



# The power of a lollipop : the Act of Good Leadership

Feena May

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**The Power of a Lollipop**  
**The Act of Good Leadership**

**J'veus ai apporté des bonbons...**  
**L'exercice de bon leadership**

THESE

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JURY

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Wisdom is first born at home and that family has been my base, my foundation – and I am lucky that I have such a good one. It grows through the friends and teachers we meet along the way. It blossoms with those that we love, who walk into our life and become part of our family. And it evolves through these same people and the sharing that takes place. This is an organic work, a journey that has been filled with people, conversations, stories and deep reflection. And it has been so much fun!

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*In all beginnings dwells a magic force.*

*Hermann Hesse*



## Prologue

When I was 23 years old, I got my first real job. I was posted to the Former Yugoslavia as Deputy to the Relief Coordinator for the International Committee of the Red Cross (where I will work today). It was 1992 and war was raging. In the relief programme we managed a huge budget, a caseload of 900,000 beneficiaries, and a team of over 100 expatriates and 1,000 national staff. I had no experience of the humanitarian world, no relief experience, nor in fact any kind of real work experience. I had a business degree in my pocket but my most useful leadership skills turned out to be those I had learnt as a professional clown.

The operational headquarters for the Former Yugoslavia was in Zagreb and had a staff of about 200 people. It was a multi-cultural setting with over 40 different nationalities, not to mention our own national staff coming from all three communities that were at war. There were periods when the problems of work, stress, security, management issues and the like weighed heavily. This brought the atmosphere down, created tensions and increased all the problems of work, stress, burnout – the “normal” suffering in organisations under stress.

When things were bad, I would take a giant bag of lollipops and go through the office building, into all the offices - from the directors to the tea-ladies - and offer to each person a lollipop. 200 adults with multi-coloured lollipops in their mouths changes a lot of things. The tension broke, people could breathe again, more work was done more fluidly, people talked to each other, problems didn't fester, and the organisation was a healthier place for a while.

What was it in this small act that could change so much? That was the question I asked myself 16 years later, then a senior manager at the headquarters in Geneva, while walking to work on a quiet spring day. The story raises many questions - why in the act of handing out a lollipop there could be found the soft skills that kept an organisation together, an emotional intelligence built collectively in a non-threatening way, a cohesion given to teams and the creative space opened to move forward in a better way towards a goal. Why, through an interaction at an individual level, was there a change in the environment both at an individual and collective level? What was it that made it an act of good leadership and why could good leadership move so much?

These questions led me back to University.

*If your actions inspire others to dream more,  
learn more, do more and become more,  
you are a leader.*

*John Quincy Adams*

## **Introductions**

### **Introduction (the non-academic version)**

Leadership - an elusive topic it would seem when one first delves into the vast quantity of literature available in the academic and practitioner world. We seem to have on one hand mystified and, on the other hand, raised to academically superior levels of intelligence a natural phenomenon – that of leading. Throughout time there have been leaders who have founded or managed and or led households, cities, countries, businesses, armies, religious groups, political groups, scientific fields, artistic fields. The famous ones are names well known, but there been equally great leaders whose talents are known only to those they served.

What unites them all is that they have stepped into, and have agreed to assume, a role – that of a leader of people, a leader of a situation, a leader of a time, a leader within a context. They have embodied the role in such a way as to make it real for those around them (those that academia refers to as the stakeholders, primarily the followers). They made their leadership real in a time and a place that connected them to people and events in such a way as to influence their evolution.

So much is written on the topic of leadership that it boggles the mind and ultimately confuses the reader. This thesis takes on the challenge of delving into the heart of the act of leadership; into what is the heart of a leader and what is it that makes a leader a good one and not a bad one. For we cannot say that leadership is by definition good – there have been many brilliant leaders who have led their followers to their destruction. It is important not to naively think only of those who one could say are the “good bad guys” like Hitler, Mussolini, Pol Pot; but one could – and should - add the brilliant leaders in business, sciences or politics who burn-out their staff, destroy the environment, destroy economies in the search for bigger profits for their stakeholders (which always includes themselves). So what makes the difference?

They say times are changing. The global economic crisis, the information technology revolution, climate change, and the need for environmental sustainability are named as some of the biggest influences on organisations today. If we are to really take this on board, then the leaders who must emerge in all sectors of life should be different; leaders who's successes will be judged not only on the material profits they make but “human profit” they make in terms of the wellbeing of those they work with, the environment within which they

work, the organisational sustainability and the legacy they leave behind for future generations. Much of the leadership literature measured the former, the latter, that of “human profit” is even not found as an idea. We shall come back certainly to this idea before the end.

My reason for undertaking a PhD was not an academic one but rather came from this practitioner motivation – What is good leadership? What is it that makes the act of leadership good? And how could I be one? How can we create leadership that serves today’s organisational reality and start to serve this new organisational reality which must emerge?

The lollipop story held for me much power; it was after all one of my stories. It was an act that took into account the people around me, the context they were in and, even if it was an individual act, it produced a new collective reality within the organisation. It allowed me to connect; it allowed me to serve the situation, and the people in it, in that moment in time. So what was it that I did so naturally? Could whatever “it” was be defined as leadership and could it be reproduced? What was the power of the lollipop? What would be the “lollipop” acts of others? Was it good leadership? What is good leadership?

My own experience of studying leadership and reading its academic literature has not been very magical. The myriad of articles and the very wealth of knowledge that currently exists serve to confuse something which my instinct told me should be simple. In fact the most inspiring reading among the many articles and books read in academia, took me on a journey back almost 100 years to Mary Parker Follett. No-one I had read about, or been taught about inspired passion in me, but she did. I found that intriguing. Reading her work showed me just how little of what is written about leadership today is “new”. How have we lost the simplicity? And in the amazing amount of literature I read on organisational context, I found the most understandable stuff, to my practitioner reality, came from the field of quantum physics! Could these two streams of literature help us today?

Why, when we recognise good leadership instantly, has it become so hard, or so complicated, in academia to explain? So the challenge I posed in this thesis was to see if we can find again the simplicity of good leadership: what does it mean for leadership today; what defines good leadership and are there underlying fundamentals of good leadership? What was the power of a lollipop? What was the power that made a simple, totally non-work-related act, an act that embodied the essence of connection that leadership makes and that makes leadership which matters? These questions led me back to university to look and see if someone had found an answer.

Academia is a funny place for a practitioner where two very different worlds meet, one a world of knowledge built on knowledge already proven and the other a world where

experience is built on experience, and knowledge - if any – is discovered along the way almost by accident. This thesis aims at bringing these two worlds together and to see if it is possible to capture the underlying fundamentals of good leadership using the knowledge of both these worlds. The objective of this thesis is to gather the knowledge available about good leadership both in theory and practice and to translate that knowledge and information into experience so that any leader may benefit from the wisdom which exists.

It is said that every true leader must first make an inner journey, this has been mine.



## **Introduction (the academic version)**

Leadership has been studied since antiquity (Bass, 2008; House, Aditya, 1997). Theories abound, though all too often the academic, and more especially the practitioner literature, tries to limit leadership theory, and indeed leadership itself, to a few common dimensions (Kets de Vries, 2003). The leadership literature in general is “based on a limiting set of assumptions, mostly reflecting Western industrialized culture” (House, Aditya, 1997:409). The multiplicity of leadership models shows that there is no one grand theory (McElroy, 1982) and yet such a theory is still sought today (Wren, 2006; Harvey, 2006(a)). Despite the generation of hundreds of thousands of books and articles, for many, leadership theory still lacks a comprehensive paradigm which is intellectually compelling and emotionally satisfying (Meindl et al, 1985). Added to this is the mixing of management and leadership theory which is one of the great theoretical debates of the academic literature in this field - are they the same, different, independent or interdependent (Zaleznik, 1977); while many would write that one can't exist without the other (Kotter, 1990; Mintzberg, 2001; Toor, Ofori, 2008) others will present them as separate theories. The theoretical debates on leadership, and the ideas which this debate generates, continue unabated, often leaving the practitioner in the field no wiser than before.

Today we work in a global environment. Technology, namely the web, has managed to do what ideology has not – it has created a global community (Bennis, 2006). Leaders therefore must act in this global, complex, multi-cultural, multi-dimensional and interconnected context (Maak, Pless, 2006). Some would argue that much of leadership thinking is failing to recognise that leadership is not just a question of top-down influence but rather that it must be integrated in a dynamic context where there are an unlimited number of interactions possible (Uhl-Bien et al, 2007) and where social responsibility and respect for all the stakeholders (including societal and environment impact) is becoming a norm (Capra, 2003; McDonough, Braungart, 2002). The talk of paradigm shift away from formal hierarchies (Gobillot, 2007), calling for leadership to be more connected to the stakeholders, seems in one way rather “old hat”. But why do we not seem able to position ourselves in this new contextual reality with any ease? So many writers in the leadership literature speak about the twenty-first century in which old stable, predictable systems are being replaced by uncertainty, non-linearity and chaos (Karakas, 2007). And yet change has always been present, and those in each time period have always seen it as fast and unpredictable. This begs the question of whether we really are in a paradigm shift for the first time or whether we just have better words and more examples to describe it - leaders of organisations when

steam engines were introduced or during World War II probably thought the paradigm shift happened back then.

The level of complexity when it comes to leadership theories is no easier. There are still over 350 different published definitions of leadership in academia (Carver, 1989) and more books and academic material on the subject than it is humanly possible to read. This means that any study of leadership takes place amidst a wide-ranging mass of knowledge and theories deriving from a whole realm of competing theories, ideas, ideologies and gurus who have it all “figured out”. Indeed there are probably as many definitions of leadership today as there are writers on leadership. Leadership is a complex, multi-dimensional process. Northhouse’s definition – that leadership “is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individual’s to achieve a common goal” (Northhouse, 2007:3) - may be largely agreed upon but lacks any emotional satisfaction and certainly leaves empty the place of context. Leadership involves relationships, it is not static and thus it is influenced by as many factors as are in the context within which it takes place. This dimension is important to the success, or otherwise, of leadership. Taking all this into account, it is not surprising to find a corresponding complexity in the leadership literature.

Despite this complexity, we seem to instinctively know leadership when we see it or experience it. If leadership is so intuitive and instinctive that we know good leadership straight away, why is there so much complexity in writing about leadership? Hundreds of books are written and millions spent every year on consultation fees devoted to leadership development (Moss Kanter, 2000) so why is there a growing sense of disillusionment with organisational leadership theory and research? This malaise, which started in the 1980’s (Conger, Kanungo, 1994), seems to have followed us into the new century. With all the leadership research, training and development that have been done, the question remains as to why we are experiencing an alarming rate of leadership failures in industrial, social and national organisations (Mathews, 2006)?

Regardless of the context or the speed of change or the complexity of the organisation, leadership does matter. Leaders are not like other people (Kirkpatrick, Locke, 1991) and there remains a highly romantic view of leadership which continues to be prevalent across all social settings (Meindl et al, 1985). But what makes a leader, and more importantly what is that act of leadership which makes for good leadership, i.e. leadership which is effective? What makes an individual the right person, in the right place, at the right time, bringing the right action for an effective outcome? What sense can we find in the academic world to help leaders in today’s practitioner world? This is the motivation for this research.

The research question which this thesis poses is a simple one - what are the underlying fundamentals or constructs of good leadership which allow it to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?

It attempts to define what elements are in the act of leadership which makes it real and makes it good leadership. Here we choose to focus the research on good leadership which we define as effective leadership, as opposed to bad leadership which we define as ineffective leadership. The act of good leadership is defined as set of elements which, when enacted, produce effective results and who's enactment is experienced by others as having a positive effect.

Good leadership touches people, moves people, changes environments, changes energy, makes situations evolve, helps people and organisations grow and develop. "Research depends on ideas, and valuable research comes from ideas for really new questions and hence new hypotheses. Experienced scientists would agree with Taylor's (1959:172) contention that worthwhile ideas do not come full-blown in all their glorious maturity out of an empty void. The process of getting and developing ideas is undoubtedly a confused mixture of observation, thinking, asking why, cherishing little unformed notions" (Lundberg, 1976). My idea was simple – if we can recognise the act of leadership instantly, and recognise good leadership when we experience it, surely we can capture the underlying fundamentals or constructs of this "good" leadership in a way that can be written, shared, taught and most importantly put into practice.

The research question must be placed in the framework of the existing academic knowledge in order to make the best, and most appropriate, methodological choices. The research question focuses on the act of leadership. The leadership body of knowledge to date can be clearly framed into two distinct streams – that of leadership in terms of personal attributes and that of leadership framed in a situation or context. The research question of this thesis however looks at the act of leadership.

Hence this thesis presents an empirical research which while grounded in the existing bodies of knowledge, proposes a new stream of academic research, a third stream looking at leadership in terms of the act of good leadership. Taking into account the research question - what are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types – it was necessary to place the research results into the practitioner reality, i.e. to place it in a situation or field context. Thus the action research part of this thesis is also rooted in this second body of leadership knowledge. But the research question has one key part looking at what is it that allows "good leadership to be enacted" and this is a stream we discovered was

missing in the academic body of knowledge. This thesis aims to re-address that by presenting results and theory around the act of leadership, emerging from the existing knowledge based around personal attributes and situational context.

The journey towards that question, and seeing whether that question had an answer is described in six parts. This thesis follows the research journey as it evolved to attempting to offer an answer to the research question on good leadership. Through this research a model of good leadership is created and applied back into the practitioner field reality in order to verify its potential validity to practitioners. The final outcome is a model of good leadership which holds both academic and practitioner merit.

The existing body of knowledge in the leadership field, as we have mentioned, is vast. Its theories place leadership into two main streams of research – leadership theories dealing with personal qualities or leadership theories dealing with situational and context related aspects. This thesis develops a third – and some would argue, new – stream of discussion, focusing on the act, or enactment, of leadership. The choice of centring the research on “good leadership” is crucial. The research question already places this as the central focus. The definition mentioned above – that the act of good leadership is defined as set of elements which, when enacted, produce effective results and who's enactment is experienced by others as having a positive effect – has two key aspects, that of the results (effectiveness) and the experience of the process (which we will later discuss as service).

**Part 1 of this thesis sets out to explore the existing knowledge about leadership.** It discusses in detail the theories of leadership which have been developed in academia since the beginnings of the study of leadership. It traces the development of these various theories over time, introducing and explaining each theory. A discussion on this body of work and its implications for the practitioner is then presented. This first part then goes on to deal with various aspects of leadership which are felt to have an important influence on any discussion of leadership. These aspects are leaders and followers, context and culture, power and presence and the debate on leadership versus management. Part 1 finishes by framing the context into which the research question of this thesis will be placed.

**Part 2 presents the plan of the research journey, including the research question, methodology and coding protocol.** It describes the choice of storytelling, followed by a field action research, as the research method used. The process of data collection and the coding protocols are described in detail. It gives a comprehensive discussion on the building of the two dictionaries of themes used in this research, namely the Dictionary of Themes of

Good Leadership and the Dictionary of Leadership Theories. Part 2 describes the construction and evolution of these dictionaries of themes, which are used to code the research, from the initial dictionary to its final form. It finishes by describing in detail the methodological choices for the action research journey, that of taking the initial results of the research and the models created back into a practitioner field setting in order to test their validity.

**Part 3 presents the initial research findings and their related framework and initial model of good leadership.** It details the initial research findings for both dictionaries of themes. It gives a detailed narrative description of the research findings and aims to bring together these results into a logical framework. It does this by modelling the research findings of the 23 themes which were defined from the dictionary of themes of good leadership into a framework creating an initial model of good leadership. It then goes on to discuss these 23 themes in relation to the top 5 attributes of good leadership given during the interviews. This allows the research results to be tested in relation to a different set of research data, thus strengthening their validity. Part 3 then re-examines the research data and draws out 6 underlying fundamentals of good leadership which sit alongside the 23 themes which have emerged from the research. The validity of the research findings are further tested by comparing the model to some selected interview transcripts and to similar tables of leadership attributes published in the research of five well-known leadership authors.

**Part 4 traces the action research journey taking the initial research results into the field reality.** It details the action research journey, describing the field research and testing which the resulting model created in Part 3 then underwent. It traces the field research undertaken through its various stages and produces a field application of the model created in Part 3. By undertaking this field study, it validates the research to date and offers a practical implementation tool for organisations to create their own leadership models.

**Part 5 details the theoretical discussions relating to the research.** It starts by returning to some of the themes mentioned in Part 1 and offers a discussion based on the research results around leadership theory and the leadership versus management debate. It challenges some of the current thinking in terms of leadership theory and presents a more appropriate table of leadership theories upon which future practitioners may base their work. Part 5 then continues by re-examining the influencing factors discussed in Part 1 and discusses the implications of the research data in relation to the earlier discussions, particularly in terms of leaders and followers, leadership presence and the leadership versus management debate. Part 5 then delves further into two specific bodies of knowledge which

have multiple references in Part 1, namely the work of Mary Parker Follett and the field of quantum physics. With this depth, Part 5 explores further their possible implications in relation to the models created in Parts 3 and 4.

**Part 6 presents the conclusions of this research and a Lollipop Model of Good Leadership.** It goes on to discuss the implications of this research for good leadership are presented. From this discussion, the “Lollipop Model of Good Leadership” is presented as the conclusion of this research. An example in practice is presented where the Lollipop model is being already put into practice in the field. This thesis ends by drawing some conclusions and implications which can be taken from this research for the leadership practitioners in the field.

The thesis presented here is written following the chronological order of the research journey. This is a conscious decision so that the reader can follow the emergence of the knowledge collected and created within this research.



# **PART 1: THE EXISTING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LEADERSHIP**



*Without theory, practice is but a routine born  
of habit. Theory alone can bring forth and  
develop the spirit of inventions.*

*Louis Pasteur*

## **Introduction to Part 1**

Part 1 traces the historical development of leadership theories. As with any research path, there is a richness of work and knowledge already amassed so it is important for any academic work on leadership to respect this past, to respect the knowledge that is already available. This is important as knowledge is built from what we already know and to ignore the richness of the past would be folly indeed. The development of each of these various theories over time is introduced and explained in their (as close as is possible) chronological order.

Part 1 then goes on to trace the reality of leadership in the practitioner's field in terms of the leadership theory by looking at the some of the practitioner material available and some of the trends which are emerging.

Part 1 then goes on to discuss some of the major influencing factors on leadership and the act of leadership, namely (1) context and culture, (2) leaders and followers, (3) power and presence and (4) the academic debate on leadership versus management. It concludes by framing the first research question for this thesis.



# **1. The Theory of Leadership**

This chapter traces the leadership theories which are present in the academic world. It presents a chronological order of development of these theories and presents a table of leadership theories which has been built through this research work.

## **1.1 Researching Leadership Theory**

In researching leadership theories, there is no shortage of material, articles and books which outline the history of leadership theory development (Bolden et al 2003; Northouse, 2007; Bass, 2008; and almost all the articles in this bibliography on leadership). This phenomenal amount of literature reflects the vast array of different approaches being aired (Storey, 2004) as well as the wealth of knowledge which exists. There are “trait, behavioural, situational and attribution theories [...] visionary, ethical, charismatic, and transactional versus transformational” theories (Abramson, 2007:115). Classical leadership theories have evolved through the 20th century from personality based, to behavioural to context based theories (Nahavandi, 2006). The majority of the literature seems to agree on the main developments in the history of leadership theory. This evolution is the background and roots on which any work on leadership today must set itself.

While the wealth of information is great, and many of the writings present coherent themes, there does not appear to be a single, exhaustive list of the major theories of leadership. To date, the most comprehensive work in this field is Yukl’s review of managerial leadership (1989) and House and Aditya’s review of leadership theories (1997). Thus, in order to better understand where the development of leadership theory stands today, the first challenge of this thesis was the creation of a coherent (as possible) outline of the theories of leadership to date. The choice of a chronological order has been made because it is well known that existing knowledge influences knowledge being developed. This was needed to allow the wealth of academic knowledge to be placed in the reality of the field later on in this research. An historical chronology offers the most realistic setting to review the development of leadership theories.

## **1.2 The Classic Leadership theories**

Table 1 outlines these leadership theories applicable to the field – as I have collected them - in a chronological (as much as is possible) order. This is the researcher's work based on the many readings which are listed in the bibliography.

Leadership Theory	Outline description	Main writers
Great Man	The original leadership approach of leaders being born not made. Those certain individuals have exceptional qualities and are destined to lead. The situation brings out the leader.	
Trait	People have certain natural traits which are more suited to leadership. Leadership traits can be listed. It is the combination of the right traits which makes a leader.	Stodgill, 1974
Behavioural	Leaders are made and not born. Leadership can be defined into certain behaviours which can be learned and developed	Skinner, 1967 Bandura, 1982
Situational/ Contingency	Situational theory sees leaders adapting their styles to the context and development level of their followers. Contingency theory proposes that it is situational factors together with the leaders style which determine the success of a leader.	Fiedler, 1964 House, 1974 Hersey, Blanchard, 1972
Path-Goal Theory	The successful leaders create structural paths which help followers attain their work goals	House, 1971
Charismatic	The personal charisma of an individual creates an intense emotional attachment for their followers.	Weber, 1947, House, 1977 Conger, Kanungo, 1994
Transactional	Emphasis is placed on the leader-follower relation. It is the transactions (reward, punishment) which are the best way for leaders to motivate the performance of their followers	Burns, 1978 Bass, 1985
Transformational	Leadership is based on the sharing of a vision which motivates and directs the followers	Burns, 1978 Bass, 1985
Cognitive	Leaders who by word or personal example influence the behaviour, thoughts or feelings of their followers	Gardner 1996
Servant	The leadership role is most successful if they serve those they lead	Greenleaf, 1977
Authentic	That the root of any leadership theory is the need for a leader to be authentic, to be self-aware.	Avolio, Gardner, 2005
Complexity	Leadership takes place in a system of complex interactive dynamics has three entangled roles (adaptive, administrative, enabling) which reflect the dynamic relationship between organisational functions and context	Uhl-Bien et la. 2007
Cross-Cultural	Leadership which takes place in a multi-cultural setting or across national boundaries	
e-Leadership	Leadership which takes place in a AIT (Advanced Information Technology) environment where leadership influence occurs across a range of AIT media	Avolio, Kahai, Dodge, 2001

*Table 1: Chronological development of Leadership Theories*

Each of the theories presented in the table is outlined in detail in each of the paragraphs below.

The **“Great Man” theory** is most commonly identified as the original leadership theory and held sway up to the mid-20th century (Cawthon, 1996). The core fundamental idea in this theory is that leaders are born not made (Callan, 2003). Though left a little on the sidelines today, it is still one of the theories that most captures our imagination of leadership. We all can give examples of great leaders. The fact that the majority of answers would be examples that are male, mainly military or western business leaders – Napoleon, Henry Ford, Churchill, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Walt Disney - is an interesting reflection of where the majority of

leadership works sits culturally even today. It was considered that a great man could change the fate of something, even on a large scale, such as that of a nation (Wrightman, 1977). Jennings (1960) adds a very important time dimension to this theory by claiming that “the great man” had the right traits for the right time in history, implying that the same traits at the wrong time would not produce “the great man”. One of the problems with this theory was that it had no distinction between good and evil (Heller, 1997). An interesting argument was put to me in a discussion that the fall of this theory coincided with the end of the Second World War. At this time government and the military had lost many leaders and urgently needed to find or grow new ones. Thus leadership thinkers had to open the conceptual framework to the idea that leaders could be developed. One could argue that, looking at the American business/political leaders of the 1920’s and the high number of women in significant positions of power, that this change in reality began after the First World War (Drucker 2003).

The ***trait theory*** approach was the first significant move away from the Great Man theory. It rose out of the study of the leadership characteristics or traits which differentiate leaders from others. Essentially it aimed to develop the list of key characteristics or traits which could be used to define successful leaders. Despite lengthy and numerous amounts of academic research, no one set of traits has ever been agreed upon and the research has been rather inconclusive (Bohlen, 2003; Mullins, 1999). Stodgill’s listing of key leadership traits and skills (Stodgill, 1974), often seen as the foundation of this research line, still holds true today. Many of these traits still emerge in current leadership writings and can still be found in the majority of the recruitment criteria used today. However traits are difficult to agree upon and researchers on leadership often ended up with long lists which contained a high degree of subjectivity (Mullins, 1999). Leadership theorists were forced to look elsewhere, directed in a way by Stodgill himself who suggested that trait study should be integrated with situational demands (House, Aditya, 1997).

***Behavioural leadership*** theories developed out of dissatisfaction with the trait approach and moved away from trait theory in that they considered that leaders are made and not born. These theories put forward the idea that leadership can be defined into certain behaviours which can be learned and developed (Bandura, 1982; Skinner, 1967). The behavioural theorists were the first to clearly put forward a case for the fact that leadership can be learnt and that it did not rely on any inherent talent. This theoretical approach became the springboard for the numerous studies, which we continue to see today, about what leaders actually do (Kotter, 1990). Out of this research came the identification of two broad classifications of leadership behaviours – task and person oriented behaviours (House, Aditya, 1997). The assumption of this theory, that there were universally accepted and

effective leadership behaviours, has caused its acceptability to decline due to the lack of consideration given to context.

The ***situational or contingency theories*** focused on the need to look at context and claimed that effective leadership is contingent on the situation (Callan, 2003). The idea that different leadership behaviours or skills are needed in different contexts today seems rather common sense but Fiedler's work in the 1960's broke new ground. Fielder put forward that there is no one best way to lead, and that the choice of leadership skill set, behaviour and style would be impingent on the situation (Fiedler, 1969). Essentially it considers that performance is contingent on the interaction of the style of leader and favourability of the situation for the leader (Mitchell et al 1970). Fielder defined three key aspects – leader-member relations, task structure and power – which would condition leadership choice of skill and style (Fielder, 1969). This theory believes that the “type of leadership behaviour which will be most effective is contingent on the favourableness of the task situation” (Sadler, 2003:77). A particular form of contingency theory, known as situational, focused on the point that leadership style is a function of the situation (Hersey, Blanchard, 1988).

The ***path-goal theory of leadership*** attempted to address the mixed results of leadership research in the 1960's which showed an unclear relationship between structure and the satisfaction of followers (House, 1971). It clarified the relationship between structure, performance and job satisfaction and the context of the type of work carried out (routine versus non-routine tasks and satisfying versus non-satisfying tasks). Path-goal theory argues that the leadership style used is altered depending on the followers' need of clarity about what the goals/expectations are, or how to get to them (the path). Thus leadership becomes a calculation of style appropriate to achieving the goal along a defined path (Plowman et al, 2007). Essentially it advanced the work of the situational/contingency theorists by developing the practical application of a leadership approach to goal achievement.

Individuals who exercise ***charismatic leadership*** can be defined as leaders who “by force of their personalities are capable of having profound and extraordinary effects on followers” (House, Baetz, 1979:399). It is a theory of leadership that has gained much public admiration. Followers are attracted to charismatic leaders and this theory typically characterises leadership as a role that is granted by devoted followers rather than a given position. In essence, “charismatic leaders differ from other leaders by their ability to formulate and articulate an inspirational vision and by behaviours and actions that foster an impression that they and their mission are extraordinary” (Conger et al, 1997:291). Charismatic leadership is said to have three core aspects – envisioning, empathy and empowerment (Choi, 2006). Charismatic leadership is in fact value-neutral i.e. it makes no distinction

between good or bad, ethical or immoral leadership (Howell, Avolio, 1992). A truly charismatic leader can lead followers to war (Hitler), heroic self-sacrifice (Jeanne d'Arc), cult beliefs (Jim Jones), peace (Mandela, Gandhi), or service (Mother Teresa). It is the ethical use of their power and the aspect of service (i.e. the wish to contribute to the welfare of others) that marks the outcome difference of a "good" charismatic leader. Research has shown that while charismatic leadership is clear in the leader-follower relationship at an individual level, it is less clear at the leader-group relational level (Seltzer, Bass, 1990). Charismatic leadership is a much discussed aspect of leadership, however its elusive nature has meant that its study is conspicuously absent from research data (Conger, Kanungo, 1987).

**Transactional leadership** theory deals with the role of "reward" (e.g. pay, promotion, etc.) as a motive for achieving results and "punishment" (e.g. loss of salary, demotion, loss of position) as a motive to ensure adherence to the goal to be achieved. The transactional leader is a leader whose actions take place within the existing organisational system or culture and who makes no effort to change that system (Waldman et al, 2001). They recognise the actions their subordinates must take in order to achieve outcomes (Bass, 1985) and develop agreements with them which make clear what they will receive if they do something right and what will happen if they do something wrong (Bass, Avolio, 1993). By default this approach acts to strengthen the existing structures and culture within an organisation. The leader's role is to make the goal clear and to select the appropriate rewards to ensure motivation towards that goal (Sadler, 2003).

**Transformational leadership** inspires followers to do more than they would have expected to accomplish (Bass, 1985). This theory was first put forward by Burns in the 1970's and was elaborated on by Bass in the 1980's. Since then it has gained enormous popularity both in academic and practitioner circles (Brown, Keeping, 2005). It can be defined as the process of engaging commitment in a context of shared values and vision (Sadler, 2003), or the aligning of the interests of the organisation and its members (Bass, 1999). For Burns this differed from charismatic leadership which inspired and motivated but did not necessarily transform and change; charismatic leadership is an inherent trait whereas transformational leadership is a behaviour that can be learnt (Tichy, Devanna, 1986). Transformational leadership is said to have four components – idealised influence, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspiration (Bass, Avolio, 1990; Avolio, et al, 1991). It is a leadership theory that involves maximising mutual interest and restraint in the use of power (Sadler, 2003). Transformational leadership was, and is, seen as leadership which broadens and elevates the interests of the follower, and that generates awareness and motivation towards the purpose and mission of the organisation. It is a theory of leadership which brings the group



purpose above individual needs for the attainment of a common goal (Seltzer, Bass, 1990). Burns sees the leader-follower relationship as a two-way transforming possibility, in which leader and follower are transformed by the interaction.

**Cognitive theory** comes from the cognitive science approach, and its contribution to leadership theory is to look at how both leaders and followers think and process information. Leaders, it is suggested, achieve effectiveness through the stories they relate and embody (Gardner, 1996; Boal, Schultz, 2007). The cognitive approach looks at how leaders think, and how their behaviour is determined as a response to the information they receive (Wofford, 1994). Its contribution is rather recent and potentially can help leadership theorists explain how leaders and followers understand and process information and use that to make decisions (Avolio et al, 2009). This potential is felt to be yet explored as leadership theory per se.

The idea of **servant leadership** was first put forward in the 1970's by Robert Greenleaf and it has gained a rather impressive following. His key idea was that the leader was first a servant. "The servant-leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. The conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (Greenleaf, 2002:27). Greenleaf argued that this view lifts leadership above the division of concepts, language and practice and allows leaders to bring people and organisations together towards a common goal. He proposes leadership that contains a depth of commitment to all the stakeholders. The servant-leader shares leadership, displays authenticity and builds a community within the organisation's members (Washington, 2007). While idealistic, the concept has gained increasing momentum due to the fact that it encompasses an ethical and ecological stance which is sustainable. It is a leadership that is aware that the end and means are inseparable and that we live in a world of relationships (Covey, 2002). While measurement of servant leadership is (and will always be) problematic, it is felt that this is a construct of leadership which has a place in the current organisational reality (Melchar et al, 2008).

The concept of **authenticity** is rooted in the commonly heard phrase "to thine own self be true" (Avolio, Gardner, 2005). Authentic leadership is commonly agreed to encompass balanced processing, internalised moral perspectives, relational transparency and self-awareness (Avolio et al, 2009). It encompasses two aspects; that of "owning ones personality" and of acting in accordance with that "true self" (Gardner et al, 2005:344). It arose out of a post-Enron need of responsible leadership i.e. the leader taking responsibility for the moral obligations of the organisation (Novicevic et al, 2006). Authentic leadership is defined on the basis of a leader's self-concept and of the relationship between that self-

concept and their actions; authenticity is seen as an attribute rather than a value or a style (Shamir, Eilam, 2005). Leaders may be authentic transformational leaders or inauthentic. Authenticity is proposed as a root construct of leadership (i.e. a construct that is not confined to a particular leadership style) although further research is needed to see whether it is a basis of good leadership regardless of participative, directive or inspirational leadership styles (Avolio et al, 2009). While important, the discussion on authentic leadership still lacks focus on the role i.e. to be authentic to oneself is one thing, but that alone is not enough; a leader must also authentically fill a role.

Proponents of **complexity leadership theory** put forward the idea that in the reality of today's organisational contexts, leadership theory must evolve in order to take into account complex adaptive environments (Marion, Uhl-Bien, 2001; Lichtenstein et al, 2006). Its proponents argue that much of the above leadership theory is based on top-down, bureaucratic paradigms (Uhl-Bien et al, 2007) and this is not effective in the current context of knowledge systems. "Complexity examines the clustering of ideas and people and what happens when these clusters interact" (Marion et al, 2005:617). Complexity leadership theory views leadership as an interactive dynamic system, of unpredictable agents that interact with each other in complex feedback networks which produce adaptive outcomes (Uhl-Bien et al, 2007). With this theory the unit of analysis is not the leader but the situation in which the leader operates; the relationships are not defined by their hierarchical position but rather by their interactions at all levels. It attempts to address the issue of leadership theory needing to be "embedded in complex interplay of numerous interacting forces" (Uhl-Bien et al, 2007:302). The framework for complexity leadership theory is made up of three leadership roles which are entangled (i.e. constantly interacting together). These are (Uhl-Bien et al, 2007):

- administrative leadership – the actions which take place in formal managerial roles and that plan and coordinate the organisations activities
- adaptive leadership – the interactive dynamic that emerges from the relationships in a context and which produce adaptive outcomes
- enabling leadership – actions which foster and enable new adaptive outcomes to emerge

The appropriateness of this approach to leadership is reflected by the numerous research articles published and even the special issue which the Leadership Quarterly journal dedicated to the subject. Its proponents argue that its call for a deeper understanding of

leadership and the context within which it takes place is a necessary basis in order for leadership to advance (Osborn, Hunt, 2007).

