lifelong process where global partners work together to produce a positive, profitable future for all³⁴. In these conditions it is important that organizations understand their own leaders development needs to choose the best practices for them³⁵. These practices are that by which improved leaders can think and act in new way and the organization benefits in the form of innovation, increased human capital, and profit. Well performing organizations that are able to compete in the changing marketplace are those that have proactively and strategically prepared themselves for future challenges through effective leaders development undertakings³⁶.

Each organization should take initiatives in leaders development. The proposed conceptual framework consists of five perspectives which together give an organization the bases for such initiatives. This framework may give different combinations of these perspectives depending on needs and possibilities of an organization.

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³³ P. Bernthal, R. Wellins, *Trends in Leader Development and Succession*, "Human Resource Planning" 2006, Vol. 29, No. 2, p. 32.

³⁴ R.M. Fulmer, *The Evolving Paradigm of Leadership Development*, "Organizational Dynamics" 1997, Vol. 25, No. 4, p. 70.

³⁵ I. Buus, *The Evolution of Leadership Development: Challenges and Best Practice*, "Industrial and Commercial Training" 2005, Vol. 37, No. 4, pp. 185-188.

³⁶ S-L. Leskiw, P. Singh, *Leadership Development: Learning from Best Practices*, "Leadership & Organization Development Journal" 2007, Vol. 28, No. 5, p. 460.

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