**Cross-Cultural leadership** theory has not been adequately defined as a leadership theory. There is a definition offered by House et al (1997) asserting that expected, accepted and effective leadership behaviour varies according to the culture within which it takes place. They put forward the idea that effective leadership is contingent on culturally endorsed implicit theories of leadership (House, Aditya, 1997). While this could be a theory of leadership, it remains rather focused on national culture rather than being truly cross-cultural. That culture is a key moderator of context is widely accepted (Walumba et al, 2007). Many studies have focused on leadership styles in, and across, cultures (Joynt, Warner 1996; Graen, 2006; Project GLOBE, House et al, 2004) again mainly in relation to national cultures. In fact it is often the case that researchers are simply applying a cultural lens to extant leadership theories (Dickson et al, 2003) driven by the need to understand what kind of leadership is effective in different cultures. This has limited the study to equate “culture” to “national identity” (Holmberg, Akerblom, 2006) and much of the reference ground-work goes back to that of Hofstede (1991), which while seminal, remains much criticised for its overly simplistic dimensional conceptualisation of culture (Dickson et al, 2003). It is well documented that leaders must face the increasing challenges of managing diverse workforces created by today’s globalised environments, which increasingly finds globalised workforces within single organisational structures (Chrobot-Mason et al, 2007). There is an increasing need to develop this aspect of the study of leadership in multicultural contexts which are often the reality of today’s organisations. Avolio et al (2009:438) even identify the concept of “global leadership” as the term incorporating an increasing research field aimed at identifying leadership which is effective across a variety of cultures i.e. a true cross-cultural leadership theory.

**E-leadership** is a term that has grown out of the changing nature of the workplace and the increasing presence of Advanced Information Technology (AIT) as a determining factor of the working environment. It focuses research on leadership taking place in high technology environments, technologies which help leaders to monitor, plan, take decisions, share and control information; E-leadership is defined as “the social influence process mediated by AIT to produce a change in attitudes, feelings, thinking, behaviour and or performance with individuals, groups and/or organisations” (Avolio et al, 2000:616). Context here is a key construct as technology is both a cause and consequence of the structures in organisations (Weick, 1990). E-leadership is defined by this new AIT context; it can be enabled or completely undermined by the AIT introduced (Avolio et al, 2000). The question remains – is it a leadership theory or is it a contextual influence on how leadership takes place? However

the increasing number of examples where interactions are mediated by technology would imply that these situations require a specific leadership theory as all the models mentioned so far implicitly imply face-to-face interactions.

### 1.3 Other leadership theories

Naturally there are more than the fourteen theories of leadership. In terms of academically accepted theories, and ones which have a substantive research basis, there are a number of other theories which have not been included in Table 1. The theories which have been excluded from Table 1 are:

- ***New-genre leadership*** which can be defined as a mix of charismatic and transformational leadership theory with a focus on leader behaviour, visioning, inspiring, ideological and moral values. It looks at leadership “emphasising charismatic leader behaviours, inspiring, ideological and moral value as well as transformational leadership” (Avolio et al, 2009:428). It is a rather wide mixture of transformational and charismatic leadership theories in a context-bound condition. This mix is felt to offer more complexity rather than simplicity to leadership research.
- ***Leader-member Exchange*** (LMX) - In LMX theory leaders develop different exchange relationships with followers and the quality of these relationships influences the outcome (Graen 1976, Graen, Uhl-Bien, 1995). It sees that the relationship between the leader and follower holds the key to the quality of the outcome of the leadership act; the more effective the relationship or exchange, the more effective the result. The literature has focused exclusively on the consequences of LMX relationships (Avolio et al, 2009). While it is one of the few theories of leadership focused on leader-follower relationships, it is transactional in nature. The research into LMX generally has taken place in a closed social system (Gehani, 2002) while leadership frequently takes place in an open system. LMX has demonstrated the benefits of high quality leader-member relations but some would argue that there is still relatively little understood about what happens within those relationships (Uhl-Bien, Maslyn, 2000). These aspects are seen to limit its practical use. LMX is felt rather to be a view of leadership which emphasises leader-member relations and their quality (Atwater, Carmeli, 2009) rather than a leadership theory per se. This is clearly shown in the work of Henderson et al (2009) who take various leadership theories and apply them to the LMX model to show how different theories result in different leader-member relationships which would seem to imply that it is not a leadership theory but rather a way of modelling leader-follower relationships. LMX research, while

significant, has been rather modest in resulting correlations between leader and member reports and their implications for outcome of LMX (Cogliser et al, 2009). Some would even go as far to say that there is a construct validity problem with the results from LMX studies (Schriesheim, Cogliser, 2009). For these reasons LMX has been placed here rather than in the main table.

- **Shared leadership theory** – a leadership theory where the members collectively share the leadership role. While writers as early as Follett (1924) have advocated for shared leadership, there is still little agreement on its definition (Avolio et al, 2009).
- **Spiritual leadership theory** can be defined as “comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviours that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one’s self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership” (Fry 2003:694). Fry bases his concept on a definition of leadership as a motivation to change. Zohar even takes the idea one step further to promote the idea of spiritually intelligent leadership defined as the “power a leader can unleash in individuals or organisations by evoking people’s deepest meanings, values and purposes” (Zohar, 2005:46). Research has shown that there is considerable overlap between leadership values and those espoused by spiritual teachings (Reave, 2005). Some would argue that this paradigm adds a missing piece to the leadership literature, that of a sense of calling or service (Avolio et al, 2009) linking to something deeper than material returns. On the other hand, this leadership theory, by default, brings the leader into a central role in an individual’s life whereby their practice of spiritual growth is directly influenced by the leader. Poole (2009) sees the organisational competitive advantages that the focus on spirituality in the workplace would bring (higher commitment, motivation, engagement, performance) but one is left wondering as to whether this is really spirituality or just effective leadership practice. The question is still open as to whether this is another “fad that runs its course” (Dent et al, 2005:647).

The four theories discussed here have been excluded from Table 1 for one of three reasons - (1) their addition to the literature is partial and covered in other theories, (2) their theory basis is as yet unclear in terms of applicability to leadership, or further research is still needed to clarify their definition, (3) they are a mix of other theories which are already taken into account separately.

## **1.4 Summarising Leadership Theory**

Fourteen leadership theories are listed in Table 1, representing the range of leadership theories found, and widely accepted, in academia. The additional four theories mentioned section 1.2 have an academic research basis (some rather considerable) and yet are theories which are not fully accepted. Together these theories represent the wide variety of views on leadership and all have been substantiated by considerable research.

The subject of leadership skills has also received much attention in the leadership literature. Mumford et al (2007) describe the various conceptualisations of leadership skills in terms of cognitive, interpersonal, business and strategic. Typically the cognitive skills are linked to the underlying information processing which occur within the individual (Lord, Hall, 2005); interpersonal skills are those linked to the interaction with others. The aspect of leadership skills will not be further developed in this thesis. Leadership theories, by their nature, imply the use of specific skills and these are defined by the theory, context and nature of the leadership being applied. Thus they are not considered to be an underlying fundamental of leadership. The same logic has been applied to the subject of leadership styles. Style is personal, and can be culturally orientated (Sadler, Hofstede, 1976) and, like values, is unique to an individual (Nahavandi, 2006). Style is a way of putting good leadership into practice and not considered as an underlying fundamental.

This chapter has thus attempted to put into a logical frame the wealth and depth of the knowledge we have today on leadership theory. As mentioned in the introduction, this wealth and depth of knowledge is perhaps one of the very problems of this field. We have seen in this chapter various leadership theories covering all aspects of leadership. Together what they give us is a framework for looking at leadership in the reality of everyday experience, the practitioner's reality. This will be the subject of discussion in the next chapter. These leadership theories also provide one of the bases for the research design for one of the dictionaries of themes used. This is discussed in detail in the introduction to Part 2 and in chapter 10.

## 2. Leadership theories in practice

We have seen in the chapter above, the depth and width of leadership theory. This chapter will focus on the practitioner's reality in the field in terms of leadership theory. It looks at the some of the practitioner material available and some of the trends which are emerging within this area.

The systematic study of leadership in the social sciences which began at the turn of the 20th century has led to no shortage of theories developed in the last 100 years. And alongside these main theoretical points of view (one could call them the "proper" scientific research and theories), there is no shortage of other leadership theories and approaches in today's organisational environment. These could be called the "popular" writers who put forward ideas like *4 C's of Leadership* (Raelin, 2004), the *Seven Ages of the Leader* (Bennis, 2004), or *Level 5 leadership* (Collins, 2005), *5-D Leadership* (Champbell, Samiec, 2005) or *Exemplary Leadership* (Strozzi-Heckler, 2007) to name but a very few. One can read leadership lessons from Attila the Hun, from Jesus, from the Tao, from the Bhagavad Gita, or from Shakespeare's Henry V (Champbell, Samiec, 2005; Wess, 1990; Briner, Pritchard, 2008; Roka, 2008; Heider, 2005; Olivier, 2003). There are the idea gurus like Goleman (1996; 2001) who argues for "emotional" or "primal" leadership. There are the academics proposing new streams of thought - Pitcher (1997) proposing "artists", "craftsmen" and "technocrats"; Gardner (1993) proposing 14 attributes of good leadership, Mathews (2006) proposing a Leader Relations model. Bennis writes on becoming a leader while Follett describes leadership as the ability to take advantage of the power and the leader role existing in the system, who speaks of "power with" rather than "power over" those being led (Bennis, 2009; Follett, 1924; Fox, 1968; Millar, Vaughan, 2001). And there are more prescriptive leadership ideas like Covey's "people-centred leadership" operating with "7 habits" or his more recent "principle-centred leadership" (Covey, 1990, 1991), or Kets de Vries' three leadership aspects of knowing oneself, controlling oneself and connecting with others (2001). One could go on with similar examples for several more pages.

Any reader of articles on leadership is not just faced with this vast array of theories, but must also deal with a wide range of key aspects of leadership without which the theories have no base. A leader is said to need character and the courage to exercise good judgement; that without this they cannot be a leader (Tichy, Bennis, 2008); on the other hand, the most important task of leadership would appear to be to anticipate crisis (Drucker, 1990); a leader should be someone who is willing to step forward to help, someone with a genuine concern for what is going on and the courage to step forward and help (Wheatley, 2005); while others

group leadership qualities around adaptive capacity, engagement with others through shared meaning and integrity (Thomas, 2008). The relational aspect of leadership has been closely examined from all angles (Wheatley, 2006) with an increasing number of studies looking at the effect which a leader has with regards to the relationships to all stakeholders. Such studies concentrate on aspects of the theories mentioned above - the charismatic and transactional elements (Waldman et al, 2001), transformational elements (Burns, 1978) or relational aspects (Mathews, 2006) or the concept of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1997; Wheatstone, 2002).

The list of theories and ideas about leadership is indeed endless and it could be said that all of them present various aspects of leadership. One could argue that the leadership literature is limited by its strong reflection of research evidence based on western leadership assumptions (House, Aditya, 1997). This is one of the key problems in today's leadership literature. While many writers converge around three key leadership elements of general intelligence, specific knowledge, way of being/presence (Carver, 1989; Kotter, 1990; Halpern, Lubar 2004), there is no one defining theoretical winner that presents an idea of leadership that can be applicable across contexts. Leadership after all is a living experience that envelops leaders and followers alike (Wheatley, 2006). Leadership has moved from the rather universalist approaches to the more situational approaches which maintain that leadership effectiveness is dependent not just on the leader but also on the followers and the context. Despite the quantity of research on leadership, there is no clear paradigm or universal theory on leadership which anyone agrees on.

Today, an important trend seems to be emerging from the literature of the need to take a more holistic, or "all stakeholders" view of leadership. The theories presented in Table 1 outline a rather individualistic frame, focusing on the leader. Increasingly, a school of thought is emerging which looks at leadership from a more holistic perspective with a shift in focus from the leader as an individual to the leadership role that organisations need to develop at all levels and not just at the top (Bolden et al, 2003; Avolio et al, 2009). This is much broader than the notion of shared leadership put forward sometimes as a theoretical point of view. This idea rather points to the need for leadership at all the multiple levels of organisations. It invites leadership studies to look wider than just the individual leader and look at the integrated aspects of leader, follower and context (Yammarino et al, 2005).

But how do we integrate this myriad of leadership elements which have been outlined above into an organisational setting that sits in the reality of the complex contexts of today's environment? Leadership occurs in a context, though "context is not deterministic but creates a framework in which agency occurs and perhaps even structures" that context (Wren, Faier,



2006:208). Many writers suggest that this question implies the need for a new organisational dynamic in such a context and that this implies that a new dynamic of leadership is also required (Osborn, Hunt, 2007; Uhl-Bien et al, 2007). This trend in leadership studies, that leadership must take place in the reality of a context, that the role has to fit the person, the task, the expectations (Drucker, 1990); and that the role has to fit the context is well accepted. Leadership is a societal phenomenon and must thus be placed in its context, be that social, historical or cultural (Nahavandi, 2006). Leadership is dependent on the context and context is established by the relationships created (Wheatley, 2006). A leader alone, without interactions with people or a shared context with those people, cannot exist as a leader.

A second trend emerging in leadership studies is the need created by globalisation. The increasing global economy, global organisations and cross-cultural workforces are calling for a fundamentally different kind of leader (Sadler, 2003). Managing complexity all at levels is recognised as being the norm. Flexibility, empathy, values, ethics, sustainability, vision, service are all words which are replacing the autocratic styles of the top-down, directive order-giving leader. Increasingly the intangible aspects of leadership (values, vision, ethics and empathy) are said to be required behaviour, required of leaders by their followers (Nevins, Stumpf, 1999).

The interconnectedness that exists in all systems shows us that we must change our thinking from disconnected fragments to a more interconnected whole (Briggs, Peat, 1999). Leaders are connectors – they connect context, followers, organisational goals, energy. This is mirrored, for example, in the work of Pitcher (1997) who puts forward the argument for a leadership which must take place within a context; of real people and real organisations; where roles are crafted to meet the context and are not narrowly defined into tasks that can be taught irrespective of the context in which they are performed. She, like others, speaks of a leadership which is alive and lived, that meets the real world, in a real way. Organisations are entities which make deliberate efforts to manage the “energies” available (be they human or material) to meet a common goal (El-Meligi, 2005). Follett describes leaders as those “who can liberate the greatest amount of energy in [their] community” (O’Conner, 2000:178). This understanding of the “real world, in a real way” is precisely what is important in leadership and why leadership is important. Thus one could argue that a third trend in leadership studies must be the increasing focus on this “interconnectedness” and the role of the leader as a liberator of energy to meet the reality of the context.

Eighteen theories in all have been outlined, which have behind them enough research to fill a few libraries. But what impact have they had in the practitioner world? The discussion above,

both of the traditional leadership theories and their more practitioner-based off-shoots, shows just how wide the field is.

And here is perhaps where part of the trouble starts - despite all the research and knowledge available on leadership, not much has changed in the practitioner world. Some would say that the problem of the study of leadership is not that it is too lightweight as a discipline but rather it is too heavy (Ciulla, 2006). Leadership in the practitioner's reality, by its nature, forces us to tackle universal questions about human nature, free will, and human interactions. This is why the leadership field is as complex as it is, and why complex theories are developed in the attempt to capture all the elements which we have discussed up to now.

If leadership studies must indeed focus on this interconnectedness and this role of leadership as the liberator of energy to meet the reality of the context, then it is important to look at how this role can be fulfilled. And this gives us our first direction in terms of the research on what makes good leadership, leadership that is experienced as being good by those who are present in the context.

In order to frame appropriately the research question, it is necessary to look further at this question of context in order to understand its influence, if any, on leadership.

### **3. Leadership, context and the challenge of culture**

This chapter focuses on the aspect of context in which leadership takes place and the influence this has on the act of leadership. It discusses the element of context, and particularly that of culture, and looks at how context challenges leadership today.

#### **3.1 Leadership in context**

Context is a basic element which must be taken into account when considering leadership (Wexler, 2005). There are some who would go as far as saying that the importance of context is about the only thing on which leadership theories and theorists would agree (Kellerman, 2001). Leadership does not take place in a vacuum but is embedded in a social setting (McElroy, Shrader, 1986; Porter, McLaughlin, 2006; Hunt et al, 2009). However there is little theory or evidence concerning applicable leadership theory or behaviours in various organisational contexts (Masood et al, 2006). While it is fully accepted that different organisation variables (size, context, culture, goal, strategy, technology, proximity etc.) require different types of leadership at different times (House, Aditya, 1997) there are few concrete answers in the academic literature to help the practitioner and much of the research literature leaves one with “if” this context “then” this theory type of answers.

Context can be defined as that which provides constraints on or opportunities for a particular behaviour or attitude in organisations (Johns, 2001). It is accepted that the context within which organisations operate has become more complex. This implies the need for a deeper understanding of leadership in a context reality (Osborn, Hunt, 2007). There is a growing acceptance that leadership theories need to be embedded in their social setting (McElroy, Shrader, 1986) for them to be effective and thus the importance of understanding context is crucial for leaders (Mayo, Nohria, 2005). The following sections look at the need to understand context in general and specifically tackle the issue of culture within context.

#### **3.2 Understanding context in general**

We can look at our evolution in the understanding context in relation to the specific scientific thoughts of the day. Newton's laws have pervaded all scientific Western thought (Einstein, 1934) and together with Frederick Taylor, both are said to have influenced organisational structures and thinking right up to the present day (Draman, 2004). This mechanistic approach was the dominant worldview. Organisational theories and design have largely mirrored the working of the mechanical age of Newton – with functions, roles and

organisational charts and processes, each part being separately identifiable and potentially able to work without interference (Wheatley, 2006). Newton's legacy was the idea that everything in the universe was predictable just like the workings of a clock (Gribbens, 1995).

More and more it became clear that the influence of neither the individual nor the context fitted either nicely – or predictably – into this neat mechanistic organisational design (Weber, 2005; Levin, 2005).

Today it is commonly accepted that the Newtonian view of the world has evolved and that, among other theories, the insights of physics, giving a quantum view of how the world functions, has aided this evolution (Bradley, 1999; Guerrini et al, 2004). This new understanding of reality means that subjectivity is always present and that the very act of observing changes the outcome. Chaos theory – as first described by Poincaré - shows how a simple system can explode into shocking complexity through the feedback of non-linear systems. He was followed, a few years later, by Max Planck who discovered that energy comes in small, discontinuous packets called quanta. Then Einstein formulated relativity. David Bohm theorized that the universe must fundamentally be indivisible; therefore all things must be linked in some way (Briggs, Peat, 1989). Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty posed the unquestionable reality that a system cannot be observed without affecting the system. He showed that as we look at one particular part of a system with more attention, the other parts get less attention thus the more we look at one aspect of the system, the more we miss its globality, thus we can never know a system perfectly. These were the foundation of the complexity theories that have abounded in organisational literature since the 1980's and which have challenged the linear mechanistic view (Plowman et al, 2007).

But much earlier organisational writers had already intuitively grasped these ideas. Follett was firm believer that observing an event changes its nature; that the simple fact of observing someone doing something changed what happened (Follett, 1924). This change, Follett argued throughout her theories, was due to the interconnectedness of people and events. Around the same time Einstein wrote agreeing with this idea - "the belief in an external world independent of the perceiving subject is the basis of all natural science. Since, however, sense perception only gives information [...] indirectly we can only grasp the latter by speculative means. It follows from this that our notions of physical reality can never be final" (Einstein, 1934:40). Einstein and his theory of relativity put forward the principle that everything in existence was moving in relation to each other – this meant that observations and analysis were all relative to the point at which they were made (Weber, 2005). Follett (1924) paralleled this in saying that the context in which organisational science looked at events was paramount in the understanding of events. Einstein viewed the perception of

reality as being relative to an individual's position and the interrelations with the surrounding environment (Einstein, 1916). This was similar to Follett's view that the individual experience of reality dictated the definition of reality for the individual (Follett, 1924). She spoke about seeking "reality in experience" and that "experience may be hard but we claim its gifts because they are real" (Follett, 1924:302).

Context interacts with the enactment of leadership and task complexity to producing differing outcomes in both process and performance (Hunter et al, 2009). As we have seen from our discussion above, context is an ever-present force which exerts a field of influence over leadership. Therefore leadership must be considered as taking place in a specific context and in turn that context influences the type of presence, behaviour and action that a leader must have. Leadership emerges in social settings which have a dynamic impact on the leader and the eventual outcomes of the leadership process (Nahavandi, 2006). This is why context is crucial.

### **3.3 Context as a field**

In physics, fields are the way in which forces are transmitted across distances (Baker, 2007). Physics defines a field as a force emitted by a single charge which exists irrespective of the whether another charge is brought in to feel its effect (Capra, 1982). Einstein called the field concept one of the most psychologically interesting events in the development of physical thought (Einstein, 1961). Heisenberg showed with his uncertainty principle that the very act of observing a particle changes it, therefore the precise knowledge of something can never be known. This means that, simply put, one can never really know the whole of reality, as reality is in movement. Physicists speak of "quantum uncertainty" (Gribben, 1995) that is, the random interconnections that happen but cannot be predicted. Stated another way, we can only know where we have been by observing it; but the very fact that an observation is made influences the reality and thus its future outcome can no longer be predicted. Heisenberg's principle posed as an unquestionable reality the fact that a system cannot be observed without affecting that system. He showed that as we look at one particular part of a system with more attention, the other parts get less attention thus the more we look at one aspect of the system, the more we miss its globality. Therefore we can never know a system perfectly. Organisational science has for years been based on the concept of "observability". Typically, in organisational science, a theory was constructed, a hypothesis designed, an observation made and generalisations deduced from the observed results.

Physicists offered to us the image of the universe "as an undivided whole in which any analysis into separate and independently existent parts has no fundamental status" (Bohm,

1980:221). What if we were to imagine context as this field, a field in which relationships happen? It is the challenge already taken up by the protagonists of complexity leadership theory, and in a different way by those of servant leadership. Both integrate context, its effect on leadership and how it is affected by the relationship which leadership creates. Therefore in the design of the research, we will ensure that this concept of context in terms of a field - and its subjective nature – will be taken into account in the later discussions.

### **3.4 Context and culture**

One of the greatest difficulties in the review of leadership research has been finding a practical place for the role of culture. Culture – be it national or organisational – is often presented as a separate topic, a separate research field. It is this author's opinion that culture is crucial to the individual's experience of reality and is a defining part of context as "leadership is a human phenomenon that is embedded in culture" (Ciulla, 2008:393). Culture can be defined as a meaning system which is shared between those who speak a particular language, in a specific geographical region and at a specific historical period (Triandis, 1994, 2000). There are over 160 different definitions of culture (Darlington, 1996), though Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) offer one of the most comprehensive as consisting "of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand, as conditioning elements of future action" (cited in Alder, 1997:14). This definition shows the range of influence that culture has on all aspects of human interaction. Culture can be thus seen as a series of rules and methods which have evolved and which nations or organisations use to deal with reality and define how they experience it (Trompenaars, Wolliams, 2003). It is a feature of life that often operates at an unconscious level so that we are not consciously aware of its nature or effect and which creates unconscious "norms" which are only norms for those within the culture (Triandis, 1982). After much discussion, the GLOBE project defined culture as "shared motives, values, beliefs, identities and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations" (House et al, 2002:5).

The reality of today's global organisational environments means that cultural aspects and understanding must be placed high on the agenda. The reality, not just of the global economy, but of the increasing mix of nationalities within even single organisations in the same country means that cultural diversity must be managed. The two levels of influence on

leadership theory of culture are national culture and organisational culture. National culture – in relation to leadership theory – was first put on the map by the work of Hofstede (1980). The dimensions which Hofstede laid out were the first major research parameters to understand cultural influences. He set out four dimensions – individualism-collectivism, power-distance, uncertainty-avoidance and masculinity-femininity – which differentiated cultures (Hofstede, 1980). Hofstede showed that different nationalities have different perceptions of all sorts of things from time, social space, distance, authority, group relations, the place and role of men and women, the need for hierarchy etc. etc. Since then the study of national culture in organisational science has become more mainstreamed and probably, one could argue, more manageable and this seminal work has led to the emergence of the idea of cultural intelligence, defined as the ability to transcend cultural limitations (Elenkov, Manev, 2005). Leadership theory can be positively augmented by this concept as it places an emphasis on the leaders' need to understand and proactively deal with cultural influences.

Hofstede (1981) defines culture as "collective mental programming" which is one level of three levels which he defined as universal, collective or individual mental programming. The universal level is that shared by all human beings - the biological operating system. The collective level is the mental programming shared with some others - for example language, dress, values. The individual level is unique to each person - it is individual behaviour which can differ even within the same collective group. Hofstede (1981) identifies value as a key construct within culture. Kluckhohn (1951) defined a value as "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action". Hofstede makes the interesting remark that one of the problems of dealing with the concept of value is that "man is at the same time both the source of values and their instrument".

Both Trompenaars (1993) and Hofstede (1981) put forward the idea that each society has a different culture which arises from the ecological factors which influence their value systems and thus the societies institutions. It cannot be said that every member of a particular society will adhere to all the cultural norms. Rather we can say that national culture describes the norms, values and institutions which most of the population share (as Trompenaars (1993) asserts in his idea of normal distribution). Hofstede (1981) does allow for a circular influencing of factors - the results of the development of culture do feedback and thus culture is not static, but changes and evolves over time. These circular feedbacks influence an organisation as it has to deal with the outcomes which they create within an individual.

We can say that national culture is a self-regulating system where the values and institutions within a society are created by societal norms. As one reinforces the other, these systems

tend to be stable over time. However it is worth mentioning at this point the speed of change faced by cultures in the latter part of the 20th century. For example there is a growing number of examples of what could be called "cultures in shock". If we look at Rwanda in 1994, the "societal norm" changed overnight when the value system of the Hutu population changed to one of murder, and led to the killing of over one million Tutsis. Cultures in conflict or cultures under pressure can pass through a number of stages of Hofstede's evolution pattern overnight. From time to time cultures experience "shock" which radically changes key elements of that culture. For example, East Germany, with the fall of the Berlin wall, changed overnight from a communist culture and moved in the direction of a capitalist culture.

Organisational culture mirrors the structures of national culture in that it too is made up of dimensions which can be explicit and defined. Research has shown that the culture of an organisation is influenced by the national culture where it belongs (Ofori, Toor, 2009). An organisation's culture can be defined as a meaning system which is shared between those who work within the organisation at a specific historical period; it is a series of rules and methods which have evolved and which organisation's use to deal with reality and define how they experience that reality. Organisational change, innovation, evolution, conflict, power, ethics, values all occur with the cultural context of an organisation (Elenkov, Manev, 2005; Grojean et al, 2004; Takamine, 2008; Triandis, 1994, 2000, 2003; Trompenaars, Wolliams, 2003). While an organisation's culture "develops in large part from its leadership", the culture of an organisation also affects the development of its leaders (Bass, Avolio, 1993:112).

It is clear that there are two extreme points in the culture debate related to leadership theory. The "culture-free" position holds that there are no barriers to transferability of any technique or practice from one country to another. The contrary view is that culture is of ultimate significance in the shaping, or even determining, of the attitudes and values of the population and thus would affect leadership practices. Kirkbride et al (1989) put forward the idea that rather than these being two separate extremes, they are in fact two ends of a continuum and that the most useful theoretical and practical position is somewhere on the mid-point of that continuum. This point is mirrored by the results of the GLOBE studies which have shown that leadership behaviours can be either universally desirable/undesirable or contingent of the culture within which they work (Nahavandi, 2006).

As the GLOBE study shows, culture affects leadership attributes, behaviours and practices (House et al, 2002). National culture will typically push leaders to mirror the acceptable attributes, behaviours and practices of the national culture in order for them to be acceptable. This is a key outcome of GLOBE. But can there be common underlying fundamentals of



leadership which are common across cultures? The author's experience of working in some 26 countries would both agree with the GLOBE outcomes that national culture is mirrored in organisation settings, but only sometimes and only in stable situations. The author's experience has shown that there are rather more basic leader attributes which are common across cultures, especially so in times of change and complexity. This hypothesis - that there are basic leadership attributes which can be common across cultures - is considered in the design of the research. In order to look further at the influence of culture, it has been a deliberate choice to ensure that 90% of the research data comes from those who have lived and worked abroad and in international, multi-cultural workplace settings.

### **3.5 The challenge of context to leadership**

Everyone agrees that context matters – the discussion presented above shows why. Organisations, and their leaders, acknowledge that they must keep abreast of the context and culture – both internal and external – within which they sit (Phelps et al, 2007). Thus understanding the context within which organisations operate is paramount not just to organisational success but to the success of the leader within that context. Context is ever changing – “we can never understand the total situation without taking into account the evolving environment” (Follett, 1924:69). Uncertainty can be seen as an objective characterisation of any environment and can be defined in relation to an individual's perceived inability to know the direction in which change may happen and the impact that change will bring (Milliken, 1987). The importance of the role of the leader in uncertainty is to reduce stress by showing how uncertainty can be turned to opportunity and success (Bass, 1985). This creative use of context is one of the leadership challenges of today. The challenge to the practitioner is clear - “behaviour is not a function of environment but a function of the relating of behaviour and environment.....a function of the relation between self and the environment” (Follett, 1924:71-2). Thus the context and its influence are ever present. The difficulty is exactly in the almost indefinable, ever changing aspect which is context.

Within leadership theories, the effect of context is perhaps not as dominant as it should be. We have discussed here the challenge which context and culture place on organisations and on leaders though its reflection in the leadership literature is, perhaps by default, often circumstantial. Little is written on whether there are some underlying fundamentals of leadership which can be common to leadership across contexts and cultures, which is experienced as a disadvantage by the practitioner. Additionally, while all theories have their advantages and disadvantages, there is also the contextual aspect of “being in the right

place at the right time". An example of excellent leadership often quoted is Winston Churchill. He was the right leader in the right moment. What he offered was right for the context of the time. He was not a great leader before or after the war, but he was perfect during. One could borrow the idea of contextualism, first put forward by Stephan Pepper in the 1940's. It is adopted in this sense to mean placing that which requires an explanation in a context (Wexler, 2005). Its use in terms of leadership is important as it is by placing leadership in context that it becomes possible to define the type, style, behaviour, the appropriate theory or more simply put *how the leader must be and act*.

Therefore contextualism must be grounded in any leadership theory in order for it to be applicable in the reality of the organisation and the individuals working within it. Leadership theories are also a product of the culture they come from. The vast majority of references in leadership theory are male and Western (Nahavandi, 2006). This is generally considered to have put a dangerous bias into our current academic literature. Culture is something that is shared, that is passed on from one generation to the next and shapes an individual's perception of reality and behaviour towards that perceived reality. Just as we have said in the earlier section, it is the individual's experience of reality which shapes their actions and behaviour. Context and culture therefore are two of the main shapers of that reality that give form and understanding to the experience of reality. Values can be defined as "desirable states, objects, goals or behaviours transcending specific situation and applied as normative standards to judge and choose among alternative modes of behaviour" (Schwarz, 1992:6). Values are culture influenced and transmitted (Lord, Hall, 2005) and, as we have seen above, become part of the complex influence which culture has on context. The leader must take these elements of context into account in order to be effective in their interaction with their stakeholders.

As we have seen from this chapter, context is an element within which leadership must place itself, which leaders must acknowledge, understand and work with in order to get their message understood, their analysis correct and to adapt their vision accordingly. The impact of context calls on leaders to adapt how they are, to adapt their ability to listen, observe and analyse, to adapt their behaviour and the way they frame their communication. As with culture, the research approach here will allow us to see the impact of context on leadership and this will be further discussed with the research findings in later chapters.

## **4. Leadership and its influences**

As we have seen from the preceding chapters, the academic and practitioner information which is available regarding leadership is vast. The discussions which are born from this material are equally vast but three main influencing factors emerge which are tackled in more detail in this chapter before moving deeper into the research on good leadership. These influencing factors are leaders and followers, power and presence and the academic debate on leadership versus management. These three subjects are considered to be crucial influencing factors in any consideration of the act of leadership.

### **4.1 Leaders and followers**

Leadership always takes place within a relationship – there must be leaders and followers for leadership to first exist (Hollander, 1992; Howell, Shamir, 2005, Kellerman, 2007), as “leadership begins when two parties meet” (El-Meligi, 2005:16). At its simplest, leadership is a tripod made up of leaders, followers and a common goal (Bennis, 2007). Thus leadership theories cannot be discussed without a mention of those whom leaders lead. Despite the term “follower” appearing in many of the theories mentioned in Table 1, until recently there has been a surprising absence of discussion into the impact of followership on leadership (Avolio et al, 2009). In reading the leadership literature, one could think that followers in fact matter little (Kellerman, 2007), however the impact of followers can be, and usually is, substantial and one could criticise the leadership literature for being too leader-centred (Howell, Shamir, 2005). Using the metaphor of Heisenberg’s principle of uncertainty - of there being a crucial interrelationship between subject and object - we could say, in our organisational vocabulary, that the same crucial relationship exists between leader and follower.

Freud and Arendt in their respective writings spoke much of the follower (Kellerman, 2001) and of the reasons people follow. In this section we discuss this aspect in terms of “interrelationship” rather than “leader-follower” as it is felt that the dynamic relationship between the two is better expressed in this way. Leaders must build on this interrelationship in two ways – through the quality of their staff and through the demands they make of them (Drucker, 1990). Some would even say that “the essence of leadership is through influence, and it is through its influence on followers that leadership may be best observed” (van Kippenberg et al, 2005:496). Leadership is an interactive relational process so, naturally, the place and role of the follower and impact of leader action on followers has recently found

increasing space in academic research on leadership (Hellend, Winston, 2005) in the view of organisations as communities which function together (Mintzberg, 2004). This implies that the relational aspect of leadership takes prime focus. Follower commitment has to do with the quality of the relationship (Moss Kanter, 2002) as much as anything else.

It is agreed that leadership effectiveness has as much to do with the quality of the followers as it does with the quality of the leaders (Shamir 2007, cited in Avolio et al, 2009). Followers are increasingly seen not as passive employees who follow orders, rules and tasks, but rather as co-creators of the act of leadership. They have an important role to play in supporting the leader to manage the organisation and in the very act of giving the leader the position to lead. The intelligent leader does not want followers, but rather co-creators serving a common purpose. Good leadership creates community (Mintzberg, 2004) where leaders and followers are in fact both following an invisible leader – the common purpose, vision or organisational goal. Follett (1924) introduced the notion of followership by saying that if “followers must partake in leadership, it is also true that we must have followership on the part of leaders. There must be a partnership of following” (Follett, 1924:255). The strength of this argument is that it challenges both the leader to be both leader and follower: to listen and hear what is said. “Quietism, in a more pious age called the sin of silence, often costs organisations – and their leaders – dearly” (Bennis, 2003:180). The energy that can be released from “followers who tell the truth and leaders who listen” cannot be underestimated (Bennis, 2003:179). Leadership is tangled in a web that covers the leader and the follower (Kellerman, 2004) and the intricacy of this web of relationship is exactly why the leader-follower relationship is so difficult.

Thus we continually see the reflection of the importance of this interrelationship throughout the discussion of leaders and followers. This is as far as we shall take the issue of leaders and followers in this research. Based on this discussion, it was decided that during the research process we would look at leaders and followers as individuals, without making a difference to their roles, exactly because of the level at which this interrelationship exists. This research will therefore use each of them as offering different, but importantly complementary, view points when discussing “good leadership”. We ground this decision in Follett's view of a partnership of following (Follett, 1924) and feel that the research based on this partnership can give richer results than if we analyse each individually.

## **4.2 Leadership – Power and the Force of Presence**

The leader as the symbol of power is a model which is disappearing (Tromenaars, Voerman, 2009). And yet power and the force of leadership presence is still a much discussed, and

rightly so, topic. In this section we will discuss power as it is seen in relationship to leadership and the topic of leadership presence.

#### **4.2.1 Leadership and Power**

Power is inherent in leadership discussions, with leadership sometimes seen as the amount of power held by the leader (Yukl, 1989). Power is an important and natural part of leadership and thus an integral part of any study of leadership. Power can be defined as the “ability of one person to influence others or exercise control over them” (Nahavandi, 2006:103) and has been distinguished into six ways of achieving this – reward, coercion, legitimacy, expertise, information and reference (Harvey, 2006). Each of these are ways in which the leader can “take power” over a follower. Leadership “power” is an important influencing factor in any leadership relationships at all stakeholder levels. Often it is considered inherent in the role. This is an old issue.

Follett challenged leaders of the day in her 1924 book which she ended by saying "what I have tried to show in this book is that the social process may be conceived either as the opposing and battle of desires with the victory of one over the other, or as the confronting and integrating of desires. The former means non-freedom for both sides, the defeated bound to the victor, the victor bound to the false situation thus created-both bound. The latter means a freeing for both sides and increased total power or increased capacity in the world" (Follett, 1924:301). Follett's reference to "power" is the one of the strengths of her theoretical and practical richness. Agreeing with this, Greenleaf (2002:24) puts forward that power is only truly granted by the follower to the leader “in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader”. Both put forward power, well used, as a potential positive aspect of leadership.

There is a dark side to power, “power over” as Follett would call it. Just as power allows leaders to influence well, it can also be abusive. Power, no matter how legitimately used, can be experienced as abusive and increase the distance between leaders and followers, thus risking the separation of leaders from the reality of their organisation and its context (Nahavandi, 2006). Causes of power abuse often stem from personal attributes of the individual leader, but can also be influenced by an organisational culture which tolerates such abuse (Toor, Ogunlana, 2009).

There exists a paradox when talking about leadership and power. Leadership can be good or bad, power can be good or bad; leadership can be good but mixed with a bad use of power it becomes abusive. Power-with comes from respecting the circular relations wheel that Follett sets out. It comes from the presence which the leader can bring. The presence of the leader

exerts a power, which like gravity, pulls an organisation, and its people, in a certain direction. When the type of presence exerted is in congruence with Follett's "power-with" view, there is naturally present a level of respect from the leader of the relating and the relationships. Thus any consideration of leadership power must be put into the perspective of the presence which the leader carries and shares.

#### **4.2.2 Leadership presence**

"Every body continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line, unless it is compelled to change that state by forces impressed upon it" (Newton, 1687:I). Gravity – the force which compels change; "in business we are always passing from one significant moment to another significant moment and the leader's task is pre-eminently to understand the moment of passing. The leader sees one situation melting into another and has learnt the mastery of that moment" (Follett, 2003:170). This is the gravity a leader brings to a situation; this is the act of presence. Gravity is that unseen force, unnoticed until an object is placed within its field; then its effect can be observed. The presence of a leader is similar; it is unnoticed until an object is placed within its field. Using this idea, the field of influence a leader has is the extent to which their presence can be felt and has an influence on the people and events surrounding them.

Leadership presence has been defined as the "ability to connect authentically with the thoughts and feelings of others, in order to motivate and inspire them towards a desired outcome" (Halpern, Lubar, 2004). The idea of leadership presence puts forward the argument that just because someone holds the title or role of "leader", it does not mean that others will follow them automatically. It is the presence that a leader holds which creates the impact a leader has. Presence includes the ability to influence and the ability to move people. Jones (2003) puts forward the argument that in an ever-changing and accelerating world, the new challenge for leaders is to be present in the moment and move from there rather than from information stored in memory.

Presence comes from within (Halpern, Lubar, 2004); it is a state of being which determines external behaviours. It is unique, and when honest, it is powerful. Leadership presence cannot be linked to charisma – presence implies an authentic being, charisma often implies the ability to lead people blindly in a certain direction. Leadership presence means being present, being true to the self and being able to lead (Bell, Patterson, 2005).

Leadership – no matter how it is defined – has one common element – it is a role held by an individual. As an individual, the leader embodies their role through the presence s/he has centred in that role. Leadership presence is all about relationships and interrelationships

which take place at a moment in time. Science has shown us that there is no such thing as a neutral position – “our affect has an effect” (Gunn, Gullickson, 2005:8). Leadership is dependent on the context and context is partly established by the relationships held. A leader must be present to both the context and the relationships in order to understand the reality of a situation. In understanding this, the leader is then well placed to influence and lead.

Leadership presence effects mood. We have all experienced at one time walking into a room and sensing the mood. It's something we can all do. Indeed we have all experienced someone walking into a room that we are in and the mood changing perceptively. Mood is something which everyone “understands” but is rather ill-defined in the academic world (Luomala, Laaksson, 2000). From the many definitions we have chosen that of Gnoth et al (1999) who define mood as “complex affective states without a specific target that are pervasive in their effect. In other words, moods are both states and responses to previous experiences that affect future behaviour and experiences”. Mood affects how we relate to experiences, the environment and how we appraise situations (Pribram, 1970; Thayer, 1989; Lazarus, 1991). In organisational sciences, it is well accepted that mood influences cognitive activity and behaviour (Choen&Andrade, 2004). Sy et al (2005), in their study of mood and leadership, showed that a leader can effect the mood of a group. They conclude that mood plays an important role in the leadership process and argue the importance of taking on-board the aspect of affect in any leadership model. Bono and Ilies (2006) show a positive link between the emotion of a leader and the mood of the follower. We can parallel this back to the earlier concept of “field” and that leadership presence exerts a field which effects those with whom they come into contact.

Presence is not some strange skill that a leader learns – it is something we all carry with us, it is how we are in ourselves and the atmosphere we bring with us as we move and interact with others. Equally we are each responsible for the mood we carry and must be aware of the effect that has on the mood around us. Leaders have an extra responsibility in this respect. Many leadership writers talk about the famous “it” – what great leaders have that make them different from ordinary managers. The literature would argue that the “it” factor is in fact a leader's ability to be present and to influence and manage mood. Knowing how to listen to mood, to differentiate between constructive and destructive moods, to know the moment to intervene and how to intervene are important for the leader to be able to shift the mood of a team back to something useful; this may be even considered essential for a leader. To do this in harmony with the vision/strategy of the organisation is the leadership presence that good leaders embody.

#### **4.2.3 *The right use of power - leadership and presence***

Power is complex. It is quantitative and qualitative, subjective in terms of perceptions and feelings as well as measurable in terms of money or position (Burns, 2006a). Empowerment involves “sharing power with subordinates and pushing decision making and implementation power to the lowest level possible” (Nahavandi, 2006:119). Through empowerment, power and influence are shared throughout the organisation which acts as a balancing force to leadership power.

In conclusion of this section, we can refer to Follett’s description of power which brings to leadership the sense of the importance of the presence of the individual brings. It is the presence that an individual holds which, like gravity, affects the experience of the context and the quality of the relating. One often hears the phrase describing people “gravitating” around a leader. This is exactly the force of presence this leadership field which, while perhaps being un-measurable, influences the interrelations between leader, follower and their context. Leadership power and presence, as seen above, have a great influence on leadership and on whether it is seen as being good or bad. These elements will be part of the research data analysis in order to look at their influence in the reality of today’s organisational structures.

The leader sees the evolving situation and must apply their wisdom and judgement not to a stationary situation but to one which is constantly changing. This insight shows leadership as something which is much larger than predicting the future – it is rather the creation of the future. The good leaders therefore are the ones who make the decisions for the future that is evolving and not just the present situation (Follett, cited in Graham, 2003).

Leadership of position gives authority but can not always be considered real leadership; leadership of personality brings individualism but does not necessarily create a team. Leadership needs to combine the practical aspects inherent in the act of leadership with knowledge of the context and an ability to grasp the whole situation, to see trends and to unite them whilst organising the experience of the group together for a common purpose.

### **4.3 Leadership versus management**

Leadership and management - are they the same? are they different? – has been the topic of endless academic debates. The reason we take this up again here is that in the practitioner’s reality these two tasks/roles seem to be increasingly interlinked. The aim of this section is to present the debate around this topic, which then will be discussed further in Part 4 with the help of the research data related to this thesis.



Leadership has been defined as being entirely separate from management (Zaleznik, 1977; Kotter, 1990; Bennis, 2009) – the leader being someone who can move people to act in ways that create the world people will live in (in big or small ways) and the manager being someone who uses a set of learned skills to implement a task or sets of tasks with a group. This view has been mirrored by “popular” writers in the management field like Handy (1992), Covey (1997) and Robbins (1998).

Einstein once said that “management works in a system; leadership works on a system” (from “Remember this” an article in *Management Today*, Oct 2004:19). Still today there are several streams of thought when it comes to the question of how management and leadership fit together. One places leadership as one of the competences within a range of management competences; another sees them as separate but related concepts which stand side by side; a third sees the two overlapping i.e. managers do a bit of leading and leaders do a bit of management (Cuningham, 1986; Bennis, Nanus, 1985, Sadler, 2003). Kotter (1990) sees management as dealing with complexity while leadership is dealing with change. In today’s organisational reality, managers perform leadership roles and leaders perform management roles (Toor, Ofori, 2008). But it is clear that not all managers are leaders and inversely not all leaders are managers (Sadler, 2003). Some even create more confusion in this debate by talking about managerial leadership (House, Aditya, 1997; Hunt et al, 2009, Yukl, 1989)

In the debate on the difference between management and leadership, we can begin by looking at their definitions. As we have seen from the preceding chapters, there is no one agreed definition of leadership with theorists tending to define leadership according to their individual perspective (Yukl, 1989). On the other hand the definition of management is more or less straightforward and is defined (according to Daft, 2003) as “the attainment of organizational goals in an effective and efficient manner through planning, organizing, leading and controlling organizational resources” (cited in Toor, Ofori, 2008:64). These functions of management are more or less agreed upon whilst those of leadership are much more widely dispersed in many theoretical branches. Leadership can be said to be relational whereas management is process orientated; managers on the other hand focus on the present, maintain status quo, implement, remain aloof from those they manage and use positional power while leaders focus on the future, create change, create culture, establish an emotional link and use personal power Nahavandi (2006:18).

The majority of academic writers would agree that leadership and management are interrelated, each performing similar functions at particular times. As Kotter (1990) put it – there is leadership in management (the motivational part) and management in leadership

(the implementation part). The business literature however has a tendency to see leadership as superior to a more basic functioning of management (Zalenik, 1977) which must be challenged (Toor, Ofori, 2008). The increasing complexity currently facing organisations means that leaders must be able to manage well, and managers must be able to assume leadership roles when necessary. Leaders offer vision, but vision without structure leads to chaos; equally structure without vision leads to declining organisations in the long run (Capowski, 1994). However, even if these two functions combine at times in the same role-holder, as roles they are distinct and different.

As can be seen from above, confusion abounds and one wonders if this a debate that has gone slightly stale? To say that managers are administrators and that leaders get organisations, and people, to change (Maccoby, 2000) seems to be a bit “old hat”. The reality that the practitioner works within today is one where the manager/leader role is often combined. There are simply no leaders who don’t manage, and I would be hard pressed to find a decent manager who doesn’t lead. Is it perhaps useful in the future to consider the idea of leadership for today’s organisations as one where the leader is architect, coach and manager of their organisation’s vision? Leadership and management processes are different but do not necessarily involve different people, so where should the debate be focused? We shall return to this in Part 4 to see if the research data collected in the field can help illuminate this question.

## 5. So where to from here?

In this chapter, we look at the implications for the practitioner of the vast amount of theory presented in the previous chapters. It aims to lead the reader into the research process which is detailed in Part 2.

### 5.1 Order out of Chaos?

Rossabeth Moss Kanter defined leadership as something “which leaves the world a better and different place; that is, you lead people in new directions, to solve problems and make new things happen” (Moss Kanter, 2002). Others talk about the “right stuff”, saying that “whether leaders are born or made or some combination of both, it is unequivocally clear that leaders are not like other people....it would be a profound disservice to leaders to suggest that they are ordinary people who happen to be in the right place at the right time. Maybe the place matters, but it takes a special kind of person to master the challenges of opportunity” (Kirkpatrick, Locke, 1991:59). Some write about synchronicity (Jaworski, 1996) and that leadership often comes down to moments of chance which are exploited (Brown, 1996). Many writers argue that a new dynamic of leadership is required to meet the complexity of today’s organisational environment (Marion, Uhl-Bien, 2001; Osborn, Hunt, 2007; Uhl-Bien et al, 2007). One of the reasons put forward for leadership theories failing to have a positive impact in the practitioners reality is that many of them do not take into account the complexity of today’s organisations. Some would argue that this itself is too narrow a view and rather it is the complexity of today’s organisations combined with the rate of change and the interacting dynamic between these two which creating a reinforcing cycle of movement (Hoverstadt, 2008) which leadership has to manage. But if, as the physicists have proven, there is a subtle form of order within complexity and chaos (Briggs, Peat, 1990), can our leadership theories bring us to finding that point of order?

Drath et al (2008) go so far as to argue that the leadership ontology to date (made up of leaders, followers and their shared goals) creates unnecessary limitations due to the complexity of current contexts. They argue that the future leadership ontology should rather look towards the leadership outcomes of direction, alignment and commitment (Drath et al, 2008:636). This, to the practitioner, is closer to the heart of producing a real and useful impact. The fact that such ontology can, according to the authors, integrate across cultures is beneficial and goes some way to address the failings of traditional leadership theories. The

most interesting idea comes from the fact that theory and practice become inextricably intertwined.

Over and over again, the writings on leadership in recent times increasingly touch on the idea of sustainable leadership, leadership that exists not just in relation to organisational goals and profit, but to the staff wellbeing and to a wider community of stakeholders. Avolio et al (2009) show in their review that several trends are evolving in today's leadership literature which take a more holistic view. Moss Kanter takes the idea of "transforming giants", business leaders and organisations who focus on sustainability at all levels where social contributions are a starting point rather than an afterthought (Moss Kanter, 2008). This new focus in organisations will call on leadership which fosters adaptation, embraces complexity and disequilibrium and generates and recognises real leadership at all levels of an organisation (Heifetz et al, 2009). Thus the leader of the future will move more as a team player and their effectiveness will come "because they can subjugate their egos for the collective good and see the extraordinary when most see only the ordinary" (Hill, 2004:125).

That "genuine leadership is deeply personal and inherently collective" (Senge, 2002:359) is without a doubt. Those proponents of authenticity would say that leadership can be as simple as Shakespeare's famous words of "to thine own self be true"? (Hamlet, 1/3/1.78). Every religion, every leadership guru has an equally inspiring phrase of knowing oneself. Perhaps Shakespeare got it nearly right! Presence implies authenticity – to thine own self be true – this is an important element. But presence also implies the ability to integrate the surrounding connections, to be able to summarise and synthesise these connections so that they can both be taken into account and given a meaning that is shared. Thus presence becomes an intensity of being, and a leader becomes an integrator and sense-giver to the world around.

## **5.2 Is it all about timing?**

Perhaps for every leader there is a season and perhaps there is a leadership lifecycle, just as organisations have a life cycle – the leader of the start-up business may not be the same as the leader of the multinational. Ward puts forward the idea that the lifecycle of organisations through creation, growth, maturity decline needs to be paralleled by changing leadership abilities of the creator, the sustainer, the transformer and the terminator (Ward, 2003). This idea illustrates the importance of the tripod (Bennis, 2007) discussed earlier (made up of leaders, followers and a common goal) to leadership; that the leadership needed is affected by differing contexts, implying differing relationships at different times. Yet Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) argue that leadership is more than just the right person in the

right place and time, but it is about seizing the opportunities that the space, time, and place offer.

So what makes leadership work? Can there be some underlying fundamentals of leadership which are present no matter the context in which the tripod is situated? As we have seen, and as it is reflected in the literature, context is constantly changing. Drath et al (2008) put forward the idea of holism, the idea being that the whole is greater than the sum of its individual parts. If leaders in all sectors of life must be different, if success must include the wellbeing of those they work with, the environment within which they work and organisational survival; if the legacy they leave behind for future generations must be sustainable – what should be the underlying fundamentals of good leadership? If multi-cultural settings are increasingly common in organisations, are there “culture-neutral” fundamentals of leadership which make leadership good and which can be common across cultures? What is the power of a lollipop? Are there leadership acts which embody the essence of good leadership? What are the stories people tell of good leadership? If influence is a key element of leadership and if one considers that much of the key interactions happen between peers rather than the formal leader-follower interaction (Lichtenstein, Plowman, 2009, Yukl, 2006), it would seem realistic to assume that the experience of leadership is influenced by the shared experience of that leadership among peers. One way to find that shared experience is to have people tell their story.

Larkin (2010) offers an interesting phenomenological view of leadership and the recognition of the subjective nature of the knowledge created. While many leadership theories are based on the assumption that leadership itself, in what in phenomenological terms can be termed “wholes”, Larkin argues that leadership lies rather in the intertwining of leaders, followers, context and purpose. She coins the idea of the “leadership moment” which identifies the leadership acts which occur in order for there to be an experience of leadership. What this thesis is searching for are these “leadership moments”. Leaders must interact with followers; they do so in a context; and they bring a purpose to the interaction. It is only when all these aspects come together, or intertwine, that we see or experience leadership. So what are these moments when good leadership is expressed? And how are the stories told about them?

Phenomenology, first put forward by Husserl at the turn of the last century, encourages the study of a phenomenon in the actual circumstances in which it exists. Taking this approach to leadership, it calls on leadership to be studied in the circumstances in which it arises. Our perception is coloured by how we are positioned, or the relationship we have to a certain event. In studying leadership, we are by default studying the perception of the leader and the

act of leadership. Any study must take this into account if it is to have an impact in the practitioner reality.

Any model of leadership must ensure a leadership which takes place in a centred, bounded reality. But can we capture it? By trying to put good leadership into a box do we lose the full picture? Are there some underlying fundamentals which are common to the experience of an act of leadership that is considered to be good? And what can different bodies of work, like that of quantum physics and the work of Mary Parker Follett, bring to the debate?

The journey to answering this question begins by defining the research question and the methodology used. It starts by asking people to tell stories about these leadership moments, these moments when leadership worked and when the experience of the act of leadership was good. It builds on these initial research findings by taking them back into the practitioner reality through action research. The various parts of this research journey are described in detail in following chapters.



## **PART 2: THE RESEARCH QUESTION, METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS**



*Anybody who has been seriously engaged in scientific work of any kind realizes that over the entrance to the gates of the temple of science are written the words: 'Ye must have faith.'*

*Max Planck*

## Introduction to Part 2

The second part of this thesis looks at the definition of the research question; the construction of the research methodology (including the construction process of the two dictionaries of themes) and the research process both for the inductive and action research which took place.

Part 2 starts by outlining the research journey. Chapter 6 presents the research plan, detailing the various steps of the journey. Figure 1 presents this research plan and the thesis uses this plan to guide the reader in further chapters.

Part 2 then continues by defining the research question. It then presents the methodology for the inductive research and in particular a discussion on storytelling as a viable research option. The action research methodology used in the field research in Part 4 is then detailed. This part of the research journey took the models which the inductive research journey created and tested them in a field setting using action research.

The data collection process is then outlined, and Chapter 10 makes some comments on the information collected alongside the actual interviews in the chapter titled “A surprising turn of events”. There is a detailed description of the building of the first dictionary of themes regarding good leadership, from the initial to the final version. The results of the coding using the initial dictionary of themes are outlined as well as a detailed explanation of the construction of the final dictionary of themes. The process of re-coding all transcripts according to this final dictionary is described, as well as the results for the double-coding which took place.

The second dictionary of themes relates to the leadership theories explored in Part 1. The aim of this work was to see if the leadership theories presented in Part 1 found either direct or indirect occurrence in the stories of leadership told by people. Its value and interest was to see if any of the leadership theory work was actually reflected in people’s stories and experience of leadership.

All the details containing the various dictionaries of themes, data analysis tables and biographical information of respondents can be found in the Annexes. In the Section I of the annexes, Annex 1 and 2 contain the detailed coding for the two dictionaries of themes (on good leadership and leadership theory); Annex 11 shows the detailed double-coding results. Section II shows the details of the interview protocol and research website which was constructed for this work. Sections IV and V contain the full original transcripts; Section VI

sets out the coding for leadership theories. Annex 4 to 7 contain all the data relating to the field study.

## 6. Defining the Research Journey

The research question must be placed in the framework of the existing academic knowledge in order to make the best, and most appropriate, methodological choices. The research question focuses on the act of good leadership.

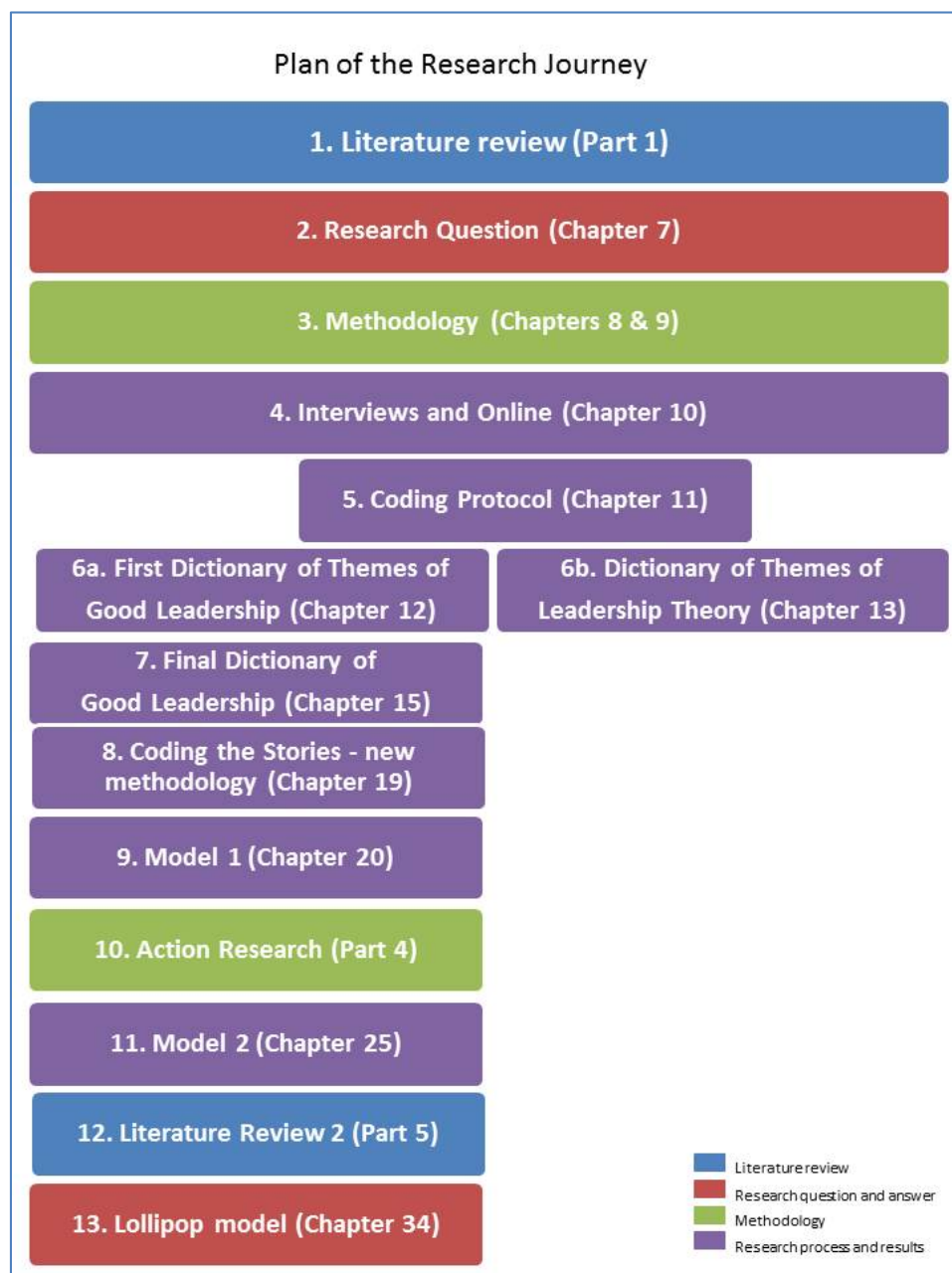
This raised the first challenge in defining the process. The leadership body of knowledge to date (presented in Chapter 1) can be clearly framed into two distinct streams – that of leadership in terms of personal attributes (e.g. trait, behavioural, transformational, charismatic, servant etc) and that of leadership framed in a situation or context (situational or contingency theory, complexity, cross-cultural, e-leadership etc). The research question here however looks at the act of good leadership.

Therefore this thesis presents an empirical research which, while grounded in the existing bodies of knowledge, proposes a new stream of academic research, a third stream looking at leadership in terms of the act of good leadership.

In order to approach this third way appropriately, the choice has been made to use inductive methods and action research but grounded in the existing body of knowledge. The choice of methodology is described in Chapter 8 and 9. This grounded theory approach is detailed in the following chapters. The global structure of the research journey is broken into two parts – an inductive approach using storytelling as the research medium and an action research approach whereby the results of the inductive research phase were then taken to the field in the form of an action research project. This research journey is shown in Figure 1 below.

- Step 1 was to complete the literature review. This has been described in Part 1.
- Step 2 defined the research question as described above in Chapter 7.
- Step 3 describes in Chapters 8 and 9 the methodological choices for this research.
- Step 4 was to gather the research data based on interviews and the internet website constructed for this research. This is detailed in Chapter 10.
- Step 5: A protocol for the analysis of the data collected was built (which is detailed in Chapter 11).
- Step 5 took the protocols established and applied them to all the research data. This is detailed in Chapter 11.

- Step 6 describes the initial creation of the dictionary of themes which accompany this research. These are detailed in Chapters 12 and 13.
- Step 7 created a final dictionary of themes. Based on the above, the first part of the research journey to be undertaken, the creation of a dictionary of themes of leadership creating 23 themes (or qualities) of good leadership. This work is rooted in the first stream of academic leadership work around personal attributes.



*Figure 1: Modelling the Research Journey*

- Step 8. A recoding of the research data in an effort to better capture the unique nature and the full richness of storytelling. This is detailed in Chapter 19.
- Step 9. The creation of the first model of the results. This can be found in Chapter 20.
- Step 10. Taking into account the research question - what are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types – it was necessary to place the research results into the practitioner reality, i.e. to place it in a situation or field context. Thus the action research part of this thesis is also rooted in this second body of leadership knowledge.
- Step 11. The model created through the action research.
- Step 12. The research question has one key part looking at what is it that allows “good leadership to be enacted” and this is a stream we discovered was missing in the academic body of knowledge.
- Step 13. Part 6 of this thesis aim to re-address that by presenting results and theory around the act of leadership, emerging from the existing knowledge based around personal attributes and situational context. It presents the final results of the research in the form of a model of leadership.

In order to facilitate the reader, the colour coding on the research plan above can be found at the beginning of the appropriate chapters.

## 7. The Research Question

### 2. Research Question

This chapter sets out the research question for this thesis and details the research methodology.

### 7.1 Defining the Research Question

Beyond leadership theory, styles and attributes is a woman or man trying to do a job. It is a role that has been taken since the beginning of time. So the problem for me was why, in the multi-billion euro industry that leadership theorists profit from, do we suffer from so much poor leadership in our organisations, institutions and groups?

The question which this thesis attempts to answer is what are the underlying fundamentals (if any) of good leadership? Good leadership is defined as set of elements which, when enacted, produce effective results and who's enactment is experienced by others as having a positive effect – has two key aspects, that of the results (effectiveness) and the experience of the process (which we will later discuss as service). Hence the research question being framed around the enactment of good leadership. This is important in the practitioners field to find, if it is possible, model of good leadership which can be grounded in the reality of practice and not just in theory.

Taking into account all the knowledge summarised in Part 1, it seems that the volume and complexity of the subject has led to some state of confusion in the leadership field. Why has no-one yet been able to agree on the key underlying fundamentals or constructs that could embody good leadership in a form accessible to the practitioner? Working in a multi-cultural organisational environment, across more than 80 national cultures, and in various types of contexts (war, post-conflict, transition to peace), I wanted to see if a construct of leadership could be found which was horizontal i.e. that was effective across these various elements of culture and context.

Too often I found in academic research (by its nature) a silo approach to one specific aspect applicable to one specific culture or context, or organisation, or the current state of knowledge. The fact that there was so much knowledge about leadership without much practical application left me disturbed. Today's practitioner reality made me challenge the academic approach of studying one aspect of leadership, and pushed me to the more axiomatic course of attempting to see if the underlying fundamentals of good leadership

could be captured in a way that could be applicable in the reality of today's organisational field.

Thus the research question posed is:

*What are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?*

This is not a naïve quest for a general theory of leadership – others have written far more eloquently on the search for a general theory than I could (Burns, 2006; Ciulla, 2006). It is rather an attempt to take the wealth of knowledge available from the academic world and match it to the wealth of experience available in the everyday reality of the practitioner world and to see if through the real experiences of good leadership we could get some answers to my question.

It was Larkin's idea, as described in Part 1, of "leadership moments" (Larkin, 2010) that led to the idea to research whether there were some underlying fundamentals of good leadership which could be universal by using the idea of storytelling, where people retell these moments from their own experience.

The use of storytelling is a conscious choice. Storytelling by its nature is an expression of the experience of a moment in time. It frees the interviewee to tell what was important for them, rather than answering a specific set of questions. What I sought were the elements that comprised a moment of good leadership without colouring the research with a predefined set of questions. This choice of the use of storytelling as a research medium is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

The use of the term "good leadership" is not accidental. Here the word "good" refers to both ethics and competence. These two senses of the word good – morally good and technically good or effective – form a logical conjuncture (Ciulla, 1995:13) where leadership is practiced i.e. leadership is seen as being enacted when people see there is both effective work done and morally ethical behaviour over time. It has been a conscious choice in this paper to focus on leadership that means something to people; leadership where people think "yes, that's good" without defining what good means. This choice has been a conscious one, as it is felt to bring us closer to describing if there are underlying fundamentals of leadership.

In all of the above, the focus has been on the positive side of leadership; the positive traits, behaviours, relationships. Less attention has been paid to the darker side of the leadership debate – the effect of negative traits, behaviours etc. of leadership on followers and



organisations. The research into this area has often found that wrongful use of power, poor communication and lack of experience are key factors which make leaders appear to be incompetent or ineffective (Kellerman, 2004; Toor, Ogunlana, 2009). Power, authority and influence can as easily be used as badly as they can be used well. Ineffective leadership is present in many organisational settings. The leadership literature has an inherently positive slant (Kellerman, 2004) which hides the basic fact that the same leadership skills, attributes and theories can as easily be used in a manipulative fashion for the benefit of the leader as they can be in a respectful way for the good of a collective.

All these choices will be developed later in the methodology chapter which follows.

## 8. Methodology for the Inductive Research Journey

### 3. Methodology

In the journey to define how I was to answer the research question which we have presented above, and in the journey through writing on the leadership theories already published, the idea came to take a somewhat back-to-front approach to the research. Instead of trying to frame leadership into a “conceptual box” (Daft, Lewin, 1990:3), the research question posed above allowed the researcher to place leadership in the middle of the reality of the individual and to see what happens; to try and capture the phenomenon without a “box”. The wish to look at the act of “good leadership” rather than leadership in general also had implications on the choice of research question and its accompanying methodology.

This meant leaving the results open to building their own frame. Leadership takes place in an interconnected system, its reality built in the individual experience of the event. The choice of storytelling allows an approach which leaves that interconnectedness in place, in context. It thus, for this research, offers a potential greater richness than the traditional interview as we place the subject matter in a holistic experience rather than in a question-response situation.

So the research was based on one main question, with two additional questions which would also serve as control questions:

- Tell me your story about an act of leadership (however great or small) that has made you think “yes, that’s good”. Tell me your story whether you were the leader or whether you experienced it; tell me about how it happened, where it took place and the context within which your story took place
- Two additional questions were put to each participant in the research. Firstly to choose 3-5 words or phrases which, for them would describe good leadership. Secondly, to tell the story about their proudest moment of their own leadership. These questions, as well as providing valuable research data, in a way also acted as control questions in the sense that the information gathered from the other experiences allowed a match to be made to see if there was consistency across the difference stories which resulted in the same data.

This research choice is a challenging one. By not defining the frame, the risk was to finish with a large quantity of information that would be un-analysable. By having one main question, the space was open to a large field of stories. The potential to enhance the understanding of good leadership however was felt to outweigh the possible risks linked to

the control of data. This choice avoids breaking leadership research into smaller and smaller pieces and in doing so potentially missing the understanding of the whole (Calas, Smirich, 1988 cited in Ciulla, 2008). Storytelling has been chosen as the medium for the research in the form of a non-structured interview. Storytelling as a viable research method is discussed in further detail below. The outline of the data-collection process and the risks involved are detailed in Chapter 10.

By approaching the research in this way, this thesis attempts to address some of the typical problems faced in leadership research whereby assumptions are built into leadership research by the researchers and thus colour the outcomes of the research (Hunter et al, 2007). By not pre-defining any leadership assumptions, including that of a definition of leadership, or of good leadership, the aim was to ensure that participants in the research speak about real experiences of leadership. Any research in leadership must include the levels of leader, follower and context. By incorporating and remaining open to these multiple levels, this research tackles the typical criticism of leadership research that “relatively few studies in any of the areas of leadership research have addressed levels-of-analysis issues appropriately in theory, measurement, data analysis and inference drawing” (Yammarino et al. 2005:10).

There has been a conscious choice of the part of the researcher to focus on positive stories. Hunter et al (2007) criticise the field of leadership research for focusing too much on the positive side of leadership and not enough on “bad leadership” or the effects of ineffective leadership or leadership mistakes. They quite rightly point out that “leaders are not infallible and must be viewed as imperfect for the full picture of leadership to be gained” (Hunter et al, 2007:438). However the choice is made here to look at the underlying fundamentals of leadership that have a positive impact on the individual, arguing that it is when these underlying fundamentals are not present that “poor”, “bad” or “wrong” leadership takes place.

This approach is subjective in nature, in that it calls for each individual participating in the research to “tell a story”. The story, as a form, is a construct influenced by the individual and thus subject to that individual’s interpretation of the events around them. Here we would argue that this is the very element which gives this research method its potential. Knowing what good leadership is, and – more importantly - how that meaning is constructed, experienced and shared should enable the construction of an answer to the original research question i.e. what are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow a leader to act and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types.

This approach also aims to tackle one of the fundamental problems of leadership research, that of treating managers as synonymous with leaders (Toor, Ofori, 2008). Many leadership

studies make their choice of subject on the position of the individual in the hierarchy (e.g. a senior manager is chosen for interviewing as a leader where it is their position which designates their participation through their management profile). Despite all the theoretical work on the management versus leadership debate (which has been summarised in Part 1) this “by default” choice of subject leads to a bias in the research. The choice of research method in this thesis avoids this problem as we are asking participants to tell stories of leadership experiences without reference to the hierarchical position of the leader in the story.

## **8.1 Storytelling as a viable research method**

In this section we look at storytelling as a viable research method.

A story is an organised discourse which tells of an event, what the characters did, the context in which the event took place and the outcome of the event (Ralston et al, 2003). Storytelling is an oral tradition, one that has been always with us, that is common across cultures, and which today, even in this technological age, is still a tradition which lies at the centre of how we communicate (Guber, 2007). And that is why storytelling as a research methodology is appropriate to the study of leadership.

The act of leadership can only take place if it is experienced by someone else (known in academic terms as the stakeholder, usually the follower). It is this experience that makes the leadership act a reality, and it is this reality for which we are looking. If we can discover ourselves and reveal that self to others through the stories we tell (Shamir, Eilam, 2005), it is therefore a plausible parallel to be able to understand leadership through the stories told by both leaders and followers (Billsberry et al, 2005; Daft, 1983; Lieblich et al, 1998).

Stories are an expression of events and relationships as perceived and experienced by an individual and thus are an individual's interpretation of their own experience of reality (Widdershoven, 1993). This construction of reality through stories has more to do with meaning than with fact (Shamir, Eilam, 2005). What is important is what people tell i.e. their reality rather than a scientific description of the organisation, event or its context. Thus it is the act of storytelling which “permits researchers to examine perceptions that are often filtered, denied or not in the subjects consciousness during traditional interviews” (Hansen, Kahnweiler, 1993:1394). Some would say that storytelling is the most important and uniquely human process we have (Baskin, 2005). It is the process by which we sort out the world around us and give meaning to our experience. “While thinking is certainly a complex activity, it may not be quite as complex as many believe. There are some essentially quite simple

mechanisms that underlie an important part of the process of thinking. Thinking depends very much on storytelling and story understanding” (Schank, 1995; cited in Down, King, 1999). While Schank wrote in terms of intelligence, his construct relative to stories has been accepted in social science research (Down, King, 1995).

It is argued here that storytelling is a viable means of academic research. Stories are “a fundamental way through which we understand the world” (Berry, 2001). They are a mirror of our understanding of ourselves and a mirror of how we construct our understanding of reality. Stories are valuable not only in how they are told but also in how they are retold (Brown, Duguid, 2000) and many authors would argue that this re-telling is crucial to organizational culture and leadership development (Ready, 2002). Stories serve as points of interaction and also as ways of making sense of events.

Storytelling is close to sensemaking which is defined by Weick et al (2005:409) as involving “turning circumstances into a situation that is comprehended explicitly in words and that serves as a springboard into action”. In this thesis, we side more with the wider aspect which storytelling gives as a research setting. Stories capture the “tacit knowledge or emotional component of knowledge” (Boal, Schultuz, 2007:419). Within organisations, storytelling “is the preferred sense-making currency of human relations among internal and external stakeholders” (Boje, 1991). It is in the creation, telling and retelling of stories that individuals share their reality and they connect that reality with others through the simple act of telling their story.

Storytelling as a research method is not perfect. Language and the stories used are inevitably told to the advantage of the storyteller (Moch, Fields, 1985) which means that any analysis carried out on the stories told must also ensure that the context of the storyteller and their intentions are known. This is the reason for choosing a non context-specific field. By this I mean that the stories gathered in a way which allows the storyteller to choose the context. This should minimise inference of intention by neutralising the context. While not perfect, it is argued that the use of storytelling creates an initial triggering event for the respondent that is largely free from influence of the research or researcher (Billsberry et al, 2005). The fact that the respondents do use their own language ensures that they convey their own sense of their reality. Stories have an essential characteristic of coherence, otherwise they cannot be told (Ibarra, Lineback, 2005). They help us make sense of the reality around us and the actions of others and they shape the construction of our identity (Bird, 2007). They are a way of sharing an individual's personal experience – the challenge is to catch the meaning of the story as it emerges. As Ardent (1968:22) shows “no philosophy, no analysis, no aphorism, be it ever so

profound, can compare in intensity and richness of meaning with a properly narrated story” (cited in Kateb, 2002:330).

There is a proverb that says “one story is good until another one is told” (late sixteenth century). Stories are an individual’s own verbalisation of their experience of reality (Shamir, Eilam, 2005). That is the strength which this research method offers to this thesis. Leadership is not just an act which stands alone, it is an act experienced by the leader, by the follower, by the stakeholders within a context. The story is an expression of the reality of that moment. An individual’s story may change with experience, over time, but in the moment of telling, it represents the current experience of meaning and reality. We pass through history via stories, find meaning through stories, but have yet to find a good leadership story that satisfies our need and that we can share.

The lollipop story in the prologue started the journey of this thesis. Based on the arguments in favour of storytelling as a valuable research method presented in this chapter, it seems to provide a natural fit to the research journey towards good leadership. Thus all the data for the inductive part of the research comes from this source.

## 9. Action research – the Field Study Methodology

### 3. Methodology

This chapter outlines the research question for the field study which took place in order to look at the field applicability of the results of the research to date and the models created. It also presents the methodological research choices.

### 9.1 Defining the Action Research

The question which this thesis has first attempted to answer is what are the underlying fundamentals (if any) of good leadership? The first research question which was posed was what are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?

The answer to this question, which is presented in Part 3, is the Dictionary of Themes which allowed the creation of the Framework of Good Leadership and the initial Model of Good Leadership. While these both held academic value but could they be really applied to a field setting? Had this research, like so much else of the leadership literature, created good knowledge of academic value which had little real application back to the practitioner reality.

The motivation for then taking the results to the practitioner's field was the simple question of whether the academic results could hold up to the test of reality in the field, the practitioner reality found in a multi-national organisation. Could it hold up in reality across cultures and in times of organisational change and challenges? Does the construct presented in the Lollipop Model, which may be academically strong, hold the same strength and a level of practicality in terms of implementation in the real world, in my world?

Thus the action research question which was posed was constructed to look at whether the Framework and Model of Good Leadership described in Part 3 as the initial outcome of the research, have field viability and can they be used to create individual or organisational models of good leadership for practitioners which can be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?

This question began the second phase of research journey from theory to practice.

## **9.2 Decision on the methodological approach for the field research**

To date the research methodology chosen for the inductive research has been designed to limit any assumptions of what good leadership should be, and to allow the model to emerge from the research data. This method has ensured that, to the greatest extent possible, no author assumptions have been integrated into the study. This choice answers an argument in the leadership research field that much of the research design brings with it a number of assumptions (Hunter et al, 2007). Research methodology of the first phase was that of storytelling (Daft, 1983) and this story is encompassed in the Model of Good Leadership which emerges. But does the story hold in field reality.

The methodological choice for this second stage of the research – going to the field - is one based on action research. This method, the roots of which can be traced back to the 1940's and the work of Lewin (Reason, 2005), contains a number of characteristics which suit the research question which the thesis now poses. Action research can be defined as a “participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing....it seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participating with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities” (Reason, Bradley, 2001:1). This definition contains the elements which are considered useful at this stage of the research – of action research being practical, of bringing together many ways of creating knowledge, of involving people and of being an emergent process.

Action research is by definition a participatory process where research is designed and carried out and integrated between participants and researchers (Lingard et al, 2008). It is research that is grounded in context and is an iterative process and this is felt to best reflect both the needs of the research at this point and to ensure a limit to any author bias. Action research also offers the advantage of being able to embrace the tension between local solutions (here the use of one field setting) and the creation of transferable knowledge (the ability to answer the research question of creating a model which can hold across contexts and cultures) which would make the results more generally applicable (Meyer, 2006).

Avison et al (1999) put forward that in order to make academic research relevant, researchers should try out their theories with practitioners in real situations and with real organisations. Action research usually involves four stages – the identification of the research question, the gathering of information to answer that question, the analysis and interpretation of the information and the sharing of results with participants (Berg, 2004).



These four stages are represented by the research question outlined in 13.1, the research journey, the gathering of information and its analysis is dealt with in greater detail in Part 4.

## 10. Data Collection– a form of Internet Blogging and Unstructured Interviews

### 4. Interviews and Online

This chapter sets out the data collection method used in this thesis. It details how the data was collected, from whom, and gives some interesting observations made during the data collection process.

### 10.1 The data sources

Two principle sources of data collection have been chosen – the typical interview method common to most academic qualitative research and an internet website/blog. I am not an internet freak, far from it. But someone said to me once that I should start a website for the lollipop story; after all, most of the world seems to communicate in this fashion. I was intrigued. Collecting qualitative information in a written form is an intriguing challenge, and I felt it would make an interesting parallel to information that is collected face-to-face. While some would challenge that the written story is not as fluid as an oral story, I would argue that the very fact of writing something down means that the structure and forcefulness of the story may be even stronger.

The choice of two data sources has been motivated by:

- The interview method is a standard and accepted part of academic research. Thus the material gained (once the quality is ensured) is easily acceptable and can historically be matched to similar research methods. Thus the results have academic validity.
- The website method, as far as the author is aware, has not been used for a qualitative research data gathering. It challenges various aspects of typical research methods mainly with regard to the quality of the input, as the “interviewee” is in no way directed by the “interviewer” and has the freedom to go in any direction their interpretation of the question takes them. It also places a challenge on an idea of confidentiality – that individuals are influenced in what they say depending on the level of confidentiality. This research website addressed the issued of confidentiality in three key ways. Firstly the website provided a way of submitting a story in a confidential manner. Secondly, the question asked is a positive one; the stories being asked for are of good leadership thus there is no danger to the individual story teller of a possible backlash from the characters involved in the story. Thirdly, we live in an internet world, a world

that has become interconnected through the use of internet. The number of blogs today reflects the very changed attitude towards privacy of information both personal and professional. It has the advantage of taking the potential reach to an audience much wider than any traditional research method, and but this is also its challenge in terms of managing that information.

## **10.2 The choice of one question but 2 possible story lines**

After much consideration, the choice of the research question has been specifically left open to gathering stories in which the individual is either telling a story as a leader or as a follower. This data coming from both points of view was felt to be extremely important. Despite the multitude of leadership research, followership has been largely overlooked – if one looks at the production of books on the subject, there are over 17,000 books on leadership and only 3 on followership (Dearlove, Coomber, 2005). And yet confining the research only to stories from the followership point of view would potentially lose valuable knowledge and insights.

The choice of only three questions in the interview guide is driven by the wish not to colour in any way the interviewee's narration of their experience of leadership, nor what – for them – were the vital elements. This choice of unstructured, autobiographical interviews is made with the aim of giving the space for the implicit meanings of individual stories to emerge.

The data collection was broken down into three parts

1. Descriptive data on the individual – age, sex, years of work experience, current position profile, organisation profile
2. The main research question (around the story of good leadership)
3. Directive question on a maximum of 5 words/phrases to describe good leadership

All three parts were done in both face-to-face interviews and as part of the leadership research website ([www.leadershipstory.org](http://www.leadershipstory.org)) especially created for this thesis called “The Story of Leadership”. A full description of the interview guideline and the website design and content can be found in Section I of the Annexes under Chapters 6 and 7, along with the full transcripts in Section 2 of the Annexes.

To find other people's leadership stories became a passionate adventure into the stories of leadership for all sorts of people, in all different walks of life. This was aided by a rather large personal network that spanned a number of continents.

### **10.3 The Interviews**

The interviews were conducted between December 2009 and April 2010. All interviewees received information on the research beforehand (see Annex 6) and more than 50% had visited the website prior to the interview. In total 31 interviews took place with 5 interviews discarded after transcription and analysis as they did not meet the criteria of “telling a story” (they gave ideas about leadership but the interviewer could not through the interview elicit a story from them). The breakdown was distributed into 16 male and 10 female respondents from 12 different nationalities. All held senior management positions or above. All but two have lived and worked internationally. The full biographical details can be found in Section 1 of the Annexes, Chapter 4.

### **10.4 The stories from the website**

The stories were gathered on the website [www.leadershipstory.org](http://www.leadershipstory.org) which had specially been designed for this research. In total 26 stories were collected. The breakdown was distributed into 10 male and 16 female from 11 different nationalities. These stories came from individuals in all categories of work experience. All but four have lived and worked internationally. Again, the full biographical details can be found in Section 1: Chapter 4.

### **10.5 A surprising turn of events**

The one thing that I had not imagined when launching this research was to find that it was hard for people to come up with stories of good leadership, or to find people who had memories of good leadership experiences.

Typical among the comments I heard when explaining my research were the following - “but I don’t have any stories about good leadership” from someone in their 50’s who has worked all their lives; or “my initial reaction is that I have not experienced great examples of leadership in my own career and have probably offered pretty uninspiring leadership myself” from a senior partner in a famous law firm; or “good stories.....they don't come readily to mind” from a senior manager in an international organisation; or “pour ma part, je n'ai jamais vécu, je crois, de situation de leadership...”<sup>1</sup> from a scientist who has worked for the last 30 years at cutting edge research. From nearly everyone I interviewed the same comments came - that if

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1: Translation: “for my part, I think, I have never lived an experience of leadership”

I wanted stories of bad or poor leadership, they would be easy to recount and endless in number; to please leave them time to think of some good stories before scheduling the interview. Some even refused the interview because the question was too hard. A senior manager of 25 years' experience said "I did not experience much of leadership in my previous positions. Not even in my current position".

Such comments, and the continual manner in which they came, left me somewhat disturbed. One comment from a senior director with more than 30 years' experience about leadership was that leadership "is a beautiful theory, you can read a lot, and of course nowadays it is very fashionable to talk about emotional intelligence ... I said real good leadership I did not fully experience, I did hardly experience, I mean that. I never did find this kind of complete personality" or someone else who said "you could have a good analyst, you could have a good, a brilliant decision maker, you could have a good team worker but I hardly found all the positive ingredients in that one person. There was always lacking something" said by a director of an international organisation.

Why was good leadership such a difficult thing to find in the real world? Was leadership a thing that in reality was an ideal, but which could not be found? Another interviewee (a CEO) said "I've been thirty years now in business and thinking about all the bosses I had and there wasn't a leader among them. And the ones I admire generally ended up letting me down because their ego took over". Why did this disappointment seem to be repeated constantly by the people from various fields with whom I spoke? Why did the difference in nationality (12 different nationalities were interviewed) make no difference to these kinds of replies?

The website received similar comments. The advertising of the website went out to over 3,000 people, and it was a struggle to get the small number of stories figuring in this research paper. Many friends and colleagues promised to add stories but again the question of it being "too difficult" came up over and over again. While one can argue that filling in a form is a lot less inspiring and less conducive to gathering information than an interview setting, however the comments which can back to me were the same as those above. One person wrote "When I actually started to think about leadership – good leadership, true leadership, I was somewhat amazed at how little real leadership I had experienced in my life. By that I mean someone who can inspire, motivate, teach - someone that can make things happen".

Why then do people have so few stories of good leadership? Why does the workplace seem so void of people who have good experiences of leadership? What is failing in our definition of leadership, in our relationship to leaders, in our experience of leadership in the workplace that leaves so many people feeling let down? But that was the interesting challenge of doing the research in this way, in looking for stories of good leadership, and there are 52 stories in

this research as illustrations. One senior medical person said "I have many times I think experienced other people as very good leaders". There was hope!

## 11. Coding protocol

### 5. Coding Protocol

The aim of this chapter is to describe the coding protocol used in this research.

According to Basit the analysis of qualitative data is a "dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorising" (Basit, 2003:143). Coding is a crucial part of qualitative analysis in order to make sense of the data being gathered. There are two principle aims in the building of the coding protocol for this research. The first is to extract the wealth of information from the interviews and stories and put them into a semblance of order. This is done by building the dictionary of themes in an ongoing cumulative manner i.e. the starting list is augmented by the interview transcripts to create the final coding. The second is to see if it is possible to develop an inductively derived theory about the phenomenon of good leadership which can emerge from the research data unhindered by any preconceptions or biases of the researcher.

The coding protocol defined two dictionaries of themes that are used in this research. Firstly a dictionary of themes looking at good leadership in order to analysis the research data from the view of the research question. This process is detailed in Chapter 12. Based on the academic review of the leadership theories presented in Part 1, a second analysis of the research data was carried out to look at the aspect of leadership theories and their relevance in the stories told about good leadership. This is detailed in Chapter 13.

The starting list of themes for the Dictionary of Themes of Good Leadership was built from the literature on leadership which has been reviewed in Part 1, together with the first five interviews carried out. The final list of themes was built in an on-going manner following the review of each of the transcripts as interviews were completed and coded. This approach borrows its theoretical foundation from grounded theory (Glaser, Strauss 1967) in that it builds the coding dictionary in parallel to the research data, allowing for the incorporation of new data along the way. Grounded theory methodologies can be defined as methodologies which "inductively derive frameworks by directly studying the phenomenon of interest. There are distinct advantages to grounded approaches. By coding and categorizing data at a level of analysis closely associated to the phenomenon, the resulting framework 'fits' the reality of the phenomenon. In turn, because the framework fits, it has a high degree of practical usefulness" (Gilliland, 2003:57). This means that the thesis respects the precepts of grounded theory (Thomas, 1998; White, 1998), namely:

- an hermeneutic analysis which breaks down the text into themes which are explored and interpreted
- a content analysis which examines the words/concepts used
- a grounded theory analytical approach which makes a line by line analysis with a constant comparison with the coding dictionary
- a phenomenological approach which identifies themes from participants stories

The approach in this thesis thus takes grounded theory from a more constructivist approach, agreeing with the arguments put forward by Charmaz (2000) in recognising that the researcher is not neutral in the research process. Thus the process of allowing the building of the coding tables to emerge from the results seeks to minimise this influence. One aim of this work is to see if it is possible to develop an inductively derived theory about the phenomenon of good leadership. This thesis has not built the theory *a priori* but rather its aim is to allow any potential theory to emerge during the data collection and analysis process.

At this stage a choice was made not to analyse the structure of the stories as what was being explored were the themes arising from the individual stories and a structural discourse analysis would not be beneficial to the research question.

The various evolutions of this dictionary are presented in Annex1, while Annex 2 presents the dictionary related to leadership theories.



## 12. Coding the Research for the 1st dictionary – Themes of Good Leadership

### 6a. First Dictionary of Themes of Good Leadership

This chapter looks at the coding of the research for the first dictionary of themes - the Themes of Good Leadership. It describes in detail the coding process from the first to the final version of the dictionary of themes.

### 12.1 An overview of the process

Coding stories is not an easy task. Stories, by their very nature, are moments in time retold by the teller, and they don't lend themselves naturally to the very academic process of coding. Though adding difficulty to the task, this was a conscious choice. A story brings a relating of an experience unfiltered by questions which, no matter how well defined, do structure in some way the response to the question. Leadership is something which is experienced in the reality of everyday life and it is the reflection of that experience of the reality of leadership which is sought in this research.

The coding process was built into 2 rounds of coding as outlined below:

- An initial dictionary of themes was built
- All interviews were coded into this dictionary which was expanded when new themes emerged from the transcripts being coded which had not be included in the original initial dictionary
- The resulting coding table was analysed and rebuilt into a final dictionary of themes
- All interviews and stories were coded again according to this final dictionary of themes
- Where there was insufficient information or information that was not clear, both interviewees and website participants were re-contacted for clarification
- 5 interviews were double-coded as a control of the quality of coding (this is detailed in Chapter 14)

A more detailed description of this process is described below. In total there are over 320 pages of transcripts in Times Roman type size 12 which equates to just over 12 pages per

interview, equivalent to approximately 1h 15 minutes of interview length. This can be considered to be appropriate for the quality and depth of the research data.

## **12.2 Round 1 - Building the first dictionary of themes**

This first draft of the dictionary of themes was built using the key themes of leadership from the theory section. These were selected by the researcher and then were added to through the reading of the first five interviews that had been completed. In the initial dictionary, 34 themes were defined. This table can be found in Annex 1.

All 26 interviews were coded according to this initial dictionary of themes. Each line of the interview transcripts was analysed and coded according to the dictionary of themes. Each time a theme of leadership arose which was not covered in the dictionary of themes, a new line was added to the dictionary. At the end of this process, the coding table contained 45 themes. This can be seen in Annex 2 with the original themes in black and the themes added as the first round of coding took place in red.

This produced 26 coded tables, one for each interview (which can be found in Annex Section IX). As the coding progressed, the dictionary of themes was adjusted to include aspects which had not yet been defined (as described above). It became clear during this first round of coding that in order to create a viable final Dictionary of Themes of Good Leadership, the dictionary of 45 themes would have to be re-edited into a final, more appropriate version.

As the dictionary of themes clearly needed review, it was decided at this stage that the stories from the website would only be coded according to the final dictionary of themes and that the interviews would all be re-coded under this final dictionary as well.

## **12.3 Round 2 - Building the final dictionary of themes**

Each of the individual coding tables which had been made in the first round of coding were summarised and analysed. The objective was to see if there was a match between the information in the transcripts and the themes that had been defined in the dictionary of themes as it stood at the end of the first round. This important summary can be found in Annex 3.

Of the 45 themes defined at the end of the first round of coding, four themes found no match whatsoever. These were managing uncertainty, the distinction between leadership and management, power and common sense. 15 categories had only 1 response out of the 26 interviews while a further 22 had 3 or fewer responses. On the basis of this, it was obvious

that the coding table needed a certain amount of refinement and clarification of definition. This led to a process whereby each of the 41 remaining themes (after the 4 themes which had no corresponding information were dropped) were looked at in terms of definition of the theme and the logical sub-themes which they incorporated. This work created the final dictionary of themes against which the interviews were again analysed as well as the stories from the website.

This process of analysis and the changes made (themes added or dropped) is described in detail below. From here, the final dictionary of themes was constructed which contained 23 themes. These 23 themes, their corresponding sub-themes and definitions can be found in Annex 10. This final dictionary of themes was then used to re-code all of the interviews, as well as the stories from the website.

#### **12.4 The themes that were changed between round 1 and the final dictionary of themes of good leadership**

At the beginning of round 1, the dictionary of themes had 34 categories; by the end it had 45. In the analysis of the responses (detailed in Annex 1), several interesting factors came out - the most notable of which was that four themes had no corresponding factors occurring within the research data. These were managing uncertainty, leadership versus management, common sense, and power.

##### ***12.4.1 The themes that were added***

Eleven new themes were added. These were credibility, delegation, respect, balance or managing the whole, empathy, knowledge, service, inspiration, luck, managing change and relationship. Two sub-themes were also added. These were “opening new possibilities” under the theme of space, and “empowering the organisation/group as a whole” under the theme of empowerment.

##### ***12.4.2 The themes that were dropped***

***Managing Uncertainty:*** The fact that managing uncertainty did not arise in any of the interviews as an important aspect of good leadership was a surprise to the researcher. So much of leadership discussion takes this aspect into account, particularly the complexity theories of leadership that for it not to be mentioned at any stage left open some questions. Was uncertainty simply not important, or rather – as the research only focuses on good experience of leadership – do good leaders manage uncertainty in such a way that it is not

an issue? Is a theme of good leadership the actual taking away of uncertainty in a situation? One may be able to say this if the interviews only covered stories from followers, but as there is a fairly even spread of stories from both followers and leaders in the interviews, the fact that managing uncertainty did not arise in any of the transcripts or stories means that either it is not an important aspect of good leadership, that it is enmeshed into other themes, or that good leaders manage uncertainty in such a way as for it to be safe/secure for others. For example if a leader presents a clear vision, a good analysis of the situation, a real presence, good organisation, good communication, builds real teams etc. etc does this diminish the influence of uncertainty of the situation to the point of it becoming a non-issue? On the other hand, could uncertainty now be such a part of the daily working environment that it no longer becomes something unusual? As there are no references to managing uncertainty in the research data, and taking into account the fact that managing uncertainty is considered to be a key aspect of leadership (Ng, 2009), the researcher considers, based on experience, that the probable reason for this is that if good leadership is present in the other themes outlined, then this by default manages the aspect of uncertainty.

**Leadership versus management:** This was added to the dictionary of theme as a bit as a challenge by the researcher to see if people made the distinction or mixed the two. They did not. None of the interviewees focused on the day-to-day management tasks and all clearly had their own concept of leadership. In the classical academic debate caught so well in Zaleznik's title over 30 years ago "Managers and Leaders – are they different?" (Kaleznik, 1977), so much is still written about this topic. Personally I stand with those for whom "leadership" and "management" comprise two different groups of tasks, but who consider that leaders must manage, while managers must also lead the teams they manage. The non-response to this theme seems to indicate that the research data shows that this is not an issue for consideration when looking at good examples of leadership as respondents were clearly able to differentiate a leadership story from other aspects of management.

**Common sense:** This was a theme added by the researcher as experience shows that it is a quality frequently used. However there was no mention of this in any of the research data so it was dropped.

**Power:** The fact that the word "power" was practically not used (and found no match in reference to the definition of the theme of power) once in over 300 pages of transcripts was rather interesting. Is this a reflection of the fact that the research focus is on good examples of leadership? Perhaps it is the reflection of Tromenaars and Voerman's (2009) argument that the leader as the symbol of power is a model which is disappearing. Does good leadership automatically imply a "good" use of power in such a way that the trust and respect

and real leadership present in the situation means that the power of the leader becomes a non-issue for both the leaders and the followers? Is this a reflection of Follett's "right use of power" as we have discussed in early chapters?

Whilst all four themes are discarded in the construction of the final dictionary of themes, they will be retaken again in the final analysis. The lack of response perhaps says as much about good leadership as a few responses in the research data.

### **12.4.3 Changes that were made**

The following commentary indicates the changes made from the dictionary of themes at the end of round one and the final dictionary of themes:

**Analysis:** The sub-theme of analysis termed "seeing the big picture" in retrospect was felt to mirror the theme of "globality" under "vision" so these 2 themes were merged under "vision".

**Being positive:** This theme was moved to become a sub-theme of positive energy. It was felt to be more appropriate under this theme.

**Choices:** The section on "giving choices" was altered to better fit the reality of the data. The initial idea had been to look at whether within the act of good leadership, one theme was the ability of the leader to give choices in a situation, and then support those choices or whether the leadership was more of a directive or authoritarian nature. Further into the analysis of the research data was one theme added which was that of "balancing or managing the whole". It was decided to group these aspects together to reflect how good leadership balanced the managing the whole of the organisation. Within that balancing is found how choices are made, instructions given and how change was managed.

**Collective good:** When this theme arose in transcripts, it invariably was linked to a sense of service whether internal to the organisation, its people, its mission or to the external environment. Thus it was moved to "service".

**Communication:** The final dictionary features a change of language in this section to offer a clearer focus on the communication flow in sub-theme 1 (looking at the kind of communication taking place). Sub-theme 4 (being clear/giving clear instructions) was moved to the theme of "balancing/managing the whole" as it was felt to better reflect the reason for the communication rather than the quality communication itself. Closely linked to the communication flow and its quality, is the basic fact of sharing information. The old cliché of "information is power" often echoes around the walls of leadership discussions but in this research the sharing of information appears to be a minor issue, explained by the fact that if

the quality of the communication flow is present, information is by default shared. Hence these 2 aspects were merged.

**Consistency:** Was moved as a sub-theme of confidence, as consistency was seen to inspire confidence.

**Credibility:** Was integrated into confidence in terms of consistency shown over time.

**Delegation:** In the initial table this was a theme in itself but after study it was felt to be better reflected under theme 4, sub-theme “giving clear instructions”.

**Empowerment:** The sub-theme of “seeing individual qualities and developing them” was seen in hindsight to mirror totally that of “developing your people” under “team”; the latter seemed to be a more appropriate location for this theme.

**Humour:** Was moved to become a sub-theme of positive energy to reflect the information given that humour was linked to the positive energy which a leader brings into a situation.

**Inspiration:** Was moved to become a sub-theme of positive energy as it was felt to more naturally sit under this theme.

**Intelligence and knowledge:** These two themes were merged. Intelligence can be defined a mental ability, a power of learning, a quickness of understanding while knowledge can be defined as knowing, as the acquaintance with facts (Oxford English Dictionary). These two aspects reflected in the transcripts were found to be used together – knowledge without intelligence was incongruent in leadership.

**Listening:** In the initial table this was a theme in itself but in light of the research data it was felt to be better reflected as a sub-theme under communication.

**Loyalty:** Was moved to a sub-theme of confidence as this reflected more precisely the fact that loyalty was linked with confidence and consistency in the leadership.

**Luck:** Was moved to a sub-theme of “presence” as it was carried in the presence of the leader.

**Managing change:** This was moved to become a sub-theme of “balance/managing the whole”.

**Motivation:** Clearly respondents felt that motivation was an important factor of what a leader brought to a situation. As it reflected the energy a leader brought, it was moved to a sub-theme of “positive energy”.

**Organising:** This entire theme was changed. Initially this theme was looking to the more “management” side of leadership defined as the organising and giving of structure to the vision being set out. These were merged into the themes of “team” as the ability to organise or structure work reflected a common sense of purpose in the way of working together.

**Prioritisation:** This was moved to “decision making” as it was felt that making priorities is essentially an act of decision making.

**Quality Control:** This was merged under how the leader takes responsibility for the team and their work.

**Relationship:** This theme had looked at whether there was a real relationship between leader and follower. This was felt to be more appropriate under the theme of presence so was moved to this theme.

**Resources:** This had been added to the original list as a feature of good leadership, which was a new idea. In the subsequent analysis of the interviews, it was felt that this aspect would be more appropriate if it was integrated under “empowering the organisation as a whole” as a sub-theme of “empowerment”.

**Responsibility:** The third sub-theme under responsibility looked at the whether the leader gave appropriate responsibility to others. This section was merged with that of “giving choices” under theme 4. It was felt that the giving of choices and the appropriate responsibility to carry out those choices fitted together.

**Support:** This theme was originally defined in terms of the support that followers felt from their leaders. In the analysis of the responses, it was seen that the idea of giving support to staff was inextricably linked to the giving of choices and the delegation of appropriate authority which meant that followers felt supported. Thus this theme was moved to the theme “balancing/managing the whole”.

**Team:** The sub-theme of “coaching” was merged with the leadership role of developing a team, as the coaching role in fact was crucial in terms of the leader’s ability to recognise individual skill and to develop it.

**Time and Space:** The idea of being present and giving time and space to others was moved to the theme “presence”. The replies showed that this theme was directly linked to the presence which a leader had and brought to a situation.

**Transparency:** In the initial table this was a theme in itself but after studying the transcripts, it was felt to be better reflected as a theme of fairness.

**Sense as a sub-theme of Vision-** This sub-theme was integrated with the sub-theme vision.

These make up the changes which were applied to the dictionary of themes at the end of round 1, in order to create the final dictionary of themes. By building the dictionary of themes in this way, the reality of the data was able to influence, as directly as is possible, the construction of the dictionary.

## 12.5 The final dictionary of themes

Based on the analysis outlined above, the final dictionary of themes listing the themes of good leadership was as follows:

	Themes of Good Leadership
1	Action
2	Analysis
3	Authenticity
4	Balance / Managing the whole
5	Communication
6	Confidence
7	Courage
8	Culture
9	Decision making
10	Empathy
11	Empowerment
12	Fairness
13	Honesty
14	Knowledge / Intelligence
15	Positive energy
16	Presence
17	Respect
18	Responsibility
19	Service
20	Team
21	Trust
22	Values
23	Vision

*Table 2: The 23 themes of Good Leadership*

This dictionary gives us our first glance at the themes of good leadership emerging from this research. Based on the final dictionary of themes as outlined above (the full dictionary and its corresponding definitions can be found in Annex 1.4) all the transcripts from the interviews and the stories from the website were coded into this dictionary. These results of the coding can be found, in full, in Annex Section III.



## 13. Coding the Research for the 2nd dictionary – Leadership Theory

### 6b. Dictionary of Themes of Leadership Theory

This chapter details the coding work undertaken for the second dictionary of themes focused on leadership theories.

### 13.1 Coding Leadership Theory

Based on the theoretical work presented in Chapter 1 on leadership theories and the further discussion which took place in Chapter 2 regarding these theories in practice, it was felt by the researcher to be of value to use this theoretical data in juxtaposition to the research field data to find the real place and use of leadership theories in the field. This meant the construction of a second dictionary of themes which was built on the basis of the leadership theories presented in Chapter 1 of the research. This dictionary can be found in Annex 2.

The aim of this round of coding regarding leadership theories was to see if, within the reality of people talking about good examples of leadership in practice, there was any reference that could be linked to one or other of the main theoretical concepts of leadership which had been outlined in the theory section and listed in Table 1. Its value and interest was to see if any of the leadership theory work was reflected in reality in terms of speech or of use of concepts. This was also motivated by the fact that 43 out of the 52 respondents were senior people within their organisations and therefore had been exposed to high-level leadership training and development and thus various theories of leadership. The objective of this coding was also to see if there could be a validation (or indeed invalidation) of the choices which had been made in terms of the various theories which had been included and excluded from Table 1.

### 13.2 The dictionary of themes of leadership theory

The full dictionary of themes for leadership theory can be found in Annex 1. It traces exactly the leadership theories presented in Table 1 which was built from the study of the leadership literature and builds questions, based on each theory, with which to analyse the interviews.

The coding process entailed coding each of the interviews to identify references to leadership theories which have been described in the theoretical part of this research. This was done by reading the transcripts (see Annex Section VI) and marking each of the aspects

of leadership theory that appeared. These were coded into direct and indirect references. The full summary results can be found in Annex Section 1.

After initial work on coding the stories from the website, it was found that there was not enough information to code them to a satisfactory degree. Rather than presenting results which showed the appearance of no leadership theories (of the first 10 stories coded, no results were found), it was decided only to focus on the transcripts from the interviews for this coding.

The discussion regarding the implications of this research data are discussed further in Part 3.

## 14. Double-Coding of the research

This short chapter describes the double-coding process, which aims to strengthen the validity of the research data presented in this thesis.

A double coding was undertaken in order to assess the validity of the coding process. The coding undertaken by the researcher was double-coded in two stages. The first was to take one interview and undertake a double coding. This was done by the professor supervising this thesis. Then a random selection of 4 interviews was given to another individual along with the dictionary of themes in order to undertake a double-coding. This job was undertaken by a holder of a PhD who is currently Director of Human Resources for a large state organisation.

The following table shows the summary of the results of the double coding.

Interview Number	Items matching	Codes matching
2	81%	80.6%
3	83%	80.95%
5	81.2%	83.9%
13	82.4%	80%
26	83.3%	81.5%

*Table 3: Results of the Double Coding*

The complete results of this double-coding can be found in Annex 11. From this we can conclude that the coding of the research is at an acceptable level.

## **PART 3: BUILDING THE FRAMEWORK OF GOOD LEADERSHIP**

*If we do discover a complete theory, it should be in time understandable in broad principle by everyone. Then we shall all, philosophers, scientists, and just ordinary people be able to take part in the discussion of why we and the universe exist.*

*Stephen Hawking*

## Introduction to Part 3

Part 3 looks at the research results and aims to bring together the information gathered into a logical framework.

It starts by discussing, the research findings under the 23 themes which were defined from the Dictionary of Themes of Good Leadership. Based on this discussion, Part 3 then sets out to build a landscape map of the research findings and presents this idea in detail in what is termed as the initial “Model of Good Leadership”.

It then goes on to discuss these 23 themes in relation to the top 5 attributes given during the interviews. This allows the research results to be tested in relation to a different set of research data, thus strengthening its validity.

From here the research question of this thesis was defined - to see if there are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. The challenge, to approach the research question in an open way, had an inherent risk of ending with data that would not form any useable conclusion. This risk was felt to be worth taking in view of the potential it offered to find some underlying fundamentals of good leadership. Part 2 presented the research process and methodology and detailed the evolution of the dictionary of themes used to code the research. The resulting data generated by this research was discussed in detail in Part 3, and a framework representing the 23 themes of good leadership was defined as an outcome of this research.

Part 3 undertakes a further testing of the validity of the research findings by comparing the Framework of Good Leadership themes to some selected interview transcripts and to similar tables of attributes of leadership published in the research of five well-known leadership authors.

Part 3 then retakes the research data and complements the research analysis by a fourth round of coding which focuses on the underlying aspects of each of the stories. It presents and discusses these underlying fundamentals mentioned in relationship to good leadership and which emerged from the stories told. It then takes the Framework of Good Leadership presented and discusses it in relationship to the 6 underlying fundamentals of good leadership which this research sets out.

Finally, a model which consolidates all the research findings on good leadership presented which is termed the Model of Good Leadership and its initial implications are presented.



## 15. The Key Themes of Good Leadership - The Results of the Coding process

### 7. Final Dictionary of Good Leadership

This chapter discusses the results of the coding process and based on this, offers a description of each of the themes based on what emerged from the research data. These results are discussed under the 23 headings in the final dictionary of themes, ordered alphabetically. The detailed analysis of each can be found in 10.

As a reminder, the 23 themes are as follows:

Themes of Good Leadership			
1	Action	14	Knowledge / Intelligence
2	Analysis	15	Positive energy
3	Authenticity	16	Presence
4	Balance / Managing the whole	17	Respect
5	Communication	18	Responsibility
6	Confidence	19	Service
7	Courage	20	Team
8	Culture	21	Trust
9	Decision making	22	Values
10	Empathy	23	Vision
11	Empowerment		
12	Fairness		
13	Honesty		

Table 4: The 23 themes of Good Leadership (repeated)

The definitions of the 23 themes presented below have been built from what has emerged from the research data.

[Note: the text boxes in the following pages contain quotes from the interview transcripts. Each quote is presented with a number representing the interview, or when that number is preceded with an “s” representing the story from the website. The second number represents the line number from the transcript. These transcripts can be found in Annexes Section IV and V (for those marked with an “s”). The full coding results can be found in Section III. For the sake of fluidity of reading, word repetitions or word fillers (such as “like”, “you know”) have been removed in this chapter from the quotes.]

### 15.1 The 23 themes of Good Leadership

#### **Action**



Action describes bringing the right ingredients into a situation in order to drive things forward, in order to ensure action towards the agreed result. Action encompasses the idea of leadership which is focused, which has movement, which moves vision, ideas, organisations, groups forward. In this respect it is fundamental to any kind of good leadership.

### ***Analysis***

Here analysis refers to the ability to analysis a situation while at the same time being able to open up new avenues or choices through the analysis of future possibilities. Analysis is seen as an essential capacity for the creation of an appropriate vision, for making a decision, or for an ability to see right for the current situation. This definition making analysis an important starting point which weaves with many of the other themes to make good leadership act. We will return to this idea later.

“Leadership isn’t about what you are expected to deliver within your role. It is about taking fuller responsibility when your skills and your perspective let you see things others can’t; it is about assessing the risks and possibilities; it is about communicating effectively what you see; and designing with others a way forward.” (s2:26).

### ***Authenticity***

Authenticity describes the ability of a leader to be genuine in what they do and say and whether their actions are in line with how they present themselves.

Throughout the stories told in this research, leaders were not those that knew it all, or were brilliant – they were those that were real, authentic, congruent with what they did and who they were. Being real, having strengths and weaknesses, knowing the self and being congruent with that self, no matter what leadership “style” is used – that seems to represent people’s experience of authenticity in good leadership.

“You have to really, to be, to live what you are asking the others to be” (5:89)

### ***Balance / Managing the whole***

Balance describes the ability to balance the needs, objectives, outcomes, resources for all aspects of the organisation and its staff in a particular direction. By achieving clarity in this aspect, change can be managed.

Good leaders are able to balance the resources they have with the work at hand and the needs required by the vision/objective to be achieved. Within this theme is the continual presence of the idea of seeing the “big picture” and acting accordingly. This balance also meant that followers felt that they are an active participant in the evolving work being undertaken. Good leadership gives clarity and choices while at the same time gives vision and insight and clarity and can help the organisation

“Life itself is profoundly out of balance most of the time, but what you can do is redress, and that’s what you’ve to be always trying to do. Where is the system weak, how can I strengthen it. Where is it strong, how can I empower it” (4:140). “its about taking fuller responsibility when your skills and your perspective let you see things others can’t; it is about assessing the risks and possibilities; it is about communicating effectively what you see; and designing with others a way forward” (s3:26). “he was a courageous leader – he implemented change, looking at the bigger picture, and he truly seemed to believe in the need to do the best thing for the organisation, rather than the best move for his own career” (s18:25).

evolve. Achieving the balance between these is good leadership. Importantly the research shows that if this is in place, the ability of a leader and the organisation to manage change is vastly improved and allows change to become a normal part of organisational life.

### **Communication**

Communication refers to the ability to listen and to ensure an appropriate flow of communication in all directions.

If listening is the “key for leaders who would be heard” (Hesselbein, 2006), then the research here agrees fully. Good leaders listen well, and facilitate listening in others. Listening presents itself in this research as a linking skill, linking the leader to their people and vice versa. The research results showed that an importance is placed on the communication flow between leader and follower, both in terms of the existence of such a flow in both directions (leader to follower and follower to leader) and the quality of such communication. Communication undertaken by leaders has a role in the sharing of vision and the giving of direction. The quality of communication exists in not just the message but in how that message is shared, how the communicator respects those with whom they are communicating, how the communication is lived. Communication flow calls for quality in open, honest, respectful and competent communication. The quality of the communication is based in respect and when that respect is present in the communication, the research showed that the flow seemed to be present and appropriate.

“Communication is enormous, it's enormous that ability to inspire” (12:30).

“if leading is a daily practice, I think the ability to listen I think would be a paramount quality or attribute or practice” (19:191).

### **Confidence**

Confidence refers to the confidence that a leader carries which allows them to inspire confidence in others, and their consistency, credibility and integrity over time which allows others to be confident in them.

A leader inspired confidence by ensuring that they and others know and understand what the task is, what is its purpose, know the context, know what they are leading and who they are leading inspires confidence in others. Confidence covered a range of aspects like belief in others, allowing mistakes, and having more to offer than perhaps what is needed at any one moment. Confidence was often instilled by the confidence offered by the leader to others, it inspires trust. Confidence was also supported by leaders who were credible, who stayed credible over and who were consistent (both in substance and coherency) over time.

“if you accept the knowledge of the one who leads you, the professionalism and you see and feel that it matters to him, that you matter to him and he wants to achieve the goal together with the group and not alone and that's probably what gives you the trust to follow” (5:41).

Good leadership demands that leaders are aligned and consistent in everything that they say and do and it is this which inspires confidence in a leader.

### ***Courage***

Courage describes the ability to do what is right and to instil in others a desire to do what is right.

Courage in leadership, the research showed, was the ability to look at the big picture, to take decisions that were best for the whole organisation rather than any personal self-interest. Courage in leadership was seen in upholding common values and in the congruence with words and actions. Courage they say is the leadership characteristic that informs and strengthens all others (Treasurer, 2009).

Courage is both the ability "to do what is right and the ability to instil in others a desire to do what is right" (s6:4).

### ***Culture***

Culture as a theme of leadership refers to, from the research, the adaptation of the actions of leadership so that they can be understood.

This requires that leaders ensure that their actions, as leaders, is grounded in informed practice and is reflective of the shared and collective historical and social experience of those they are leading and of the context in which they are operating. Leaders must integrate this as a daily practice. The local environments, the cultural environment, the organisational environment, the team diversity all have an impact on leadership and thus leaders must adjust their practice appropriately in order for them to be understood.

"their practice, prescription or direction, as leaders is grounded in informed practice and is reflective of our shared and collective historical and social experience" (s5:76).

### ***Decision making***

Decision making here describes the ability to make decisions and the ability to prioritise and manage the decisions made.

Good decision making in leadership involves appropriate consultation, taking a balanced view and then making a decision. Decision making, the research shows, is in part about the ability to actually make a decision but it is also about the ability to make the decision in a way that is understood and appropriately inclusive and is also about the ability to communicate that decision so it is understood. Equal in importance in good leadership to the making of decisions, is ensuring the action which those decisions require. The research would seem to indicate that the ability to make priorities is actually a reflection of the ability to put decisions into action.

Leadership is not an academic exercise but rather needs someone able to make a decision (2:59).

## ***Empathy***

Empathy refers to the ability to identify oneself with others, to see what they are able to do and what their potential can be.

This emerged from the research as a major aspect of good leadership. Empathy is linked to listening, the quality of relating to others, being present to the people around, about sharing in a way that was felt and can carry the group through the difficult times.

"There's an aspect of love about it as well, that unless you have a positive regard for the people that you work with and a positive regard for the people you serve then you can't really exercise good leadership because then your leadership turns into an authoritarian thing or oppressive thing" (8:204).

## ***Empowerment***

Empowerment describes the ability to recognise what others can bring and to empower them to do so.

The essence of good leadership would seem, from the research, to entail the ability see the actual and potential skills of individuals and to be able to empower that by giving it the appropriate space. Good

"Good leaders see the people who work with them and for them as whole human beings, and that their workplace is a part of a whole tapestry of life which people are living (13:97).

leaders were seen to be the ones who trusted, who encouraged, who were capable of being present with their staff, of giving them trust and the space to develop. Good leaders seem to be able to manage to create this feeling of individual relationship no matter how big the team. This implies the giving not just of responsibility but also the giving of the authority to use this responsibility. Good leadership, it seems, is not just about the recognition by the leader of the qualities and capacities of their followers but is about the power that they invest in their followers to carry forward the vision. This role has within it both the giving of power to others to act and the freedom to exercise their roles, their own judgement and skills and at time make mistakes. Such leaders give their staff a wider territory to act within, stretching their capacities and ensuring their growth. The key seems to lie in the leader's ability to challenge their staff while at the same time trusting them, of offering the power and the space to exercise that power. Doing so empowers the organisation/group as a whole and had an important role in balancing and managing the "whole" as was discussed above. The research would indicate that really good leadership empowers whatever space, and the people therein, for which the leader has taken responsibility.

"what she did was challenge us to stand in a different part of the world and see how we would see things from there and to go into different kinds of situations where the knowledge we already had wouldn't serve us well and you had to find a new way – she believed strongly, you see, in the fact that if you throw in your lot all the time with the same people.....you won't learn anything new (4:210).

## ***Fairness***

Fairness refers to being fair and transparent, in a balanced way, in all actions undertaken.

Within this theme are the aspects of fairness (is there a perceived fairness in the leadership and a sense of justice) and linked to that is the aspect of transparency (is there transparency in the leader's way and in their decision making).

"fairness doesn't mean everybody gets the same, but rather that everybody gets what's right for them in their own terms. This means that people had to trust him to know what was right for each staff member" (14:128).

## ***Honesty***

Honesty describes the integrity with which leadership acts.

"I think if you're trusting and you're honest with people generally everybody gets it and they come back and are just as honest with you as well, which is really important" (12:177).

## ***Knowledge / Intelligence***

Knowledge refers to the ability to bring experience, intelligence and know-how into a situation.

People valued leaders who were skilful, knowledgeable and capable. Good leaders were seen to be highly intelligent as well as being competent in their area of work. Knowledge gives validity and a foundation from which to lead and is this ability to bring experience, intelligence and knowledge into a situation which gives leadership its grounding, its gravitas.

## ***Positive energy***

Positive energy describes the ability to bring motivation, inspiration, energy and sense of humour to a situation.

Good leaders bring energy to a situation, indeed are often the energy which moves a system. This is felt, experienced and crucial to a team. The personal motivation which a leader brings to their own jobs, the research showed, seemed to get reflected throughout the whole organisation, it seems to catalyse the attention and energies of the group and give power to the direction taken.

"this is why the concept of leadership is so powerful. It creates intrinsic motivation to follow, to give and to sacrifice, which in turn leads to the action of striving towards goals in a more committed and dedicated way, which invariably leads to the achievement of great things" (s2:47).

Inspiration catches the imagination, it inspires people in a direction, it brings passion; the leader through their words, actions, attitude and power inspires others. It creates energy and movement. The leader is a role model; the attitude, energy, determination, enthusiasm, passion a leader brings affects the whole organisation. To bring a positive attitude to the daily work, to the things that have to be done, to the way objectives are set and goals achieved was a theme of good leadership. This "positiveness" of a leader, the research showed, was infectious and brought energy into the system. Finally a sense of humour comes up often – it is needed no matter what the occasion, and funnily enough more needed

when things are going wrong as opposed to when things are going right. A sense of humour is about meeting the context of the workplace in a real way and at the right level. It is about the leader's ability and indeed responsibility to intervene and the way in which that is done.

### **Presence**

Presence describes the impact of the physical presence of a leader and how they create, affect, move in and lead the space around them.

The individual presence a leader holds has meaning when it is felt and affects those around them. Presence affects the space in which a leader moves. Throughout the stories, it was not a "big personality" type of presence that was shown, but rather a presence of someone who was very much at one with themselves,

"the way that he just walked into the office, and the first time, the first day and every day and the way he was with people throughout, just made everybody feel very calm and confident and were with him. And it was what he said but really it was just the way that he sort of wore the mantle of responsibility" (11:109).

who seemed to understand the people and the situation and ensure a calmness that spread around the organisation even in times of crisis. Presence, the research showed, is fundamentally about being congruent with oneself and respecting others. These are the ones who lead by example, walking the talk but inspiring along the way. Presence allows something more, leadership that has no followers but partners.

Leaders with presence are present both in time and space, which allowed the leadership act to exist, ensures understanding of team and context and of the needs. It is here that the listening can take place and relationships be formed. It is an investment on the part of the leader, but it is the foundation for allowing a lot of the other themes we have mentioned to take place.

"that you [as a leader] have a strong sense of what it is that you are leading, the intention of what it is that you are leading and that's embodied in you, as you walk, as you speak, as you interact with people, as you make offers; that intention is in your body and it's clear for everybody to see. I think that's one of the things that make people attractive as leaders, fundamentally" (13:90).

Luck is embodied in the presence that an individual carries with them and in the outlook they bring to events. Perhaps there are those who can create their own luck, some perhaps are just lucky, but those who are unlucky are unlikely to be leaders.

### **Respect**

Respect refers to the level of consideration a leader shows towards the sense of worth of others.

Leaders have both a role in respecting those around them, but also in inspiring respect for all and from all within the context. Respect appears in all aspects of the relationship between leaders and followers. It can be about the respect for their engagement, in terms of managing their performance or simply respect in terms of communication, in terms of how people are brought together and

"respect for everybody who shares the enterprise of which you are a leader. Most people choose their enterprise whether it's a religious congregation or a school career or whatever it is because they want to do good. So profound respect for the good they want to do and can do" (4:229).

interact together. Respect is a generosity of spirit, a motivating with care and came out of the research data as a basis for the good stories.

### **Responsibility**

Responsibility refers to the state or fact of having to deal with something.

Leaders take on responsibility at a number of different levels. They have a responsibility for themselves, for how they are and for what they are leading; they have a responsibility to and for the team, and they have a responsibility for the quality and control processes to ensure objectives are met as set out in the vision of the organisation.

"I'll never forget that she took responsibility for her actions and didn't place the blame elsewhere. That's leadership. Being responsible for the decisions you take and giving credit to others when it's due" (s24:20).  
"that it's a responsibility to look after that rather than just to blame. As a senior person you are responsible for a team" (13:69).

The responses in this section focused on the idea of responsibility of the self, rather than responsibility to know the self, showing the importance in good leadership of taking responsibility in a real way, of the ones actions and their consequences. The main element in this theme is that of taking responsibility for the team, of the work and but taking responsibility for the collective overall good of the team. With this responsibility go words like trust and confidence. By taking a leadership role, a person automatically also takes on the accountability for that of which they are the leader. Good leaders accept that they have a responsibility at all levels of the organisation and for all aspects of its work, its quality, its outputs, its people and the outcomes. The leader must ensure that those members within the team deliver a quality of work which reflects the vision and direction set. If this is not the case, then there is a problem not only of output but also of perceived fairness.

### **Service**

Service describes whether there is a sense of service present and experienced in the act of leadership.

Good leadership was seen incorporating a sense of service which leads to becoming something bigger and better than before; the idea that the leader is there to serve the team, to be there to support, to guide, to lead. It is an ability to see, and act upon, what is right for the collective whole, the actions taken, the products made, the impact of the organisation. This, it seems, is leadership that inspires.

"leadership is about service, it's not about being looked up to as the leader, but it's about actually putting yourself in that place where you become the one who serves" (8:201).

### **Team**

Team describes the ability of a leader to build a team, to give it a common sense of purpose and direction and to have it work together.

Creating and building a team takes time, it is an investment on the part of a leader. Building teams has an aspect of leadership foresight in choosing the right people to work together, in making the right “mixture” so that it works well. Good leaders recognise that the power to get things done lies in the team and not in themselves and they empower what they build and this is what gives the team

“the capacity to create a team, a leadership team, to draw people in to the leadership process and to recognise the gifts of those people, to encourage the gifts of those people, to help draw out and develop the gifts of those people, so that within their leadership, leaders were being created” (8:28).

strength. Good leaders know their people, have an ability to listen, to know their capacities and build on them. Good leaders see individual qualities and develop them, are educators where followers develop their skills, their autonomy, and their knowledge; they address underperformance and demonstrate real leadership as followers experience this investment and have the space and support to grow and develop. Importantly in this theme is leadership which gives a common sense of purpose of direction and create the ability to work as a team. Leadership is a constant process of backing a team, supporting and guiding them, giving space for success and failures and moving forward from there.

### ***Trust***

Trust describes the confidence which is generated by the act of leadership.

Good leadership is a process of trust – a leader has to be trusted, and in turn has to be able to trust and give trust to their followers.

“A leader is not necessarily to be loved at all, is not to be admired. A leader is to be trusted” (2:63).

This in turn is a basis for building motivation and being able to move together towards achieving a goal. Good leaders seem to show an extraordinary level of trust in their followers, in their teams. That trust builds the space in which people can grow and expand; it brings teams together. It is also demanding of the leader and demands a sharing of power in a fundamental way.

### ***Values***

Values as a theme refers to the values which are held by the leader and which are visible to others.

“You need to be a role model for something, you have to stand for values, you have to be recognisable as something” (1:171).

Leaders represented a certain number of values – those values need to be explicit and be recognised by followers as attractive. Leaders must be rigorous about the values that they hold and that they hold their team to the same set of values and be consistent over time.



## **Vision**

Vision describes the ability to give clarity of sight to the goal which is to be achieved, giving direction to that goal and ensuring

The offer that a leader makes is one of being able to formulate and share a vision of how the future could be, will be, and the belief that there is potential around the team to get there. That process of being able to communicate the idea, to show the vision is central to good leadership; it must build a vision, and be able to give a sense of the route to achieve that vision. The ability of a leader to create, hold and share a vision is their ability to see where in the future the team or organisation should be and to be able to formulate how to get there. Real vision has a role to expand horizons. It is that clarity

of vision that gives leadership power and strength. But vision alone is not enough, it must be accompanied by actions are consistent with that vision and make sense over time. Good leaders continually demonstrate the ability to keep energy in the vision, to keep direction and to continually motivate others towards that vision.

Globality is the more reflective side of vision. Good leaders need to be able to continually be reflective, to stand back and contemplate the whole picture to ensure a correct evolution within the context. It is that depth and clarity of vision that gives leadership power and strength. Globality of vision, i.e. the ability to see the whole of the context and the place of the defined vision within that context, is essential. It is this depth that creates the viable action in order to continually looking forward.

"The key word for leadership is vision, you have to have a vision to know where you go and you have to be able to communicate [that vision]" (23:5).

"there have to be ways to keep sharpening up that vision. People's vision gets tired and one of the most rewarding things about any of the leadership things I've been a part of, have been the moments when, as a result of a workshop or meetings or whatever, that you can see it happening in front of your eyes you know that people are getting excited again about doing what they're doing or being where they are" (4:235). S

"be some way contemplative, some way reflective, able to stand back and have quiet time and process what's happened and separate what's at the core from all the peripheral stuff, so that you don't go back in the next day with your agenda much smaller than it should be" (4:246).

### **15.2 The 23 themes - an interim summary**

The 23 themes of good leadership which have been described in detail above make up the results of the data analysis from the 52 interviews and stories told according to the Dictionary of Themes of Good Leadership. The full analysis can be found in Annex Section 1. All 23 themes are clearly themes of good leadership and their validity will be further discussed in Chapter 17.

But what do these 23 themes of good leadership offer us? In order to answer this question, the following chapter will look at what this data offers in determining if there are underlying fundamentals of good leadership and whether these themes can be modelled into a useful framework.

## **16. Building of a landscape map of the results according to the research**

This chapter sets out to build a landscape map of the results from the analysis of the data which has been presented in Chapter 16 and brings the research work to build a *Framework of Good Leadership*.

### **16.1 Putting a framework on the research results**

The research set out to look for stories of good leadership; by default it meant looking for “good experiences” of leadership and not necessarily effective leadership *per se*. Leadership that was real to the person who was telling the story, leadership that was experienced as being good leadership. In all the stories collected good experiences of leadership gave, in effect, good and effective leadership - an interesting point! And so in the analysis of the interviews and the stories, the challenge that was set at the beginning of the research - of seeing if a set of underlying fundamentals or constructs of good leadership could be found – started to take form and from the discussion of the research data that has taken place in Parts 2 and 3 of this thesis, the challenge in this chapter is one of seeing if a landscape map (Endrissat et al, 2005) of good leadership could be built.

This research started with a story about lollipops and has journeyed through the stories of many others, in many places and through many contexts around the world, stories of good leadership.

In studying the 23 themes of good leadership which have arisen from the research data, and in placing them in the context of the stories told, there appeared to be three categories into which these themes fell, which represented the various levels on which good leadership appears to operate. These three categories or levels of good leadership are:

- Self – the leader as a person and the qualities they hold
- Group – the group of people that the leader brings together and is responsible for
- Context – the vision which is formulated and held in a particular context

This is a useful starting point to build on through this discussion to see if in fact we can build a landscape map of good leadership. These three levels are the foundations upon which the act of leadership must solidly construct in order to be experienced as good leadership. The

research would appear to show that leadership must be present at all three levels in order for good leadership to actually take place.

Table 5 below describes the definitions of the 23 themes of good leadership in the Dictionary of Themes and attributes them to the three levels upon which good leadership should be constructed. One may notice from the list that one of the themes is missing in the list, that of action – this is because action falls (or underpins the elements) at all three levels. Action is defined as the ability of the leader to bring the necessary energy into a situation to drive things forward, to move something towards a result. This definition is needed at all three levels, as without action the most authentic self, the best team or the brightest vision is actually worth nothing. We will discuss this point later as we build the model for these 23 themes.

The methodology used for making this attribution in terms of where each theme fits related to the definition of the three levels has been to re-analyse the detailed descriptions of the themes which the research data provided in Chapter 16 and to make a judgement, based on the data; it is also added to through 20 years of professional experience. This can be paralleled to the lollipop story at the beginning. It was an act that encompassed the self (the presence to act), the group (the act of giving) and the context (the space in which the act took place and which the act affected, and changed).

We begin to see from Table 6 the enormity of the task of good leadership and the many elements which have to be managed and taken into account by a good leader. In order to see more clearly how these elements interrelate, the following sections aim to build a landscape map in order to be able to structure them into a potentially useable model.

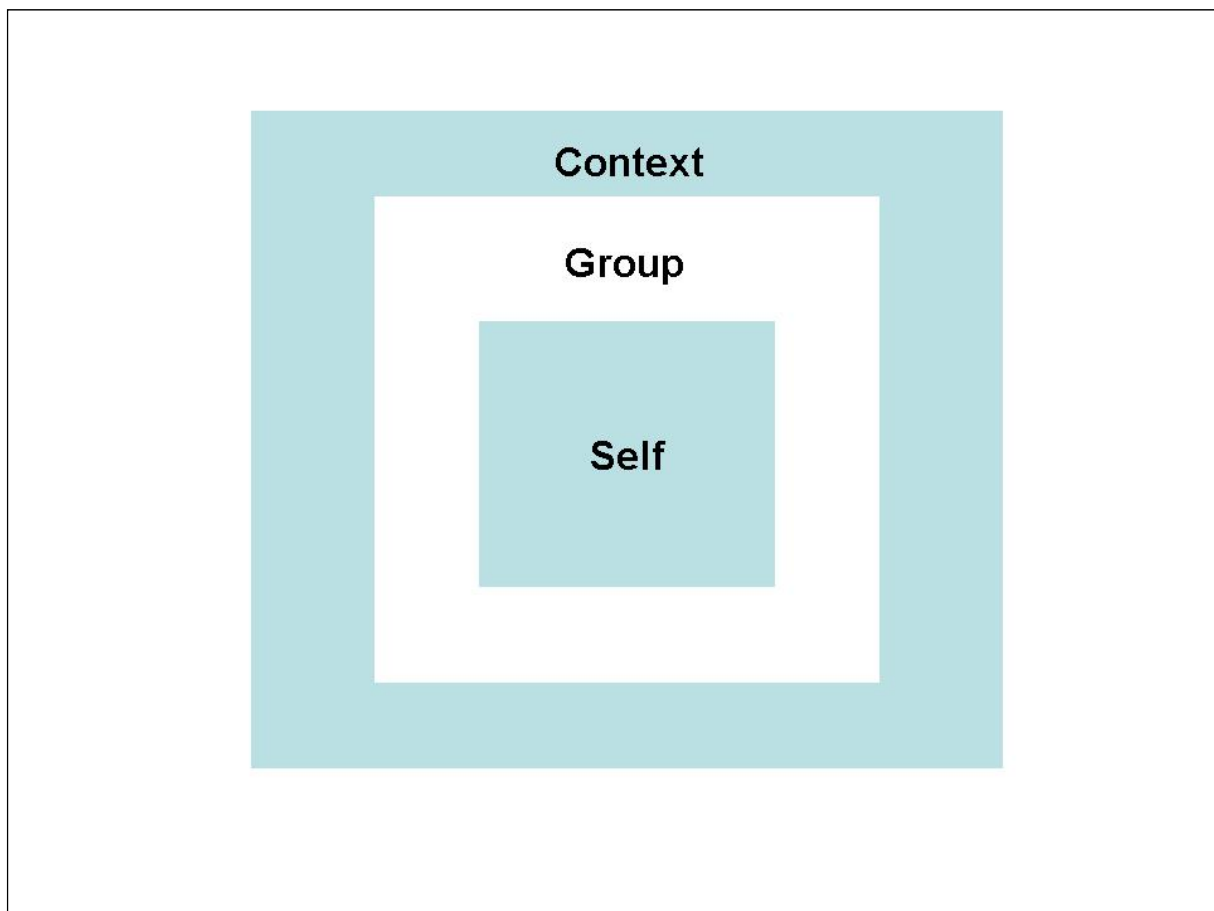
Level	Detailed attributes	Explanation
Self	Authenticity	Leadership which is authentic in what is said and done
	Communication	Leaders as responsible to ensure a flow of communication in all directions
	Confidence	Leadership which inspires confidence
	Courage	Leadership which demonstrates courage
	Decision making	Leadership in the making of priorities and the taking of decisions
	Presence	Leadership which is experienced, that is shown by example, that creates and gives time and space
	Empathy	Leadership which shows empathy
	Fairness	Leadership which demonstrates fairness and transparency and ensures a sense of justice
	Honesty	Leadership which demonstrates genuine honesty
	Knowledge/intelligence	Leadership which demonstrates knowledge, intelligence, competence
	Positive energy: motivation/inspiration/humour/luck	Leadership which brings positive energy in their presence; energy which motivates, inspires; leadership which brings a sense of humour to the workplace; the leader's innate force that seems to operate for good in an individual's or organisation's life, as in shaping circumstances, events, or opportunities
	Respect	Leadership which embodies the respect for all
	Trust	Leadership as an act of trust between leader and follower
	Values	Leadership which has a clear and appropriate set of values
Group	Empowerment	Leaders recognising individual uniqueness, empowering it and empowering the organisation to evolve
	Culture	Leadership which adapts to cultural differences
	Responsibility	Leaders who take responsibility for their actions and the actions of the organisation in short and long term
	Building/developing/working as a team	Leaders as builders, developers of teams, as coaches; leaders giving a direction and common sense of purpose to the team
Context	Vision	Leadership as giving clarity and sight to the goal which is to be achieved, of giving direction to the whole enterprise being undertaken; Leadership as the focal point for the ability to see the big picture, to bring on board all the elements of the surrounding context
	Service	Leadership as service to all stakeholders and ensuring the integration of that into the vision and context
	Analysis	Leadership as the analyst, ensuring that the globality of the present context is taken as well as the future possibilities
	Balancing/managing the whole	Leadership as responsible for the management and balance within the whole enterprise – balancing needs of the business and the staff, the giving of choices, instructions, and managing change

*Table 5: The 22 themes of Good Leadership attributed to the three levels of leadership*

## 16.2 Building the research results into a Framework of Good Leadership

Why do we aim to build a framework from the research results? Experience shows that if data can be modelled (i.e. drawn), it can ensure to a greater degree its coherence in terms of concept and also make it more “shareable” with others.

If we re-take the three levels into which leadership needs to be structured which have arisen from the discussion above, they can be represented in the following diagram.



*Figure 2: The Framework of Good Leadership, Step 1*

Figure 2 shows the self at the centre of the framework. Any act of leadership starts with the individual taking on the role and all of the elements they must hold; this we have termed the “self”. Surrounding this inner level is the level of the group, those that the leaders brings together to fulfill the vision. The third level is that of context which here we give a wider definition in terms of vision placed, defined and managed within the context. In building this structure further, lines appear to delimit the levels. These between each of the boxes

represent lines of communication, of respect and of service. These lines both offer form and structure to each of the levels and by doing so allows them to act as filters through each of the levels and with the context as a whole. These three aspects (communication, respect and service) permeate all levels of leadership – they must be part of the leader, they must be part of the team and they must be part of the vision and held within all aspects of the context. Some would argue with saying “they must” by saying that these are not foundations of leadership, that they are elements which can come into leadership. This paper argues that they are essential fundamental structures to the three levels being able to interact and so become real in terms of leadership. This is irrespective of whether the leadership is good or bad. For leadership to be real there has to be an individual holding the role (self), there has to be a team, a group of people who are following (group), and there has to be a vision, somewhere to go within a context (context). It is communication that allows this to take shape, it is respect (in the good or feared sense), that brings it together and it is a sense of service (again good or bad) to the vision that holds everything toward the vision.

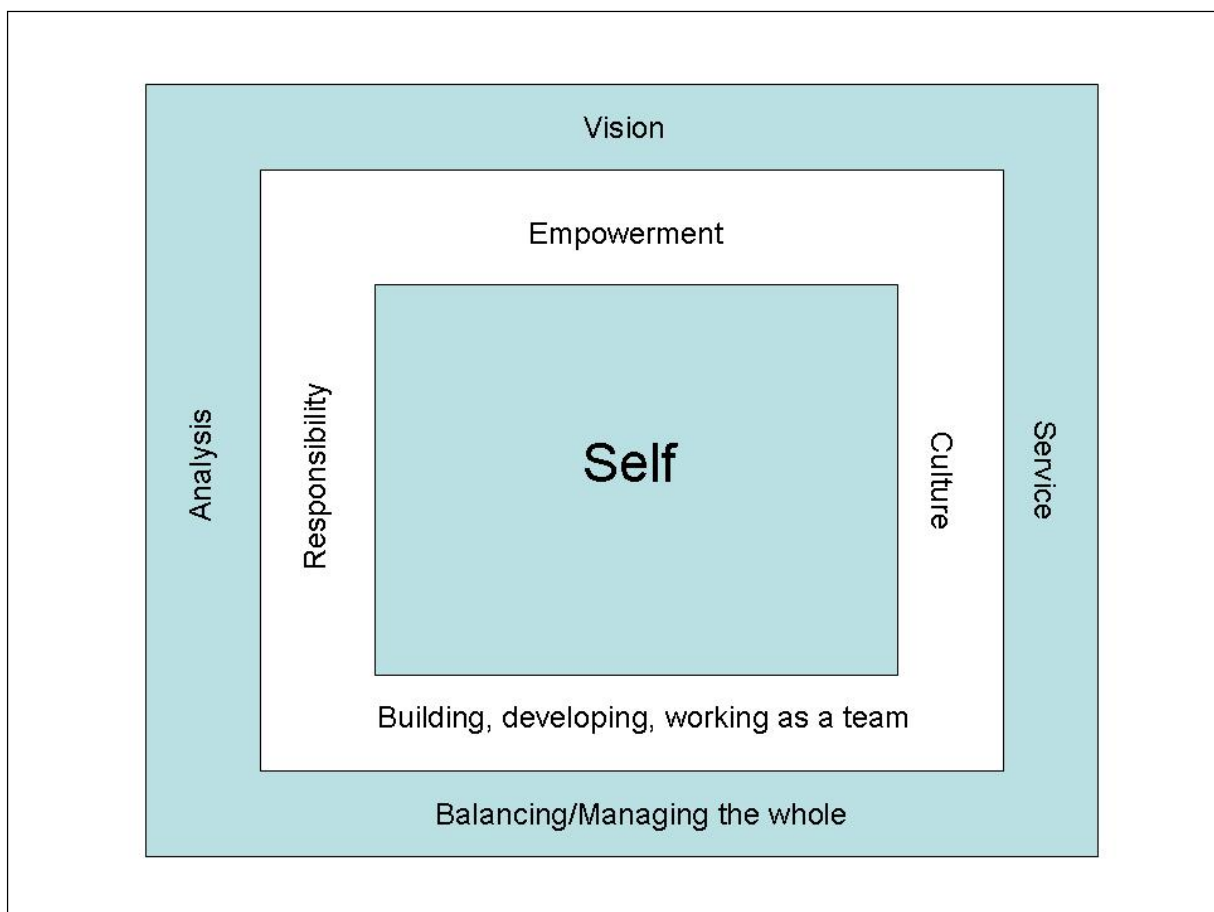
History judges dictators poorly but their leadership, from a purely leadership theory point of view, was often powerful. No matter whom you bring to mind, they each had great communication skills, respect for the vision they had and in a sense for those who chose to follow them without question, and a sense of service, again to the vision they had. The difference between good and bad leadership lies in the ethics and moral justification which the leader espouses and which gives momentum to the leadership. Just as a sword can be used to protect or kill, a pen can be used to write well or for evil ends, so too leadership being good or bad is a choice of how the skill is used.

Taking the same structure as presented in Figure 2, Figure 3 builds on it by placing each of the themes which have emerged from the research into the structure. This is based on the attribution made earlier in Table 5. In the central box, or first level, containing the “Self” we find the authentic self and the presence that a leader brings with them.

The second level is that of the group, the people involved with the leader. This is where the actual act of leadership becomes apparent. Here we find the leadership acts of creating and building a team, of developing the people within that team, of working together as a team. This level contains the act of empowerment, of the leader empowering those with whom they work. It is where the leader takes the responsibility for how the act of leadership unfolds. It is where the aspects of culture are played out in a real way. It is in this level that the act of leadership has the strongest interaction.

The third level is that of context. Context here is defined as the setting within which the leadership takes place. This is embodied by the elements of vision, service, analysis and

balancing/managing the whole. It is here that the leader's key role of balancing and managing the whole takes place. It is in this level that the act of leadership incorporates the creation of vision, of goals, of objectives; it is here that the leader has a role in analysing the context so that the vision and direction match the reality of the context. From the research we have seen that the aspect of service is a responsibility which the leader should hold for the leadership to be considered good. In the framework we have linked it to vision, as if service is built at this level it can be effective throughout the enterprise being undertaken.



*Figure 3: The Framework of Good Leadership, Step 2*

The research - purposefully – was designed to be open, to get people to tell good stories and by having that as the only framework, seeing if there were some underlying fundamentals of good leadership, of leadership that is good. By building from the research in this way, the risk was to arrive at no conclusion. However (and to the relief of the researcher I would have to admit) there does seem to be some basic elements which make up good leadership. They are numerous (23), yet relatively simple. Figure 3 above gives a structure for the framing

good leadership. As mentioned earlier, it also in a way starts building safeguards into leadership theory which can answer the point made earlier in terms of what makes leadership that is good. It does this through the presence of certain attributes like responsibility and service and yet, as we have discussed earlier, the difference between good and bad leadership will continue to lie in the ethics and moral justification which the leader espouses and which gives momentum to the leadership. By focusing this research on stories of good leadership and good experiences of leadership, irrespective of whether the story has been told by the leader or by the follower, it seems to confirm that we have inadvertently found a number of elements which allows us to build a landscape map of “leadership that is good”.

Figure 4 details the elements which fall into the definition of the self of the leader, which have been described in detail in Table 6 above.

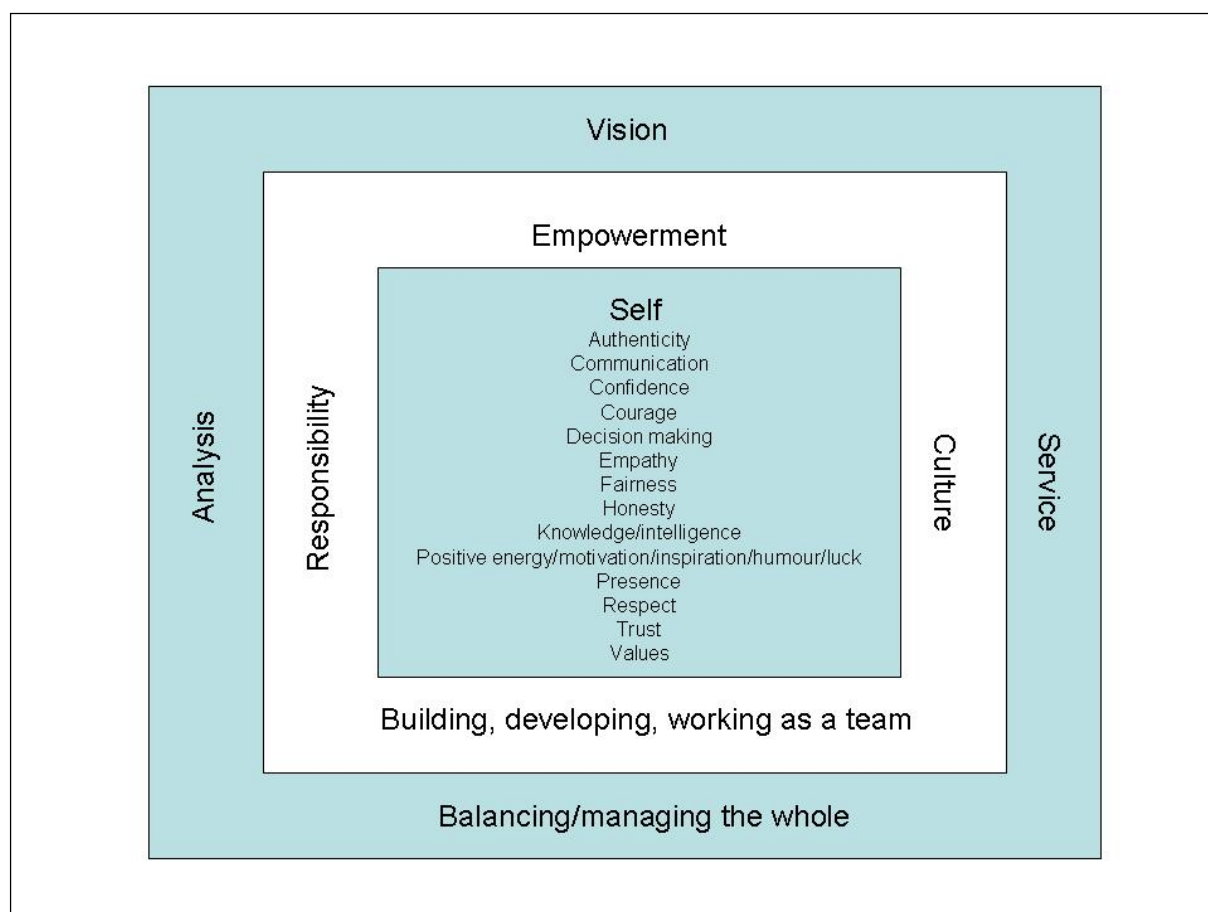


Figure 4: The Framework of Good Leadership, Step 3



Contained in the inner level of “self” are the following themes: themes of authenticity, communication, confidence, consistency, courage, decision making, presence, empathy, fairness, and honesty - all of which characterise good leadership. Here too we find the knowledge and intelligence a leader has; the positive energy, motivation, inspiration, luck and good humour. Contained in this level are the presence that a leader brings with them as they move, the time and space which a leader, by their presence, brings to a situation as well as the respect and trust which a leader has and gives by how they are and values which they hold. Together these elements make up the leader’s selfhood. This list has been constructed through the 52 stories of good leadership which this research has gathered. It brings a practical definition of what leadership selfhood contains that can make leadership good.

Leadership is not something static, as many of the themes we have discussed in detail have shown. Leadership may be all of the things shown in Table 6, but as we have already mentioned, if there is no action, no movement, then it leads to nothing. Action was found to be a major theme in the research. It was described as the energy a leader brought into a situation in order to drive things forward, in order to ensure action towards the agreed result or vision. Therefore it is felt that Figure 5 in fact shows the appropriate framework for good leadership.

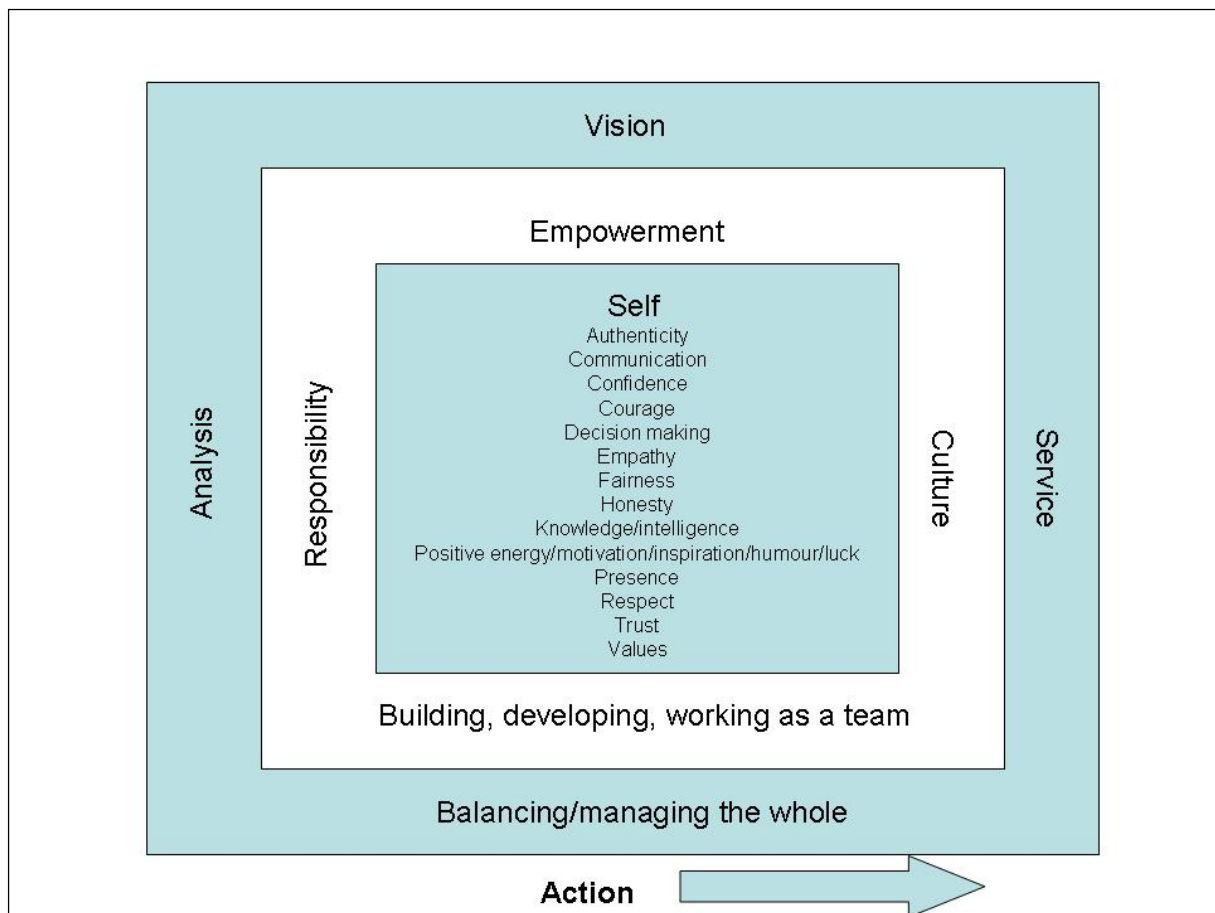


Figure 5: The Framework of Good Leadership, Step 4

This therefore shows the dynamic nature of leadership. Real leadership can only be present if there is movement, if there is a group moving towards an objective, doing something, achieving something. This is good leadership in reality.

The *Framework of Good Leadership* described was built by further analysing the 23 themes of good leadership which the research has given and drawing how they interact together. It gives us a way of linking the themes of good leadership and a way of building a framework that is transmittable. It gives form to the elements that make up good leadership, the “bits” that have to be present. Does it give us a way of describing good leadership? It has a practicability which is refreshing, a simplicity which I had not expected to find.

Before further discussing this, it is important to see if this framework is validated by the rest of the research data, in particular by looking at the answers to the question of the top 5 attributes which people attributed to good leadership.

## 17. The 23 themes versus the top 5 attributes of Good Leadership

This chapter brings together and compares the research results which have been presented up to now with the answer to one of the research questions related to what five words or phrases an interviewee would use to describe good leadership. The aim of this chapter is to see if the validity of the *Framework of Good Leadership* presented in Chapter 16 can be strengthened.

### 17.1 Compilation of the “top” of the top 5

It perhaps comes as no surprise that the request for people to give their top five attributes of good leadership gave a myriad of answers. The full tables of replies and the complete compilation of the data can be found in Annex Chapter 3. It is interesting to look at those replies which had three or more respondents. These were:

Top 5 attributes of good leadership (in order of frequency)		Number of respondents
1	Vision	14
2	Communication	12
3	Listening	12
4	Direction	10
5	Respect	10
6	Exemplarity	9
7	Team	9
8	Humility	8
9	Inspirational	8
10	Motivated/passionate	8
11	Empathy	6
12	Honesty	6
13	Trust	6
14	Courage	5
15	Decision making	5
16	Confidence	4
17	Empowerment	4
18	Energy	4
19	Fair	4
20	Values	4
21	Action	4
22	Analysis	3
23	Committed	3
24	Intuitive	3
25	Openness	3
26	Reliability	3
27	Responsibility	3

Table 6: The Top 5 attributes of Good Leadership

In total (after some cleaning of the data) 89 different attributes were given by 52 respondents. This mirrors the academic work done on the trait theories of leadership which found that the list of traits was as endless as the numbers of people being asked.

Most of these appear within the Dictionary of Themes of Good Leadership which was established during the research. There are four missing:

- Humility, which could be considered, by default, as being incorporated into the theme of service
- Commitment which could be seen as the presence of a leader – if they are not committed they cannot be present and vice versa
- Reliability which could be considered as consistency
- Intuition which is not contained in the dictionary of themes. Its reflection, if there is one, would come under the discussion on globality and teams; globality in the sense that the leader needs a certain amount of intuition in order to see into the future and teams in that to build a team there is a certain amount of intuitive knowledge used. Some could perhaps argue that another way to look at “luck” would be to call it intuition. This however remains the main divergence between the research analysis of the transcripts and the listing of the top 5 attributes of good leadership.

Based on these results, we can conclude that, based on this research question of ascribing five words to good leadership, there is an 85% direct match and a 96% indirect match between the words people use to describe good leadership and the stories they tell about their own good experiences of leadership. This lends credibility to the leadership framework which has been built from this research.

## 18. The 23 themes and their validity

This chapter looks at the validity of the research findings in relation to the Framework of Good Leadership presented in Figure 5. It is judged to be interesting at this stage to test its validity in this way, in order to strengthen, if possible, the conclusions that can be drawn.

When discussing the validity of the research, two approaches were taken. The first was to take the *Framework of Good Leadership* and apply it to three randomly selected transcripts to see if there is a match. The second was to take an example of a number of different leadership writers and see if, again, there is a match with the framework that has been built here.

### 18.1 The validity of the research findings compared to 3 complete interviews

To test the validity of the leadership framework that has been presented in Figures 2-5, three sample interviews were taken to see if there was a match, and to what extent.

		Interview 4	Interview 11	Interview 26
Self	Authenticity			
	Communication			
	Confidence			
	Consistency			
	Courage			
	Decision making			
	Presence			
	Empathy			
	Fairness			
	Honesty			
	Knowledge/intelligence			
	Positive energy			
	Respect			
	Trust			
	Values			
Group	Empowerment			
	Responsibility			
	Building/developing a team			
	Culture			
Context	Vision			
	Service			
	Analysis			
	Balancing/managing the whole			
Action				

Table 7: The Framework of Good Leadership applied to sample interviews

The coding undertaken by the researcher was double coded in two stages. The first stage consisted of the supervising professor taking one interview and undertaking a double coding.

Then a random selection of 4 interviews was given to another individual along with the dictionary of themes in order to undertake a double-coding. This job was undertaken by the holder of a PhD and someone who is currently Director of Human Resources for a large state organisation.

The full details of this analysis can be found in Annex 11. The level of match ranges from 95% to 100%. The only element not finding a 100% match was that of culture (which found 2 out of 3 matches).

From this we can say that there is a high degree of validity between the framework presented and the research data.

## **18.2 Matching to other works on leadership**

Another interesting, and perhaps more important, view is to see whether there is a match to other works on leadership. To do this, a table has been constructed using the attributes given to leadership of five leading writers in the leadership field (Boyett, Boyett, 1998). Table 9 shows this analysis by comparing the 23 themes of good leadership from this research to Bennis's basic ingredients of leadership (2009), Nanus's seven megaskills of leadership (1989), O'Toole's characteristics of values-based leadership (1996), Covey's seven habits of highly effective people (1990) and his eight discernible characteristics of principle centred leadership (1991) and finally DePree's attributes of leadership (1993).

Between them all of the attributes outlined in this research find matches with the exception of six – culture, empathy, fairness, responsibility, team and values. It is interesting to note these gaps and this perhaps leads us to a possible conclusion of the difference between leadership attributes, in the abstract, and the themes of good leadership developed through this research.

We have discussed the aspect of culture in detail and its influence on how leadership is enacted and received. As summed up in the research, it is a fact that you cannot lead in the same way in Asia as you would in Africa. Hence an awareness of culture and its influence and an ability to manage cultural influences are necessary attributes for a good leader. Empathy has been clearly seen from the research data to be an important aspect of how good leadership is shared. It has been defined as the ability to identify oneself with others. Throughout the research empathy was a recurring theme of good leadership in its quality of

relating to others. It was about being present to the people around, about sharing in a way that was felt, that carried the group in a real way. This research underlined empathy as a major attribute of good leadership. Fairness also emerged as a major theme of good leadership, as good leaders ensured that there was fairness and a sense of justice in the system. The research here showed that fairness gives leadership both strength and position.

	Leadership attributes	Bennis	Nanus	O'Toole	Covey	Covey (2)	DePree
1	Action		Initiative		Be proactive	Synergize	
2	Analysis				Sharpen the saw		Discernment
3	Authenticity					Engage in physical, mental emotional, spiritual exercise for self-renewal	Vulnerability
4	Balance / Managing the whole		Master of Interdependence Organisation design Mastery of Change				
5	Communication	Curiosity		Listening			
6	Confidence						Predictability
7	Courage	Daring				See life as an adventure	Courage in relationship
8	Culture						
9	Decision making				Put first things first		
10	Empathy						
11	Empowerment					Believe in other people	
12	Fairness						
13	Honesty	Integrity	High standard of integrity	Integrity			Integrity
14	Knowledge / Intelligence		Anticipatory learning			Continual learning	Intellectual energy and curiosity
15	Positive energy					Radiate positive energy	
16	Presence	Passion			Seek first to understand, then to be understood	Lead a balanced life	Presence Sense of humour
17	Respect			Respect for followers			Awareness of the human spirit
18	Responsibility						
19	Service				Think win/win	Service orientation	Respect for the future, regard for the present and understanding of the past
20	Team						
21	Trust	Trust		Trust			
22	Values						
23	Vision	Guiding Vision	Farsightedness		Begin with end in mind		Comfort with ambiguity

Table 8: Leaders attributes from Bennis, 2009; Covey, 1990, 1991(2); DePree, 1993; May, 2010; Nanus, 1989; O'Toole, 1996;



Most surprising is perhaps the absence of the aspects of responsibility and team. This research showed unequivocally that leaders, to be good, must take responsibility for themselves, their actions and the actions of the enterprise that they are leading. Responsibility towards the self is mentioned in much of the academic literature as an important theme of leadership, especially by the proponents of emotional intelligence (Goleman et al, 2001). This level of authenticity is required of good leaders. Responsibility is also about taking responsibility for the team, where leaders are there to direct, support and actions of the team and to assume responsibility for those actions both in the short and long term. Likewise, the attribute of team was seen as key in terms of leadership, both in terms of building and developing the members of the team and giving the team a common sense of purpose in working together as a team.

Finally, and even though one writer used the term values-based leadership, the attribute of values did not find a match. Good leadership, the research shows, requires that leaders' values are visible, held and recognisable. People are instinctively drawn to leaders with similar values and want that leaders are clear about the values that they hold and that they hold their team to the same set of values and that there is consistency over time.

### **18.3 Implications for the validity of the research**

The match between the framework and interviews carries over a 95% match. The match between 6 leadership formulations from well-known authors and the research data in this thesis carries just over a 75% match. In the section above we have argued that each of the attributes which did not find a match has a validity based on both the research data presented here as well as the theoretical literature presented in Part 1. Based on this, we can consider that the research data has significant validity.

## **19. Tracing the Research Journey that led to the Framework for Good Leadership**

### **8. Coding the Stories - new methodology**

This chapter presents a fourth round of coding which was undertaken. It creates a coding which respects the nature of storytelling in order to see what, if any, the key principles in each of the stories were.

This is a methodology which has been created for the research. A new methodology was needed because of the lack of an existing methodology which could capture the underlying concepts held within the richness of the story telling. This allowed the deepening of the understanding of the research data. It did so by further looking at the underlying aspects in the stories people told and in what people focused on when telling stories about good leadership and their good experiences of leadership. This chapter then presents a model of the Framework for Good Leadership in relation to the outcome of this fourth round of coding.

[Any numbers appearing indicate the number of the interview – or with an “s” the number of the website story – from which the quote is taken].

### **19.1 The underlying fundamentals of good leadership which emerged from the stories**

By this stage, all the research data had been read and coded three times (for the initial and final dictionary of themes of good leadership and for the dictionary of themes on leadership theories). This gave a depth of knowledge to the research data. Stories, by their nature, are not easy to code and with each analysis of the data it seemed that some of the richness of the stories was somehow being lost in the coding process. In order to respect the nature of the storytelling, a further reading of the research data was made using a summary approach - accepting the subjective nature of such a choice - to see if there were elements which emerged from the underlying constructs of the stories rather than the actual words used. The coding table related to this can be found in Annex Section VIII.

This reading in a way answered the challenge of how to put the right-brained "story" into a left-brained "coding table". This meant interpreting the stories in a way that brought to the fore the underlying sense of what was said.

This approach was designed to respect the nature of the storytelling. While it may be subjective in its nature, this choice - to see what are the elements which emerge from the stories - was felt to potentially offer additional value in seeing if there were some underlying fundamentals in the stories good leadership.

Based on the analysis of this fourth round of coding, 6 elements which we term the underlying fundamentals of good leadership have emerged from this research work. These are humility, expansiveness, partners not followers, long term responsibility, service and enlightened vision. They are not “new themes” but rather place an emphasis on some aspects of the 23 themes defined in this research which particularly underlie the enactment of good leadership. Neither can these be considered *the* underlying fundamentals of leadership, but rather can be considered to be one set of underlying fundamentals of good leadership when it is put into action.

The following sections summarise the interesting aspects which respondents mentioned along the way through this research under each of these 6 headings.

### **19.1.1 Humility**

Despite charismatic, big personality type leadership being something widely recognisable in the leadership literature, the stories presented here of good leaders often were those who were a little bit more humble, a little bit more recessive, and more comfortable with themselves. They do have presence but it's not a big personality presence but rather someone who's very at one with themselves, who deals in a consistent and calm way with all aspects of the organisation, from the smallest problem to the biggest problem. Several people mentioned that good leadership often goes unnoticed unless there is a situation of crisis of change; that good leaders are often in the background and sort of make things happen. Like the quote of Lao Tzu on leadership which is often mentioned, that “the leader doesn't talk, he acts. When his work is done, the people will say “amazing, we did it, all by ourselves!” (Mitchell, 1988). If this is true, then no wonder we have such a difficulty in our leadership world. The multi-billion dollar business that is leadership training and development does not often espouse a humble form of leadership, with the probable exception of Greenleaf's servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002). In looking through the indexes of numerous leadership books, humility was simply a word that was not listed. Why do we not give value to this while at the same time acknowledging that leaders who move with humility have a greater capacity to listen to and see possibilities for the future?

### ***19.1.2 Expansive – the space to grow***

Good leadership offered space; it created and opened the space for the people around to grow. Good leadership was expansive in that it created this space, it widened horizons, and it created new possibilities. Leadership is a combination of many factors; factors that must fit the time and the place and the group – they can be vision, energy, intelligence, the willingness to be part of a team and to let other people be their best, to be open. One person spoke of a leader that was “recognised as being exceptionally intelligent and competent and hardworking but I think the qualities that made him a particularly successful leader of the firm were more on the human side really, in that he was a very balanced, calm person and modest, had clarity of direction and objectives, dedication, hard work, intelligence, a kind of courageous innovation” (9) and that good leadership opened the space for the organisation and people to grow.

So many of the stories of good leadership were of those whose leadership encouraged people to grow and develop personally and professionally. They were stories of leaders who taught and shared their skills and knowledge and gave space and time to those growing up under them. Good leaders widen horizons – either at an individual or organisation, or even context level. Expansive leadership opened time and space to and for others; it shared experience and it supported the growth of others which left them with the feeling that they were better than before.

### ***19.1.3 Partners not followers***

Good leaders created teams that worked together rather than followers. “At no point did she position herself as a reference point facing us. She was going the same way as we were, but paving it for us. Not a general ordering its troops but an inspiring soldier like us, a bit braver, less self-centred, more ready to serve. Sharing, inspiring, daring; another kind of leader, one who has no followers but partners” (s1). So many of the stories mirrored this aspect of leadership; of leadership that made people feel that they were part of something, that their contribution meant something, and mattered, that they were together part of something.

### ***19.1.4 Long Term Responsibility***

Good leadership carried responsibility through to the end, even if that end was years down the line. Good leaders took a real responsibility for what they, and those working for them, did. Good leaders earned trust. They were congruent with who they were. They spoke with

authority and speaking with authority was about integrity between what was said and what was done. Good leaders set examples that make people want to follow them.

Above all good leaders ensured that those around them knew, and felt safe in, the fact that the leader took active responsibility for the vision being enacted and the work being undertaken.

#### **19.1.5 Service**

While service did feature as a theme, it underlay many of the other stories aswell even if it was not described as such. There seemed to be an element of service in good leadership, leaders putting themselves in that place where they become the one who serves the team in helping them reach the vision or goal. This entailed leading by example, that the leader can put themselves somehow last, in service of not just people but in service of the purpose, in service of the aims, service of the goal. The leader makes sacrifices on behalf of that but somehow in making the sacrifices “you find life yourself, you think that you’re sacrificing yourself, your life but in fact you discover you’re the one who’s gained” (8). Leadership was about being in community and being responsible and thus able to respond in a way that served the greater good of that community.

#### **19.1.6 Enlightened vision**

Vision, naturally, was an important theme. Good leaders built visions that were not only clear, but that are appropriate and well communicated; they seemed to have the capacity to build stories for the future that give people choice and possibility, a wider horizon with which to see the possibilities of the future, an enlightened vision which brings more than what is presently seen, and brings with it a sense of service to the future. Leadership is about taking fuller responsibility when the leader’s skills and their perspective lets them see things others can’t - which many would call intuition; it is about assessing the risks and possibilities; it is about communicating effectively and designing with others a way forward.

So within the stories gathered appear to be six underlying elements which come over and over again. This is what we have tried to capture in re-reading the stories when creating the “lollipop model”. In the following section we discuss these further in relation to the 23 themes of good leadership which have defined in this research.

## 19.2 The 23 themes of good leadership and the 6 underlying fundamentals

As described earlier, the 23 themes of good leadership have emerged from the direct analysis of the research data. Additionally, on this fourth reading of the data, 6 underlying themes have now been identified. These were often implied in the stories rather than being directly spoken about, which justifies the choice of a fourth round of coding.

We have seen within these stories that there are underlying elements which appeared over and over again. Leadership being carried with humility, leadership which is expansive, which helps people and organisations grow. Leadership that is responsible, that carries the long term consequences of their actions. Leadership as a service, leadership as building and carrying of vision and leadership as a partnership rather than the old leader-follower view. These few additional comments taken from the research show the width and depth that good leadership has.

These complete results are set out in Table 9 below.

	23 themes of good leadership	Underlying fundamentals
1	Action	Humility Expansive Partners not followers Service Enlightened vision Long term responsibility
2	Analysis	
3	Authenticity	
4	Balance / Managing the whole	
5	Communication	
6	Confidence	
7	Courage	
8	Culture	
9	Decision making	
10	Empathy	
11	Empowerment	
12	Fairness	
13	Honesty	
14	Knowledge / Intelligence	
15	Positive energy	
16	Presence	
17	Respect	
18	Responsibility	
19	Service	
20	Team	
21	Trust	
22	Values	
23	Vision	

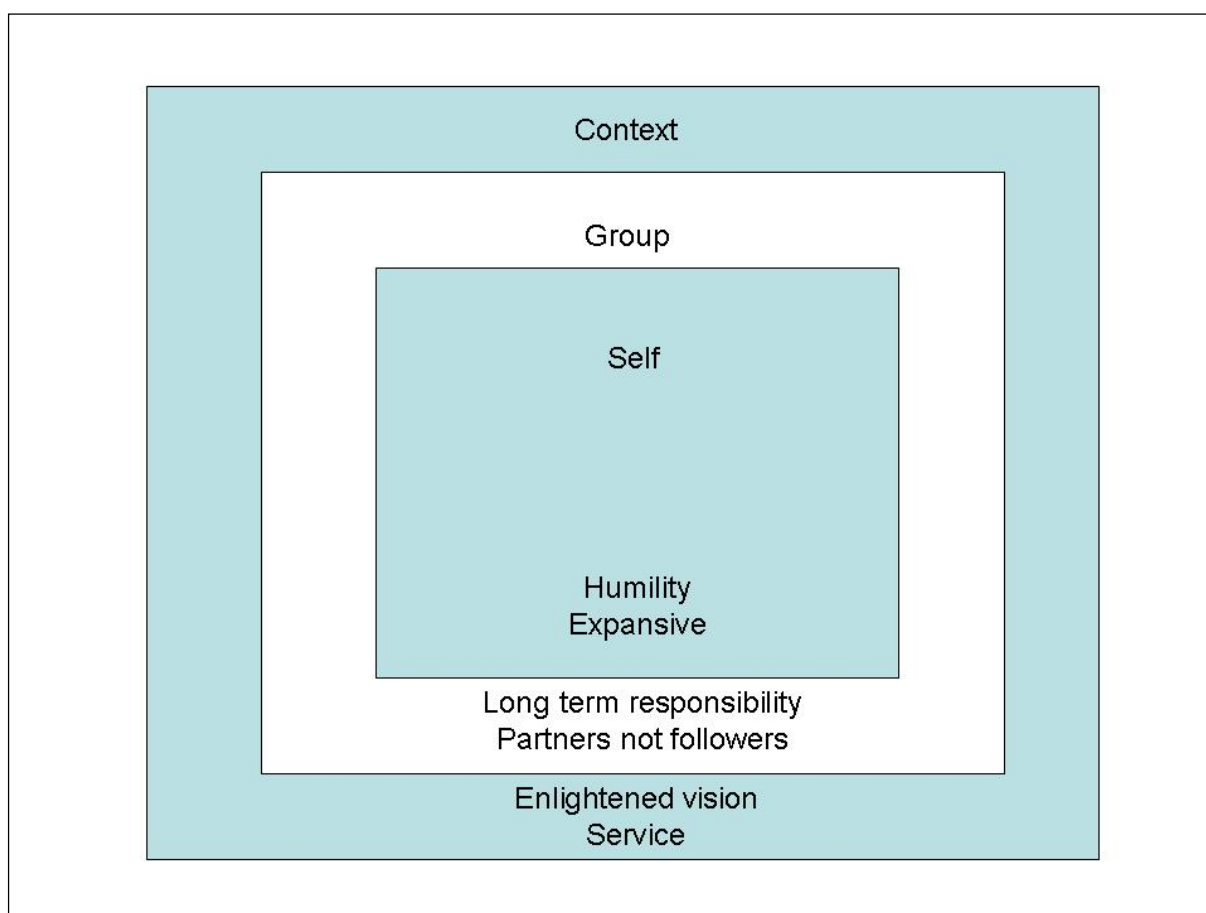
*Table 9: The 23 themes of good leadership and their underlying fundamentals*

As we have seen in the discussion in Part 3, the results of the 23 themes of good leadership which have arisen from the research were put together into a Framework of Good Leadership. This framework shows the fundamental elements which must be present in order for good leadership to be enacted. From Table 9 above, we see 6 elements which underlie

these in the act of good leadership. The fact that each of these elements is put into action is what allows good leadership to become present.

The ability to build the leadership framework justified the choice made at the beginning to leave the research frame open to the stories being told. It meant, as far as is possible, putting no bias in the collection of data as the interviewees had complete freedom of what they chose to tell as a story and how they chose to tell it. It has meant that the themes which this research has been able to frame have been generated from this open space.

The Framework of Good Leadership was created to show the interaction of these 23 themes at the three levels of leadership which were defined as self, team and vision. Figure 6 below presents a model of these research findings and the link between the underlying fundamentals and the 23 themes of good leadership. We can now define good leadership as being leadership which acts, and interacts, at the level of self, group and context and which manages the related fundamentals at each of these levels.



*Figure 6: The link between the Framework and the underlying fundamentals of good leadership*

Have we come up with the definitive Framework of Good Leadership?

Probably not, as the science of leadership is as complex as the people involved. But what this model does offer is a realistic and transmittable view of good leadership and the elements which should be put into practice in order for good leadership to be enacted.

We have mentioned above, that the “good” in terms of how leadership is experienced and enacted lies in the ethics and moral justification which the leader uses and which gives momentum to the leadership; the respect and service with which a leader acts in the role will determine that outcome. It is interesting to consider that the framework presented in Figure 6 now actually ensures that leadership is good. It allows the practitioner to move away from a reliance on ethics and morale justification to make leadership “good” to an actual set of measurable elements which, by default, gives good leadership.



## 20. Modelling Good Leadership

### 9. Model 1

This chapter brings together the research findings as presented over the last 19 chapters and presents these findings in a coherent model which is termed the *Model of Good Leadership*.

### 20.1 Leadership presence – the real power which a leader brings

Good leaders work within the Framework of Good Leadership through their presence, the depth they have and the grounding they hold. We can define presence, based on the elements found in the research, as a leader's ability to be stand in who they are in the reality of the context, in the reality of the group, in the reality of the organisation; the ability to be present in the moment, the ability to be present to the people around them. The second aspect is termed depth – this is the knowledge and skill and experience a leader carries with them; it is the wisdom which they have accumulated and are willing to share. The third aspect is termed grounded. Being grounded can be defined as the ability to hold space and time for others through the ability of being present in the self and connected to the group and context; as a leader's ability to stand in who they are, their roots and their history and being able to share that. It is the strength of their learning from the experiences of life. It is the roots that hold a leader steady as they move in life and which allows them to be present to others. Together these three aspects make up the leader's energy field; this is the energy that they hold and it is also the energy that they share; it is the invisible field which they carry around with them and which is felt as they move. Leadership presence is fundamentally about these three things.

We have seen in Part 1 leadership presence defined as the “ability to connect authentically with the thoughts and feelings of others, in order to motivate and inspire them towards a desired outcome” (Halpern, Lubar, 2004). This research would seem to challenge this definition as being too narrow as it talks about connecting and moving, but not of the innate power and depth of presence. Presence indeed does include the ability to influence and the ability to move people. The research data would agree with the idea that leadership presence cannot be linked to charisma and speaks of presence as having a deeper connection to others, to the context and to a sense of service. As science has shown us that there is no such thing as a neutral position (Gunn, Gullickson, 2005), we can say that leadership

presence, or the energy field which a leader carries with them, has an effect. Throughout the stories, the presence of the leader is felt and affects the outcomes, especially in respect to the personal relationships and the building of teams.

It is a leader's presence, grounding and depth that can make a leader real – it is the putting of all that into action that makes a leader powerful. It is this which allows leadership to be put into motion, which allows the giving of vision, of shape, of rhythm to an enterprise and allows this to be shared with others. This is what allows the communication and movement between the three levels to happen, to be fluid and to be in tune with the reality of the needs of the vision and context. This is the real power of good leadership, and perhaps the reason why, when this is present, that the theme of power so often present in the leadership literature, found no place in this research. Power – as a power over followers – seems to be transformed when looking at good leadership into a power of presence rather than a power of leadership which empowers.

## **20.2 The Model of Good Leadership**

The prologue of this thesis presented a story of a leadership moment which had an impact. The journey since writing that story has taken us towards being able to answer the research question which this story and this thesis posed - are there underlying fundamentals or constructs of good leadership which allow it to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?

In terms of looking at good leadership, the research findings presented in this thesis offer us a rich array of results:

- 23 themes of good leadership have been presented and which we can consider as principles which a good leader has to hold (see Table 2);
- 6 underlying fundamentals have emerged from the data which must permeate the actions of a good leader (see Table 12);
- The leader's field - 3 guiding principles of presence, depth and grounding which have been put forward as a definition of the leadership field that a good leader must carry with them (see 19.1).

These together can be considered the outcomes of the research data analysis which describe what is good leadership has it is enacted in reality.

But how do these interact together? If we are to model these three research outcomes, we can put forward the idea of a Model of Good Leadership based on the research. This is presented in Figure 7 below.

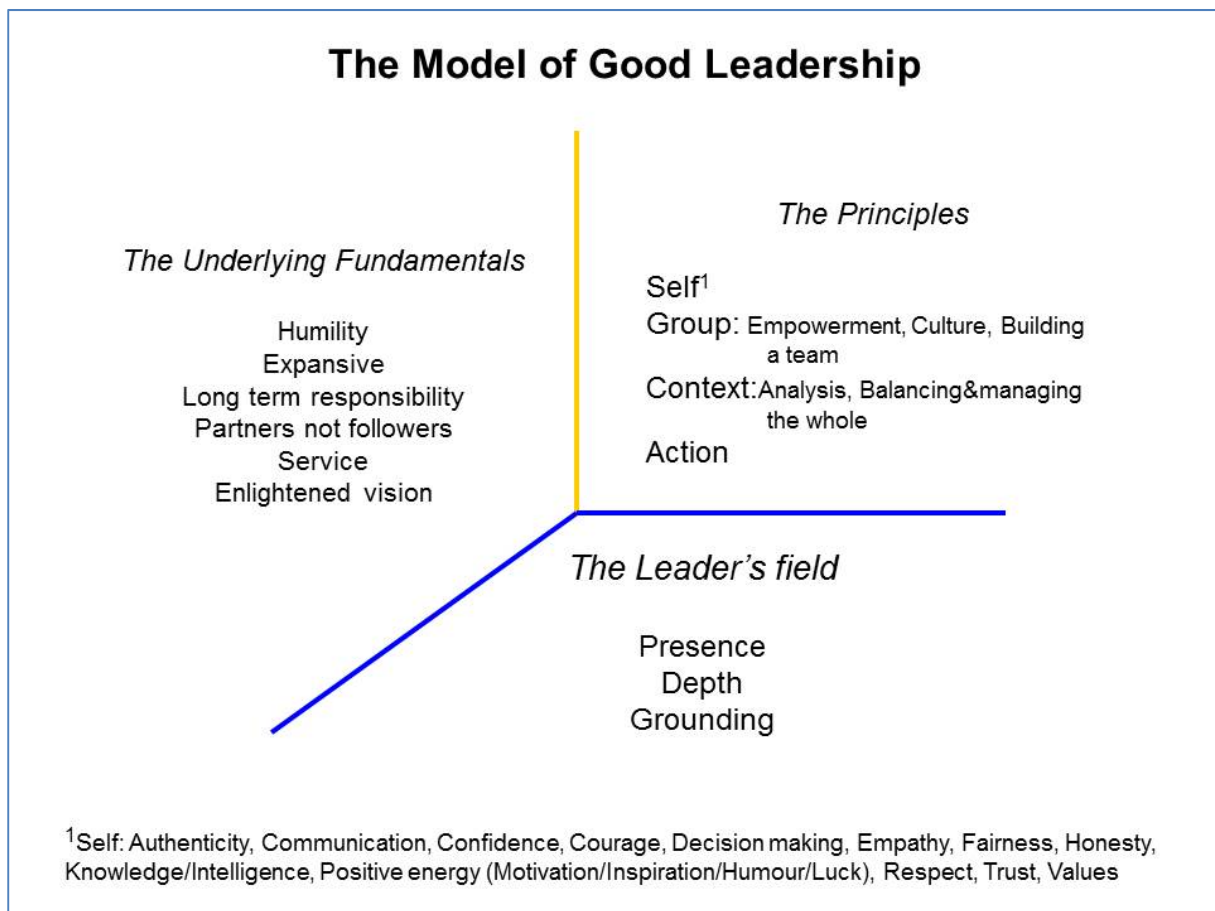


Figure 7: The Model of Good Leadership

How I would have liked to come up with the 3 Keys, or the 5-D's or the 7 magic principles! Something short; it would have been nice, and easy to show and teach and explain. But the research shows that good leadership is a complex task, it has many facets which all play a role in the outcome.

The three levels defined in the *Framework of Good Leadership* (that of self, group, context) show the multi-level functioning of leadership. The theme of action underpins the model, as without action, none of these principles are worth anything. The fourth, more alternative process of coding, undertaken Chapter 19, gave 6 underlying fundamentals of good leadership. These can be considered as factors which underlie leadership and which, when present, lead to good leadership being experienced by others. These are what make good leaders exceptional.

The leader's field (as discussed in 19.1) offers three *energies* which good leaders need to move with. I used the word "energy" with some caution but allow me to turn to physics to explain. Energy can be defined as the property of something which dictates its potential for change, a field, the ability to transmit a force by distance. From Aristotle to Newton to Einstein, all have acknowledged the fact that "every object in the universe exerts a gravitational pull on every other" (Baker, 2007) which means, if we parallel this to human interaction, each person will feel the other's presence. This field is in reality present in all human interactions, though we are not often aware of it. Leaders are aware of the effect their energy field has on a situation and can consciously use that to enact the principles good of leadership.

The model presented in Figure 7 is thus the formulation of the research findings on good leadership and presents one model of what is real, good leadership in action. It is an answer to the research question posed in Chapter 6 of whether there were underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. The answer is yes, there are and this is modelled in Figure 7. This model is felt to offer a leadership which is real, that has real impact for real people with real outcomes, and that makes real business sense.

### **20.3 The Implications of the Leadership Model**

The Lollipop Model presents a view of leadership which complete in the sense of covering all the aspects which make up good leadership. The model shows three facets which make up good leadership. Firstly what good leaders have to do, the principles which a leader has to ensure and enact in their leadership; secondly the fundamentals underlying good leadership, the why of the act of leading; and thirdly how to be, how to hold good leadership, the leader's field of presence which they bring with them.

Thus the model gives not just the elements within each facet, but more importantly offers a unique 360<sup>0</sup> picture of what makes leadership which is good and which can be experienced as being good by all involved. Thus the implications of the model are substantial:

- The model offers a set of underlying fundamentals which make leadership good. While it cannot be considered to be *the* definitive list, it is one balanced list which can be enacted.
- The model offers a set of principles or themes of good leadership which a leader must ensure are present in order to act as a good leader.

- The model offers a definition of the leader's field of presence which ensures that the leadership enacted can be felt and shared.

The strength of the model comes from this complete picture of what makes up good leadership. It challenges the fashionable leadership authors who can bring leadership down to a few essential ingredients as we have mentioned earlier. Rather it shows the complex nature of what it means to be a leader, the self-knowledge it requires, the depth it demands, the vision it must hold and the sharing with and respect of others which is the essential basis on which good leadership can be enacted.

## **21. The implications of this research at this stage for the discussion on good leadership**

This chapter looks at the implications of the research findings presented in this work so far in terms of research on leadership.

### **21.1 The Implications of the research at this stage**

There are a number of practical implications which this research gives:

- The validity of researching “good leadership” is high; it gives a set of data that can focus on this aspect of leadership and has given some clear results enabling a modelling of good leadership.
- The validity of using storytelling as a research method is high.
- The strength and depth of the research data coming from the website is clearly weaker than the depth that can be extracted from the traditional qualitative research method of the one-on-one interview. It poses a warning note of caution for those who would use this method as the only source of research data.
- The difficulty for people to find “good stories” of leadership merits further research due to the consistency of comments which came from all the various types of organisational setting and cultures. This is merited in order to understand why, when the majority of leaders do try their best, so much of what they do is “experienced” as being poor.
- The theories of leadership which continue to be the subject of academic research may find more value in using a table of leadership theories as presented in Table 8 rather than that of Table 1. This would allow a great practical application to the practitioner field.
- The *Framework of Good Leadership* (Figure 5) and the *Model of Good Leadership* (Figure 7) which have been proposed in this research have scientific validity. The ability to be able to formulate this research into a teaching package will be further proof of its use in the practitioner’s reality.

- The *Framework of Good Leadership* which is further developed in Figure 6 actually ensures that leadership is good thus allowing the practitioner to move away from a reliance on ethics and morale justification to an actual set of measurable elements which gives good leadership.
- The *Model of Good Leadership* (Figure 7) has scientific validity. The research question posed can thus be answered positively, that yes it is possible to define a model of good leadership which can allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. Its potential would merit further research in the field to ensure coherence and a complete match. The aspect of “leadership field” as presented in this model also merits further research to strengthen its validity for the practitioner reality.

These eight points made above can be considered to be the implications of this research to date.

## **21.2 So what does this mean for the question for the practitioner in the field**

Arriving at this point, one is faced with the question of what an academic result means for the practitioner in the field. Academic theory, no matter how well formed, should have a practical field application for it to have real worth (Aken, 2004). While the results presented so far have both scientific validity and value, the aim of the research was to offer the field practitioner a practical model therefore the question of applicability was central to the research. This is the reason why an action research part was proposed in order to place any academic results of the research in direct contact with the practitioner reality. This choice opened the path towards the field study. The natural “subject” for the field study was the author’s organisation. It offered a multi-national organisation, a testing field which covered all continents and a multi-context setting i.e. leadership structures which operated in contexts which scaled from all-out war (e.g. Lybia) to “normal” contexts (e.g. Brussels).

Therefore in the frame of the research a field study was proposed to the ICRC and its senior managers in November 2010. In order that there be a minimum of author bias in the field study, a group of peers (all senior management) agreed to form a working group to lead the action research. This field study is presented in Part 4.







## **PART 4: PUTTING THE FRAMEWORK INTO PRACTICE – THE ACT OF GOOD LEADERSHIP**

*Experience without theory is blind, but theory  
without experience is mere intellectual play.*

*Immanuel Kant*

## **Introduction to Part 4**

Part 4 of this thesis describes the field study which took place between November 2010 and November 2011 to answer the research question in relation to the field viability of the results presented to date.

Part 4 presents the research journey from theory to practice and the practical implementation of a model into an organisational setting. It traces the action learning journey undertaken in detail and the discussions which took place. It presents the various stages of the leadership framework as it was being built.

The starting point is from the research presented above and through the field work offers a modification of the leadership model presented in Part 3 of the thesis.

It traces the action research journey and outcomes up to November 2011 when the results were published internally in the organisation. Part 4 aims to ground the inductive research of Part 3, refining the model and adding to the debate on leadership and management. It allows the research to be brought into the field and offers a strategic direction for any organisation wishing to build a model of good leadership which is valid across context and culture.



## 22. The Action Research Journey

### 10. Action Research

This chapter presents the field research journey which followed the initial theoretical stage of the research. It discusses more in depth the reasoning behind the second phase of the research and the action learning journey which took place in the setting of an international organisation.

### 22.1 So where are we so far

This thesis so far offers, based on scientific research, an academic set of results which are presented in the form of a framework and model of leadership which emerged from the research and have been presented in Part 3. In considering the results of any academic research, the ability to translate these into the field practitioner's reality would need to be tested.

The natural question which comes to mind when ones looks at the results of the initial research presented in Part 3 is whether it is feasible for someone in a leadership position to hold all these qualities, especially in times of significant pressure, change, growth or decline of a an organisation. I felt the answer was yes; my experience told me the answer was yes – that in times of increasing pressure, leaders need an even greater width and depth and grounding through all the three dimensions of self and team and context, in all 23 elements which have emerged in the Leadership Framework presented above. But saying it out loud made me think is 23 “things” too much?

We constantly try and simplify leadership down to a few things so we can remember. Are leaders today limited in their capacity so we must have a few things? Or are the theories about the brain capacity to remember things in 3's correct? And so I found myself asking the question what's next? Yes, there are a number of practical implications of this research which has taken place so far (presented in Parts 1-3) on the enacting of good leadership. By studying good leadership, we have managed to build a framework to show the structure of good leadership and the principles that are needed to ensure that the result is in reality good for the whole group of stakeholders. Through further analysis of the research findings in terms of the themes of good leadership, the underlying fundamentals and the idea of leadership fields, a model of good leadership has emerged from this research. The framework and model presented in this research are felt to have feasibility in practice. They can be shown, explained, built upon and put into practice by anyone, at any level, in any

context. By integrating culture and context into the model they become explicit and thus become simply other elements to manage. Thus the Lollipop Model could be considered to be a model of good leadership which is applicable and effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types.

The Leadership Model presented in Chapter 20 is the formulation of the research findings on good leadership and presents one model of how to frame real, good leadership in action. It is an answer to the research question posed of whether there were underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. The answer from this research would indicate that, yes, there are such constructs and this is represented in the Leadership Model. This model is felt to offer a leadership which is real, that has real impact for real people with real outcomes, and that makes real business sense. It can be argued that this model adds to the leadership research field in a real and positive way, with practical implications for current and future practitioners. The initial research question was to see if there were underlying fundamentals or constructs which allows good leadership to be enacted. The Model of Good Leadership is the evidence-based answer which this research work offers to that question.

But does that model hold up to the test of reality in the field, reality in a multinational organisation, reality across cultures and reality in times of organisational change and challenges. That was the question I was left with, as I defended the research results in Part 1-3 for the first time. The complexity of the model encompassed the full nature of leadership but I wondered if the construct, which may be academically strong, could hold the same strength and a level of practicality in terms of implementation in the real world. So began journey from theory to practice.

Thus the second part of the research – the field or action research – was based around looking at the research question in the context of the modelling of the initial results in the form of the Framework and Model of Good Leadership. Only then could we present a competent answer to the research question of what could be the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?

The objective of the action research is to look at whether the Framework and Model of Good Leadership have field viability and can they be used to create individual or organisational leadership models of good leadership for practitioners which can be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types? Answering this question, it was felt, would offer key additional research data in order to be able to answer our research question

of what are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types.

In order to complete the answer to this question, it was felt from the beginning that any model would have to be tested in a field setting. To do this, an action research project was set up, the logic of which has been outlined in Chapter 9. The decisional processes surrounding the project are outlined below.

## 22.2 Decision process on choice of field study

Finding the appropriate field study was considered at length. The natural choice which presented itself was to use the author's own organisation. This choice held many advantages, especially practical ones. The table below outlines the main pro's and con's of this choice:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Practical access	Potential author bias
Ability to engage senior management	Humanitarian organisation which would question transfer to private companies
Global reach	Organisation operating in extreme settings which would question transfer back into "normal settings"
Multicultural setting	
Organisational mix of crisis and stable contexts	
Organisational need as no leadership framework existing at the time	

*Table 10: Decision table for choice of field study*

On analysis of the table, it was felt that the advantages offered by the practicality and complexity of the author's own organisation outweighed the potential disadvantages as these disadvantages could be managed. The safeguards that were put into place were as follows:

- Potential author bias was managed by creating a "working group" of senior managers drive and steer the process, where the author became a 2<sup>nd</sup> level participant who took notes and wrote up the minutes
- Humanitarian organisation which would question transfer to private companies. This potential disadvantage could to be overcome by testing the outcome with other managers in other organisations.
- Organisation operating in extreme settings which would question transfer back into "normal settings. This disadvantage was initially overcome by ensuring a balance between of senior staff involved which covered extreme country operations such as



Sudan or Chad with normal setting such as our regional delegations in capital cities (Germany, Switzerland, USA).

There are numerous discussions around the posture of the researcher using their own organisations as the research field (Schien, 1999, Bartunek et al, 2000). In general there is agreement that this is acceptable once the correct measures are put into place. This choice, properly managed can be a benefit to the research as action research does require a depth of organisational knowledge (Gummesson, 2000). Therefore with the abovementioned controls in place, it was confirmed to use the author's organisation, the International Committee of the Red Cross, as the location for the field research study.

### **22.3 Outlining the field study research journey**

The nature of the challenge of this field research and in order to ensure the greatest scientific accuracy meant that I could not carry out the research alone but that it would have to be embedded it into the organisation. That embedding meant not just a validation of the idea for the research but meant the necessity to build a research team who would jointly lead the research.

Thus the research process become an action learning journey in order to see what weight the framework and model had and could they be implemented.

### **22.4 The research offer and its acceptance**

On completion of the research detailed in Part 4 and the Model of Leadership that was created, a presentation was made to a senior management retreat, in the presence of the Directors, at the International Committee of the Red Cross in November 2010.

An offer was made to the organisation to build a leadership framework that would be valid throughout the organisation (covering +80 countries) in November 2010. Based on the presentation and offer made, a peer group of senior managers agreed to spend 6 months using the models created in Part 4 to come up with a Leadership Model for the ICRC. A second peer group was established as a sounding board for the work undertaken.

The creation of a working group which would lead the field study was on a voluntary basis. 5 senior managers volunteered to form a peer group to create the leadership framework based on the models presented in Part 3.

The accepting by the organisation and the willingness of senior managers to take on the extra workload was a sign of the pertinence of the research question, the importance of the topic of leadership and the need within the organisation of a framework around leadership. The following chapters trace the research journey, detailing the discussions at each step of the process and presenting the arguments which validated (or not) the leadership framework.

## **22.5 The formation and work of the peer group**

The peer group was formed on a voluntary basis. The members were the:

- Head of Recruitment
- Deputy Head of Finance and Administration
- Head of Protection Division (the most important operational division)
- Head of Delegation Bad Arolsen, Germany
- Deputy Head of External Resources

The group was joined by a partner at Ashridge Consulting who were facilitating the leadership training at the ICRC at the time of the research.

It was decided that the peer group would structure its work based on the authors research to date and the models created in Part 3.

The following chapter summarises the action learning journey which the peer group undertook and details the research journey in terms of:

- The organisation
- The research offer and its acceptance
- The formation and work of the peer group
- The drafting process of a Leadership Model for the ICRC

Each of these steps is presented in the following chapters. Each of these chapters is structured according to the discussions which took place and the work done by the peer group and concludes with comments from the author on each of the steps. Section 3 of the Annexes contains all the detailed notes.



## 23. The Organisation – the International Committee of the Red Cross, the ICRC

### 10. Action Research

The ICRC is a passionate organisation to look at, an organisation of 13,000 staff working in 82 countries around the world with a mandate which is still as valid today as at its founding in 1863. Its mandate – the protection and assistance of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence -

This chapter outlines the organisation, its history and its current operations (referenced from the ICRC website and publications).

### 23.1 The ICRC's mandate and mission

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance.

It directs and coordinates the international relief activities conducted by the Movement in situations of conflict. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles.

Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It was on the ICRC's initiative that States adopted the original Geneva Convention of 1864. Today the work of the ICRC is based on the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols. It is an independent, neutral organization ensuring humanitarian protection and assistance for victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence. It takes action in response to emergencies and at the same time promotes respect for international humanitarian law and its implementation in national law.

Since then, the ICRC, with the support of the entire Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, has constantly urged governments to adapt international humanitarian law to changing circumstances, in particular to modern developments in the means and methods of warfare, so as to provide more effective protection and assistance for conflict victims.

Today, all States are bound by the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 which, in times of armed conflict, protect wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of the armed forces, prisoners of war and civilians. Over three-quarters of all States are currently party to the two 1977 Protocols additional to the Conventions. Protocol I protects the victims of international

armed conflicts, Protocol II the victims of non-international armed conflicts. In particular, these treaties have codified the rules protecting the civilian population against the effects of hostilities. Additional Protocol III of 2005 allows for the use of an additional emblem – the Red Crystal – by national societies in the Movement.

The legal bases of any action undertaken by the ICRC are as follows:

- The four Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I confer on the ICRC a specific mandate to act in the event of international armed conflict. In particular, the ICRC has the right to visit prisoners of war and civilian internees. The Conventions also give the ICRC a broad right of initiative.
- In non-international armed conflicts, the ICRC enjoys a right of humanitarian initiative recognized by the international community and enshrined in Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions.
- In the event of internal disturbances and tensions, and in any other situation that warrants humanitarian action, the ICRC also enjoys a right of initiative, which is recognized in the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Thus, wherever international humanitarian law does not apply, the ICRC may offer its services to governments without that offer constituting interference in the internal affairs of the State concerned.

### **23.2 Structure and decision making**

The ICRC is governed by the Assembly, an Assembly Council (a subsidiary body with certain delegated powers) and a Directorate (the executive body). Both the Assembly and the Assembly Council are chaired by the President of the ICRC.

The Directorate, with five members, is chaired by the Director-General. The members of the ICRC Directorate are appointed by the Assembly for four-year terms. The current executive team took up its duties on 1 July 2010.

#### ***ICRC decision-making structures***

The Assembly is the supreme governing body of the ICRC. It oversees all the ICRC's activities. It formulates policy, defines general objectives and strategy, and approves the budget and accounts. It nominates the directors and the head of Internal Audit. Composed of between 15 and 25 co-opted members of Swiss nationality, the Assembly is collegial in character. Its President and two Vice-Presidents are the President and Vice-Presidents of the ICRC.

### ***Finances and budget***

The ICRC is funded by voluntary contributions from the States party to the Geneva Conventions (governments); national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies; supranational organizations (such as the European Commission); and public and private sources.

Each year the ICRC launches appeals to cover its projected costs in the field and at headquarters. It will launch additional appeals if needs in the field increase. The ICRC accounts for its work and expenditure in its Annual Report.

### ***The Movement***

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is the largest humanitarian network in the world. Its mission is to alleviate human suffering, protect life and health, and uphold human dignity especially during armed conflicts and other emergencies. It is present in every country and supported by millions of volunteers.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is dedicated to preventing and alleviating human suffering in warfare and in emergencies such as epidemics, floods and earthquakes.

The movement is composed of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the 186 individual National Societies. Each has its own legal identity and role, but they are all united by seven Fundamental Principles.

These principles are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality. Each component of the Movement is committed to respect and uphold them.

The ICRC's exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. It directs and coordinates the Movement's international relief activities during armed conflicts. Established in 1863, it is at the origin of the Movement.

The Federation inspires, facilitates and promotes all humanitarian activities carried out by its member National Societies on behalf of the most vulnerable people. It directs and coordinates its members' actions to assist the victims of natural and technological disasters, refugees and those affected by health emergencies. It was founded in 1919.

National Societies act as auxiliaries to their national authorities in the humanitarian field. They provide a range of services including disaster relief, and health and social programmes.

In wartime they may assist the civilian population and support the medical services of the armed forces.

### **23.3 History of the ICRC**

Since its creation in 1863, the ICRC's sole objective has been to ensure protection and assistance for victims of armed conflict and strife. It does so through its direct action around the world, as well as by encouraging the development of international humanitarian law (IHL) and promoting respect for it by governments and all weapon bearers. Its story is about the development of humanitarian action, the Geneva Conventions and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

#### ***The founding***

What was to become the International Committee of the Red Cross met for the first time in February 1863 in Geneva, Switzerland. Among its five members was a local man named Henry Dunant who, the year before, had published a crusading book (*A Souvenir of Solferino*) calling for improved care for wounded soldiers in wartime.

By the end of the year the committee had brought together government representatives to agree on Dunant's proposal for national relief societies, to help military medical services. And in August 1864 it persuaded governments to adopt the first Geneva Convention. This treaty obliged armies to care for wounded soldiers, whatever side they were on, and introduced a unified emblem for the medical services: a red cross on a white background.

The ICRC's primary role was a coordinating one. But it gradually became more involved in field operations, as the need for a neutral intermediary between belligerents became apparent. Over the following 50 years, the ICRC expanded its work while national societies were established (the first in the German State of Württemberg in November 1863) and the Geneva Convention was adapted to include warfare at sea.

#### ***First World War, 1914-18***

At the outbreak of the First World War, based on experience in other conflicts, the ICRC opened a Central Prisoners of War Agency in Geneva, to restore links between captured soldiers and their families.

It continued to innovate: its visits to prisoners of war grew during this period and it intervened over the use of arms that caused extreme suffering – in 1918 it called on belligerents to renounce the use of mustard gas. That same year it visited political prisoners for the first time, in Hungary.

The national societies themselves undertook an unprecedented mobilization that saw volunteers running ambulance services on the battlefield and caring for the wounded in hospitals. For the Red Cross in many countries, it was their finest hour.

### **1918-1939**

After the war, many national societies felt that, with the coming of peace and hopes for a new world order, the role of the Red Cross had to change. In 1919, they founded the League of Red Cross Societies, intended as the future coordinating and support body for the Movement. But conflicts during the 1920s and 1930s emphasized the need for a neutral intermediary, and the ICRC remained active – increasingly outside Europe (Ethiopia, South America, the Far East) and in civil wars (notably in Spain).

The ICRC persuaded governments to adopt a new Geneva Convention in 1929 to provide greater protection for prisoners of war. But despite the obvious broader threats posed by modern warfare, it was unable to have them agree on new laws to protect civilians in time to prevent the atrocities of World War II.

### ***Second World War, 1939-45***

The Second World War saw a huge expansion of activities as the organisation tried to work to assist and protect victims on all sides. The ICRC and the League worked together to ship relief supplies across the globe, reaching both prisoners of war and civilians. ICRC delegates visited POWs around the world and helped exchange millions of Red Cross Messages between family members. For years after the war, the ICRC dealt with requests for news about missing loved ones.

However, this period also saw the ICRC's greatest failure: its lack of action on behalf of victims of the Holocaust and other persecuted groups. Lacking a specific legal basis, bound by its traditional procedures and hindered in its ability to act by its ties with the Swiss establishment, it was unable to take decisive action or to speak out. It was left to individual ICRC delegates to do what they could to save groups of Jews.

### ***Since 1945***

Since 1945 the ICRC has continued to urge governments to strengthen international humanitarian law – and to respect it. It has sought to deal with the humanitarian consequences of the conflicts that have marked the second half of the 20th century – starting with Israel and Palestine in 1948.

In 1949, at the ICRC's initiative, states agreed on the revision of the existing three Geneva Conventions (covering wounded and sick on the battlefield, victims of war at sea, prisoners



of war) and the addition of a fourth: to protect civilians living under enemy control. The Conventions provide the ICRC's main mandate in situations of armed conflict.

And in 1977, two Protocols to the Conventions were adopted, the first applicable to international armed conflicts, the second to internal ones – a major breakthrough. The Protocols also laid down rules concerning the conduct of hostilities.

#### **23.4 Today's operations in the field on behalf of people affected by war**

The ICRC responds rapidly and efficiently to the humanitarian needs of people affected by armed conflict or by a natural disaster occurring in a conflict area. Hostilities can explode without warning; natural disasters can strike unexpectedly and their effects may be multiplied in countries already riven by war. In the face of such unpredictable emergencies, the ICRC attaches great importance to its ability to deploy rapidly in the field.

##### ***Visiting detainees***

ICRC detention visits aim to ensure that detainees, whatever the reason for their arrest and detention, are treated with dignity and humanity, in accordance with international norms and standards. ICRC delegates work with authorities to prevent abuse and to improve both the treatment of detainees and their conditions of detention.

##### ***Protecting civilians***

According to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, civilians and all persons not taking part in combat may under no circumstances be the object of attack and must be spared and protected. In fact, however, this principle has been undermined, because the civilian population, particularly since the Second World War, has suffered most of the consequences of armed violence.

##### ***Safeguarding health care***

The Health Care in Danger project aims to address the impact of illegal and sometimes violent acts that obstruct the delivery of health care, damage or destroy facilities and vehicles, and injure or kill health-care workers and patients, in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

##### ***Health***

The goal of ICRC's Health Unit activities is to give people affected by conflict access to basic preventive and curative health care that meets universally recognized standards.

***Building respect for the law***

The ICRC's mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and other situations of violence, and to provide them with assistance. One way in which the ICRC does this is to ensure respect for the rights of people affected. That involves reminding authorities and others of their legal obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

## 24. The Action Research Field Study

### 10. Action Research

This chapter details the field study through the work of the peer group. The choice of action research as the appropriate methodology has been discussed in detail in Chapter 13.2. This chapter traces the research journey from the initial discussions, to working from the base document which the author submitted to them and to the creation of a Leadership framework for the ICRC. In this chapter we discuss and analyse the content of each of the research stages; all the detailed discussion notes and reference documents can be found in Section 3 of the Annexes.

It is perhaps worth noting at this point the efforts and structural choices made in order to manage the aspect of potential author bias. The results of the research work presented in Part 3 was only shared with the peer group once they had formulated their objective and had an initial discussion as presented below in 23.1 of this chapter. This was done in order to allow the peer group to structure their and the organisational needs prior to reading the research data. By doing so, the author ensured to the greatest extent possible that the peer group would use the research data as an input rather than being directed by the results. This choice was a risk as it opened the path to a complete rejection of the research results but the risk was felt to be worthwhile as it allowed a real field testing.

### 24.1 The first meeting - November 2010

The first meeting of the peer group was to establish the objective of the group and the working methodology. This was done in a two hour facilitated brainstorming and objective setting working session. The author's role was that of note-taker and did not partake in the discussions. At this stage, the research of the author and the Models presented in Part 4 had not yet been shared with the group.

The objective which the peer group set itself was:

- to build a leadership model in which the management principles, values and added value of those in leadership roles can be clearly described, ascribed to and expected of all those in leadership roles in the ICRC

The reasoning behind this was expressed by the group as the need within the organisation to make leadership in the ICRC explicit.

The group felt that fulfilling this objective would facilitate the development of coherent leadership at all levels of the ICRC. This was felt to be particularly relevant at a time of increasing internationalisation of the staff. Up to now the ICRC had historically been a mainly Swiss managed and led organisation; the growing internationalisation of its staff means that there is a growing need to make explicit expectations in leadership within the organisation which to date had been ingrained in the organisational culture but which had no explicit description or standards.

During the work of the peer group, a number of issues which would need to be borne in mind as work on a leadership framework progressed were noted. These fell into the following categories (the full notes can be found in Annex Section X):

- issues around the integration of diversity
- issues around the clarification of what is the contribution which is expected of leaders at individual, team and organisational levels
- it should contain a clear statement of the values and should establish the what (principles), why (underlying fundamentals) and how (leadership actions/field) of leadership at the ICRC

For the next meeting of the peer group it was decided that the author would prepare a summary text of the leadership research and the leadership models created (this can be found in Annex 19) which would offer starting point for future discussions. This concluded the first meeting of the peer group.

## **24.2 Author comments on November 2010 meeting**

The first meeting of the peer group and the discussion which followed left the author feeling that questions around leadership were fairly common, even if wide-ranging. The number of points of questioning and their alignment with the questions raised during the research process to date gave the initial feeling that the research was aligned with field reality.

When analysing the discussion the first interesting point is that of diversity. Diversity is a normal part of ICRC's everyday business both externally in the contexts in which it works, and internally with the diverse background of its staff. To find 40+ nationalities working in one country team is by no means unusual for the ICRC. Diversity covered both the aspect of culturally different backgrounds of team members and the diversity of specialist backgrounds in any one team. The peer group felt that any model which would be constructed should base

itself around the similarities rather than diversity as this would allow us to be universal while be able to be relevant locally to each context. This confirmed the research finding in Part 4 of placing cultural as an element of leadership to be managed.

It was interesting to note the length of discussion around the fact that the model should integrate and represent what the organisation expects of leaders and must help them integrate these expectations into daily work practices. The fact that a model would need to clarify the responsibility of leading at the local level while at the same time being part of the institutional leadership at a global level came from the fact that everyone at the ICRC is a “delegate” i.e. delegated by the signatories of the Geneva Conventions to undertake work on their behalf at times of conflict. Any future leadership model would need to address within it the idea that people can be leaders at all levels of the organisation and leadership is not something just for others somewhere higher up in the organisation.

The fact that the peer group from the outset (and without any previous information about the author’s work or research findings to date) felt that a leadership model should make clear the contribution which is expected at the individual, the team and organisational level as well as the individual expectations matched fully the research choice which were presented in Part 3 in terms of splitting the leadership themes into levels of self, group and context.

The group felt that any model should include a clear statement of the values which leadership at the ICRC should represent and enact; that it should explicit what, as an international organisation, are the shared collective values while recognising the need for diversity meant that the issues tackled in Part 3 of the underlying fundamentals was appropriate to the needs of the field.

Additionally a long discussion took place around the aspect of the management component of leadership and the leadership component or management and what was the difference. This discussion mirrored the academic debates around the same subjects which have been detailed in Chapter 4 and while later be discussed further in Chapter 28. The model should help managers understand what the leadership component in their management is as these two terms/roles were felt to be consistently mixed and lacked any clarity of definition. It should also clarify which responsibilities fall under leadership as opposed to the management responsibilities.

The group wanted that the model should establish the what (principles), why (underlying fundamentals) and how (leadership action/doing) of leadership at the ICRC. This, it was felt, would lead to a better understanding of what leadership means at the ICRC and would give a common way of looking at leadership which would strengthen our ability to transmit and grow

leadership within the organisation. The group wondered if a model could create a virtuous circle of meaning around leadership i.e. by defining the “what” (principles) of leadership could lead to the “why” (values) of leadership which in turn could look at the “how” (embody) good leadership could be enacted and which could show the added value of leadership. This was an interested request expressed by the group and one we shall retake further on.

The ICRC works in situations of constant change. The group wanted to be able to create a leadership model which could help leaders in adapting creatively to different situations and which would allow the organisation to build congruence around what we expect from the point of recruitment to senior management. The model should make common points around which we have expectation of leaderships and which would hold and which we expect despite different personalities, e.g. ability to listen. Any future model must allow the transmission of leadership meaning and values, to grow leadership within the organisation and to improve leadership throughout the organisation and at all levels (it should help us move away from the idea that leadership is something left to the very few at the top of the organisation). A good model for the ICRC will be one which fosters change and innovation, which encourages sharing and communication in all directions and has within it an inbuilt lessons-learning feedback loop so there is continual evolution of skills and knowledge around leadership within the organisation. It should be able to facilitate the sharing of experience and the safe-keeping of institutional memory

These points reflect the research journey in a way which was surprising. The parallels to the two hour discussion that took place between these managers with the thread of the discussion presented in Parts 1 to 3 were striking. The myriad of subjects, wishes and attributes which a leadership model should have mirrors the many themes contained in the research results in Part 3. Particularly striking were the parallels with the underlying fundamentals which were an idea presented in Chapter 19 and the real request expressed by the group to see a model which incorporated this level of value. Also striking was the wish to be clear at the level of self, group and organisation which again would seem to validate choices made during the research in Part 3.

### **24.3 Peer Group Meeting of December 2010**

The objective of this meeting was to structure the way forward. The foundation for the meeting was the document submitted by the author (Annex 16) which contained the summary of the Leadership models created by the research to date as outlined in Part 3 of this thesis. The group also looked at a number of organisation’s leadership documentation which were available on the web.

The discussion in the working group put forward a general feeling that the various documents, leadership models and sets of competences which the ICRC has had in the past, and models which individuals were familiar with from other companies, did not “walk the talk” enough and that any model we would create must have that very practical actionable reality to it.

The question which was most discussed during this session was that of values – that any leadership model would need to clearly explicit the values which the organisation wanted to be upheld by its leadership and thus each leader would be expected to embody. If this was necessary, it was felt that the group would first need to do its own homework around their own values. Thus an initial task was set for the next meeting – that each member of the peer group would answer the following questions:

- what are the/your most important values as leaders?
- what do you want to transmit as a leader?

These answers were to be compiled by the author as discussion for the next meeting.

The group then discussed what would be needed in a document for the ICRC. As a second task, the group asked the author to draft a paper of what the ICRC would expect from a manager. This should include:

- values we believe in
- expectation from leaders and expectations that we as leaders are willing to uphold
- being truthful to our commitment
- creating adhesion/convincing

Any model, it was discussed and agreed, should be able to bring all of the above in a simple way if there is to be comprehension and adhesion across the organisation. An effective model should be able to act as a linking force across the organisation. Due to the nature of the ICRC, it was felt that a model would have to include the principle of universality and unity as principle to keep and that there were values we traditionally uphold in the ICRC such as being open to the new contexts, curious to learn from others, having a strong ability to listen and to learn from others.

The group then discussed the question of “what do you value in leadership?” The answers, which can be found in detail in the Annex 17, can be summarised as follows:

- clear and well transmitted goals
- link to objectives
- transfer knowledge available into objectives
- people's contribution - that people have the space/belong to the group/ participate to goals
- ability to continue to learn and engender learning
- self/authenticity, team, balancing/managing whole
- leaders being humble enough not to know it all; being willing to learning and encourage learning; being willing to change you mind and still keep authority; ensure that others have confidence - this allows to adapt to changing context but needs consistency
- balance - in task/delivery, process/people, leading/giving confidence
- vision

It seemed to the group following this brainstorming that the daily task of a leader is to balance all of these (and probably other) needs and to do this requires courage and honesty. The balancing of goals with needs and the ability to balance openness with strength and courage stood out clearly from the discussion. The act of leadership was one of continually finding the right balance between so many elements and this is probably the most important personal challenge of a leader.

It was noted that the models in the authors paper (Annex 16) give a structure and sense of openness graphically which can be a workable base to start from. It concepts have a sense of not being constrained as much as other more closed, limited models. The group was clear that the drawing of the model will have an impact on how it is received and decided that once the elements of the model were fixed, there would be some work on presenting various alternatives.

As a conclusion to this meeting, it was decided to follow up the questions above by having each member answer the questions which were structure out of the conversations during the meeting. These questions were:

- for you, what are the most important competences/values of a leader
- in your leadership role what competences/values do you want to transmit to others



- for each of the competences/values you list above, what do you think are the consequences if they are not present

Each of the members of the group would answer each question and a compilation of the answers would provide a basis of discussion for the next meeting.

#### **24.4 Author comments on December 2010 meeting**

This meeting, while it covered a wide variety of topics, was first and foremost for the author a confirmation that the Lollipop Model was on the right track. As one traces the subjects of discussion during the meeting, we can trace similar discussions that took place in Part 3 and the creation of the Dictionary of Themes of Good Leadership.

Several points are worth further comment in relation to the discussions and its analysis in comparison to the research findings presented in Part 3:

- “Walking the talk” was the phrase used by peer group members and it is interesting that this was practically the first point of the discussion. Any leadership framework or model must have “practical actionable reality”. This confirms the choice of placing action as a primary driver as in Figure 5 and as a key principle in Figure 7.
- Values – this discussion showed this as a key driver for leadership. It was placed under “self” in the Framework in Figure 5. In the Lollipop model in Figure 7 it almost disappears as one of 13 elements of “self”. This opens the question as to whether this choice is correct and to its correlation with the underlying fundamentals. If values was such a driver (this would be one way of analysing the discussion) then should be appear more forcefully in a final model?
- Expectations of leadership – this was an interesting point that any model needs to make clear the expectations of leadership and the expectations of what leaders should uphold. This was interesting as it showed that in the organisation leaders do not know what is expected of them other than the pure operational results aspect and the requirement that a leadership model would give clarity to this aspect was felt to be important. The Framework in Figure 5 does not have this aspect within in though the discussion around the underlying fundamentals encapsulates exactly this requirement. This could be considered a validation of the choice to placing underlying fundamentals in the Lollipop model of Figure 7.
- In terms of the discussion around what people value in leadership, all the points raised are included in the Lollipop Model. There is one exception to this and that is a

clear reference to the setting of objectives – while it is part of the theme of vision, this question needs further analysis as we proceed.

Overall this was a constructive discussion which added further depth to the research by forcing a certain amount of rethinking on the points mentioned above. By the group themselves setting up further research work in terms of the sets of questions asked, it should lead to further depth of the content of a future ICRC Leadership Model. At this stage, while there were some positive comments on the Lollipop Model of the author's research, the ICRC Model was completely open as to both its future shape and content.

## 24.5 Documents sent prior to January 2011 meeting

As stated above, the peer group set themselves an exercise of self-reflection in terms of competences and values of leadership. This section sets out the answers received from the peer group. Based on the results this exercise the author created the ICRC Leadership Model, Version 0. This is presented below in 23.5.2.

### 24.5.1 The replies

Question 1 asked “what are the most important competences/values of a leader”. The table below compiles the replies. The full details can be found in Annex 18.

Value/competence of a leader	
Clarity	Communicating
Impartiality	Show initiatives and curiosity
Loyalty	Make decisions
Integrity	Motivation/development
Results focus	Generosity
Develop people	Empowerment
Accountability	Set priorities
Manage change	Common sense
Value diversity and difference	Admit mistakes and learn from them
Impact / influence	Awareness of Self and impact on others
Relationship building	Clarity of Strategic Thinking
Listening	Supporting & developing others
Selling	Leading
Transparency	

*Table 11: The peer group competence and values of leadership collated replies*

To question 2 - in your leadership role what competences/values do you want to transmit to others? Again the table below compiles the replies, the full details can be found in Annex 18.

Value/competence to transmit	
Proactive cooperation	Action orientation
Creativity, curiosity, initiative	Instilling confidence in others
Respect for others	Supportive and developmental focus

Table 12: The peer group competence and values to transmit as a leadership collated replies

Question 3 - for each of the competences/values you list, what do you think are the consequences if they are not present? – had the following replies:

Awareness of Self	Leaders who fall into the traps of not listening, believing their own PR, upsetting or demotivating those around them, unwillingness to learn or develop themselves, resistant to feedback, making the same mistakes over again etc If listening is not present you might not understand what people can bring and people might feel not involved
Impact on others	No sense of leadership; If you do not take the lead you might bring confusion and people do not know where to refer to Lack of understanding which leads to lack of motivation and could be a factor of possible errors or misperception of the right thing to do; negative ambiance at work; aggressive or mean behaviour; Weak (not trusted) leadership. Fading motivation
Clarity of Strategic Thinking	Uncertainty, lack of clarity in the organisation. Different strategies being played out in different areas/geographies etc. Focus on day-to-day tactical actions at the expense of the bigger picture. The 'BIG' questions around purpose never happen at a formal level of with the 'right' people involved.
Decision Making and follow-through	Can feel like a 'rudderless' organisation, or one where there is endless talking but no consistent action. A culture where no one is held to account for following up on agreements, along with the creation of endless 'action lists' that have no real status or value.
Supporting and developing others	Lack of effective talent management, capability gaps in the organisation, losing your best people, Over-reliance on the leader (of course this is what they may want). Creation of fear culture where people are not willing to offer challenge.
Apparent or effective favouritism	provokes jealousies and a climate of competition; lack of fairness; Suspicion
Lack of respect	hypocrisy in dealing with the boss to please him, not to make the institution better functioning Show disrespect for others, no ethics, tolerate mobbing and harassment common sense and integrity enables you to show respect
Operational effectiveness	To listen only to some ones = possibly miss the right proposal; loss of terrain vis-à-vis competitor or obsolescence of our products absence of external/fresh knowledge; loss of competitive advantage and therefore less value for the whole. Hinder or slow down effective processes Absence of development If selling is not present you might loose clarification, loose your role of leader, might not be able to convince Ultimately: Inefficiency of the global enterprise
Loss of confidence	No credibility, no adherence to rules, lack of exemplarity and confidence; insecurity among staff leading to high turnover, reactive behavior, create resistance
No common objective	Ignore other's views and competences, miss opportunities, competition instead of co-operation, no empathy risk of parallel approaches, lack of streamlining and clear resource allocation, minimalism. Lack of interest for resources and funds - risk of fraud or waste, no clear responsibilities, short-term result focus, lack of sustainability and transparency If priorities are not set, there might be a lost of control and demotivation as well, people will look for another leader
Power	Use of power instead of conviction, no adherence, lack of confidence

Communication	If communicating is not present, you might create misunderstanding, and if communication is present you better ensure people's involvement
Initiative	If initiative and/or curiosity is not present, people might not be motivated and not involved
Honesty	If you do not admit mistakes and learn from them you show superiority, the relationship is not equal

*Table 13: Competence and values of leadership and their effect if missing collated replies*

The complete complied replies were sent to the group prior to its January meeting. The above replies also facilitated the creation of Version 0 of the ICRC Leadership Model which had been requested by the peer group from the author. This can be found below.

#### **24.5.2 The ICRC Leadership Model Version 0**

The following 6 pages present the Version 0 of the ICRC Leadership Model.

This was drafted based on the discussions and input to date from the peer group which has been detailed in Part 4 to date and the Lollipop Model from Part 3.

The narrative was built from the discussions to date and in answer to the request of the peer group to state clearly the organisation's expectations from its managers. The various points of the discussions were organised under the model structure in Part 4 as the peer group had positively commented in the previous meeting on the appropriateness of the model structure. The document was organised in a way which allowed the peer groups work to feed into it while any points which were either missing or additions were clearly marked for the group to answer, again to minimise author bias. Each field or quadrant had a long list of possible elements and choices would need to be made by the group as to which were appropriate or not.

It was sent to the peer group as a basis for discussion for the following meeting which was to take place in January 2011.

## ICRC's Leadership Model



# ICRC

The ICRC's Leadership Model addresses the way the leading and managing of people and objectives should be implemented throughout the ICRC's many geographical locations. It identifies key actions, values and behaviours which are expected of those in leadership roles anywhere and at any level of the ICRC.

The ICRC Leadership Model:

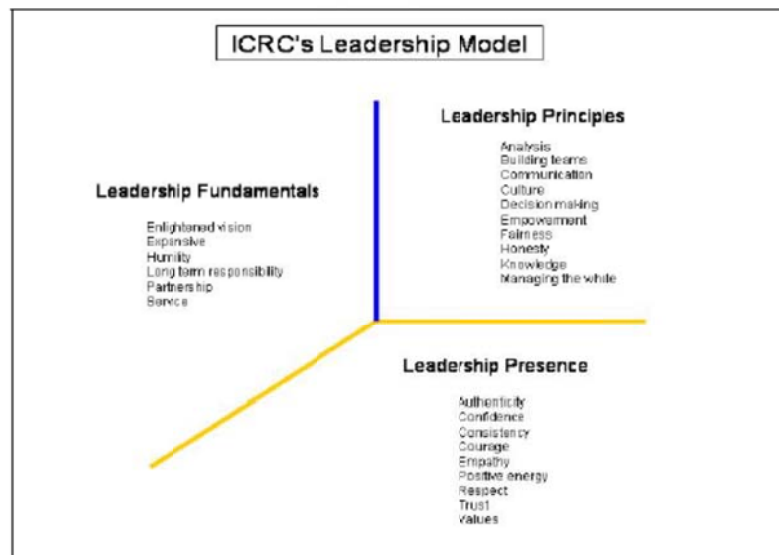
- offers a clear vision of the way in which leadership should be enacted at the ICRC
- communicates clearly the leadership elements which are expected at all levels of the organisation
- provides a common language regarding leadership throughout the organisation
- supports all staff through clearly targeted leadership learning and development

The model is a dynamic interaction of three fields of leadership – that of the actions a leader is expected to carry out, the personal leadership attributes they are expected to hold and the underlying fundamentals (or values) which are common to all leadership in the ICRC.

We believe that leadership which moves within this model ensures the right balance of personal, business and organisational wellbeing for themselves, their staff and their clients. This model of leadership allows change to be managed in a way which gives a security to the teams involved and ensures a right use of power held and shared for the good of all stakeholders involved.

## Alternative versions to be discussed

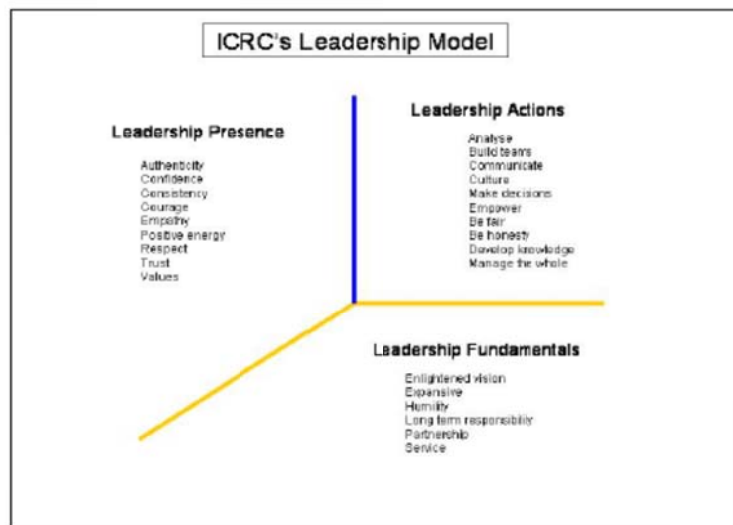
This first model is based on my own research which included around 40 ICRC participants. So I have taken this as a starting point together with your input in terms of values.



FMZ/ICRCs leadership model\_V0  
Page 1/6

Figure 8: The ICRC Model Version 0/ Page 1/6

A change here from principles to actions, reflecting closer the input received from you



This is a somewhat simpler version of the model, based on the principle of 3's (3 things being easier to remember). Am unsure how best to capture the complexity which will be a question for our work on Monday.

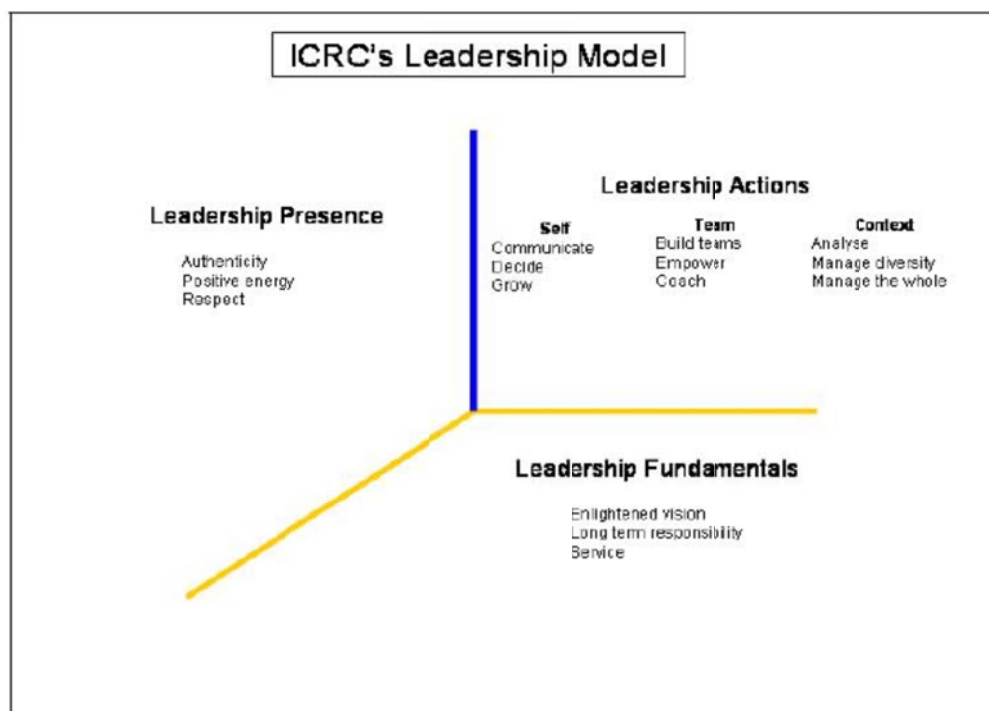


Figure 8: The ICRC Model Version 0/ Page 2/6

## Leadership Actions

Leadership actions are defined as the “to do” list of leadership at the ICRC. These are the actions expected of those in leadership positions in a 360° circle. Leadership actions, as listed below implies the “putting into action” the various elements listed and having a constant focus on the results of those actions.

Detailed attributes	Explanation
Analysis	Leadership as the analyst, who shows a clarity of strategic thinking, ensuring that the globality of the present context is taken into account as well as the future possibilities
Building/developing/working as a team	Leaders as builders, developers of teams, as coaches; leaders giving a direction with clarity and common sense of purpose to the team.
Communication	Leaders as responsible to ensure a flow of communication in all directions; leaders who can listen and who can communicate in a way which can be heard by all
Culture	Leadership which adapts to cultural diversities and differences and integrating appropriate ways of managing this
Decision making	Leadership in the making of priorities and the taking of decisions
Empowerment	Leaders recognising individual uniqueness, empowering it and empowering the organisation to evolve
Fairness ? is this logical	Leadership which demonstrates fairness and transparency in an impartial manner and ensures a sense of justice
Honesty	Leadership which demonstrates genuine honesty
Knowledge/intelligence	Leadership which demonstrates knowledge, intelligence, and competence of work-related skills - could also be termed "grow" with the idea of self development, self learning being a permanent process of getting knowledge/intelligence
Managing the whole	Leadership as responsible for the management and balance within the whole enterprise – balancing needs of the business and the staff, the giving of choices, instructions, and managing change.

### Questions remaining to be clarified

Adding value - Actions-results focus ? demonstration of progress

Impact/influence

Selling

Show initiatives and curiosity, creativity, initiative, innovation

Common sense

Transparency

Generosity

Figure 8: The ICRC Model Version 0/ Page 3/6



## Leadership Presence

Leadership presence is defined as the personal attributes which a leader embodies and enacts.

Detailed attributes	Explanation
Authenticity	Leadership which shows an awareness of self, which is authentic in what is said and done
Confidence	Leadership which shows integrity, which inspires confidence and which in turn gives confidence to others
Consistency	Leadership which is consistent over time
Courage	Leadership which demonstrates courage in the actions they take and in the values they hold
Empathy	Leadership which shows empathy
Positive energy	Leadership which brings positive energy in their presence; energy which motivates, inspires; leadership which brings a sense of humour to the workplace; the leader's innate force that seems to operate for good in an individual's or organisation's life, as in shaping circumstances, events, or opportunities
Respect	Leadership which embodies the respect for all
Trust	Leadership as an act of trust between leader and follower
Values	Leadership which has a clear and appropriate set of values

### **Questions remaining to be clarified**

Loyalty?

Admit mistakes and learn from them

Figure 8: The ICRC Model Version 0/ Page 4/6



## **Leadership fundamentals/values ?**

### ***Humility***

Despite charismatic, big personality type leadership being something widely recognisable in the leadership literature, good leaders are often those who were a little bit more humble. They do have presence but it's not a big personality presence but rather someone who's very at one with themselves, who deals in a consistent and calm way with all aspects of the organisation, from the smallest problem to the biggest problem. Like the quote of Lao Tzu on leadership which is often mentioned, that "the leader doesn't talk, he acts. When his work is done, the people will say "amazing, we did it, all by ourselves!" We give value to this, acknowledging that leaders who move with humility have a greater capacity to listen to and see possibilities for the future.

### ***Expansive – the space to grow***

Good leadership offer space; they create and open the space for the people around them to grow. Good leadership is expansive in that it creates this space, it widens horizons, and it creates new possibilities. Leadership is a combination of many factors; factors that must fit the time and the place and the group – they can be vision, energy, intelligence, the willingness to be part of a team and to let other people be their best, to be open and that good leadership opened the space for the organisation and people to grow and develop personally and professionally. Expansive leadership teaches and shares their skills and knowledge and gives space and time to those growing up under them. Good leaders widen horizons – either at an individual or organisation, or even context level. Expansive leadership opens time and space to and for others; it shares experience and it supports the growth of others, leaving them with the feeling that they were better than before.

### ***Partners not followers***

Good leaders create teams that work together rather than followers. "At no point did she position herself as a reference point facing us. She was going the same way as we were, but paving it for us. Not a general ordering its troops but an inspiring soldier like us, a bit braver, less self centred, more ready to serve. Sharing, inspiring, daring; another kind of leader, one who has no followers but partners" - leadership that makes people feel that they are part of something, that their contribution means something, and matters, that together they are part of something.

### ***Long Term Responsibility (i.e. accountability)***

Good leadership carries responsibilities through to the end, even if that end is years down the line. Good leaders take a real responsibility for what they, and those working for them, do. Good leaders earn trust. They are congruent with who they are. They speak with authority and show integrity between what is said and what is done. Good leaders set examples that make people want to follow them.

Above all good leaders ensure that those around them know, and feel safe in, the fact that the leader takes active responsibility for the vision being enacted and the work being undertaken.

### **Service**

There is an element of service in good leadership. Leaders put themselves in that place where they become the one who serves the team in helping them reach the vision or goal. This entails leading by example, that the leader can put themselves somehow last, in service of not just people but in service of the purpose, in service of the aims, service of the goal. The leader makes sacrifices on behalf of that but somehow in making the sacrifices you discover you're the one who's gained. Leadership was about being in community and being responsible and thus able to respond in a way that serves the greater good of that community.

### **Enlightened vision**

Vision, naturally, is an important aspect of leadership. Good leaders build visions that not only are clear, but that are appropriate and well communicated. They have the capacity to build stories for the future that give people choices and possibilities, a wider horizon with which to see the possibilities of the future, an enlightened vision which brings more than what is presently seen, and brings with it a sense of service to the future. Leadership is about taking fuller responsibility when the leader's skills and their perspective lets them see things others can't - which some may call intuition; it is about assessing the risks and possibilities; it is about communicating effectively and designing with others a way forward.

*Figure 8: The ICRC Model Version 0/ Page 6/6*

## 24.6 Peer group meeting of January 2011

This meeting had as an objective to discuss the Version 0 and to define the fields of leadership and what they encompass for the ICRC.

There was general consensus around the idea of having three fields of leadership; that this took into account the complexity of the subject and yet offered a frame that was wide and open enough to be expansive.

There was an agreed preference expressed from the start of the meeting for the third model in the document as this was felt to best reflect the discussions to date and was the most readable. There were a number of concrete reasons for this which can be summarised as follows:

- Very positive reaction to the field of leadership actions which reflects the 3 dimensions of self/team/context
- Model captures the elements of personality of a leader which reflects previous discussions
- Model shows clearly the elements of what leadership is and what it does/should do
- It was felt that even on a first read and though it is only an initial draft, it could immediately be put into practice and be used to train others
- The model shows doesn't show enough simplicity - the model has too many points/dimensions; it doesn't strike enough, not powerful enough as overwhelmed by different aspects; so many can't be remembered thus there is a question of whether it can be taught
- There is a need to make it more powerful, easier to remember which would therefore make it easier to implement
- Appreciate the elements of the model under "action"
- Group members found it corresponded well to the PLM principles. The ICRC's People, Leadership and Management (PLM) principles are: self awareness, conducive environment, feedback and decision making
- There still needs to be some work to make it easier to grasp, simpler to explain, follow, and thus implement
- The model does clarify the expectation that followers can have toward their leaders which is felt to be beneficial to the act of leadership

The main point of the discussion/debate centred on the following:

- The need for clarity on definition of fundamentals and presence
- The need to analyse the additional of 3 functions important to the ICRC into our analysis – the institutional control function which we often term as accountability, to look at how the model would be implemented, controlled, sanctioned and its impact on the training function and how to train new leaders according to the model

There was general agreement that the model contains everything that leadership needs but there is further work needed to see what is it really that makes leadership in the ICRC and would this mean changing/adjusting the model. One has to balance the attributes/qualities which are rather inward looking with the need to give idea that leader should be one who achieves something, puts things into action and achieves operational results. It is important that leadership should not be too busy with the internal management only but lead a team to action and ensure the networking/perseverance of leadership into implementation. There may need to be less leadership “qualities” and to put them in better focus with the achievement of results.

Following this a discussion took place on the idea of the model having three quadrants and what should be their respective weight in relationship to one another. The discussion is summarised as follows:

- general agreement that all three quadrants should be measured equally (general agreement on this). This is especially the case in the current climate where too often there is a focus on only one aspect (e.g. analysis or getting things done), often ignoring the cost created by the absence of the other quadrants
- it was felt that good leadership is achieved by representing, being present in and balancing the needs of all three quadrants of the model
- the question was discussed whether the "to do" (i.e. actions and the achievement of results) is more important than the rest or do we leaders to “achieve in all three quadrants? There was general consensus that while it is important, even crucial, to achieving results but that should not be at the expense of, for example, bad treatment or high cost to the team. The balancing of all these aspects was felt to be the difference between a leader and a good leader. It was strongly felt that at the ICRC we do not want people in a leadership role who can only achieve results in one quadrant; equally just to “love each other” is not enough but need to achieve results

Following this discussion, a work was undertaken to go through the definitions as presented in Version 0. The points of these discussions are listed in detail Annex 17 but in summary as the three quadrants of action, presence and fundamentals were confirmed though the idea of fundamentals needs further clarification as they are the fundamental principles which we require leaders to embody.

Based on the detailed comments, the peer group asked that the ICRC Leadership Model Version 0 be reworked to incorporate the points discussed and asked the author to do so prior to the next meeting. The peer group also decided that they would test the model with various colleagues to create further input for the next meeting.

#### **24.7 Author comments on January 2011 meeting**

To summarise the discussion, there are a few elements which emerge relative the research to date which were both encouraging while at the same time showing the complex nature of language and the use of concepts which are not immediately clear.

The fact that fundamentals and the concept of presence required much explaining meant that the Lollipop model had within it aspects which were not evident to others. This posed a serious problem in terms of its potential acceptability and application. The concept of “leadership field” did not speak to participants and its was found to be confusing and unclear.

The role of organisational language was also an issue. For example the term accountability does not appear as such in the model. Its basic idea is incorporated in that of long term responsibility which is in the model, yet this was felt not to be enough to be able to “speak” to the organisation. This showed that if a model is to have practical reality in terms of implementation in an organisation, it must to flexible enough to be able to adapt to the organisational language.

The discussion around the balance between internal focus (on the attributes of a leader) and the external focus (getting things done well) needed a sharper focus and better balance.

The discussion around the weight of the quadrants in relation to each other was particularly important. The fact that all agreed that the quadrants should have equal value is significant. That actions were to be given the same weight as presence and fundamentals meant that even in an “action orientated” organisation like the ICRC where the results of the work can mean life or death, the leadership model that would be created was passing the message that the “how to get things done” was as important as “getting things done”. This, if it would be kept within the model, would mark a significant shift in management and leadership style



for the ICRC where the “getting things done” was more important than how things were done or how people were managed and led through the process.

## 24.8 The Model of Version 1

Based on the discussion in January's meeting which have been outlined above, the author reworked Version 0 to take into account the comments and questions which had been raised. This document was then sent to the peer group as preparatory material for the next meeting which took place in March 2011.

The full Leadership Model Version 1 can be found in Annex 19. Below is the drawing of the model which Version 1 presents.

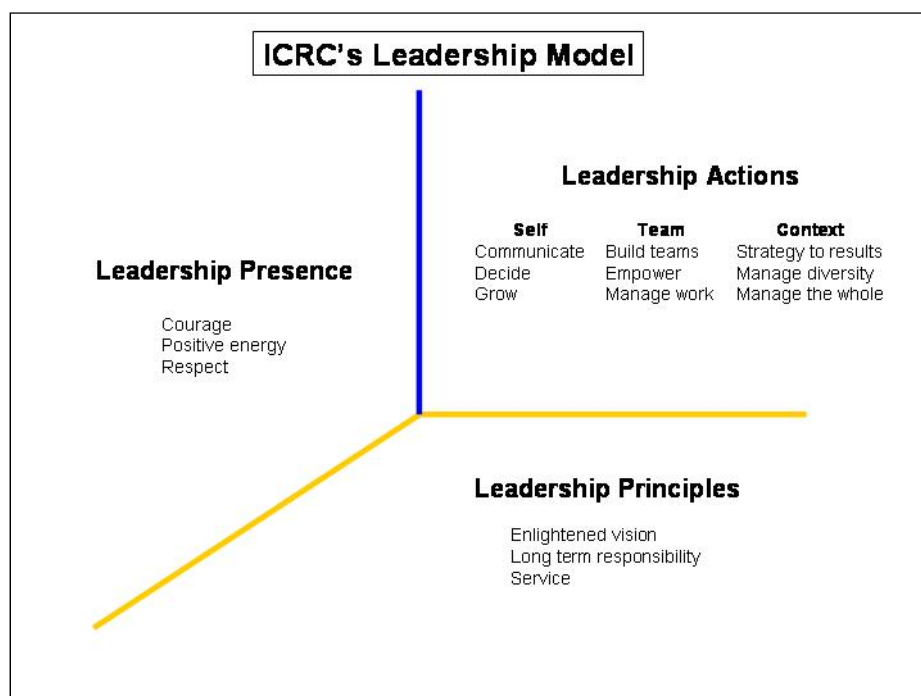


Figure 9: The ICRC Leadership Model Version 1

### 24.8.1 Author comments

Version 1 contained a reworking based on all the comments made in the January meeting. The author made one “executive” change by integrating the aspect of coaching into building teams after a discussion with the trainer responsible for coaching at the ICRC who warned against mixing too many ideas. The other was to change analysis to “strategy to results”. These changes incorporated the discussions around the need at the ICRC to manage the work, balance priorities and to ensure that leaders did not just make a good analysis of the situation but were able to put into action plans and to achieve results.

The final main change was authenticity to courage. This was the result of a long debate which said that courage was needed to be authentic and that this could combine both. The definition was changed accordingly.

A big piece of work was the creation of the definitions under each theme of the model. This was done using the research work from Part 3.

## **24.9 February and the inquiry process**

Prior to this meeting, the ICRC Leadership Model Version 0 was reworked. The peer group agreed to undertake an inquiry process based on the new ICRC Leadership Model Version 1 (see Annex 19) as a first test to see reactions among managers not involved in the process and at different levels in the organisation.

The inquiry process asked each member of the peer group to send Version 1 to one or more people and then interview them. The document was sent prior to the interview so that participants would have time to read it and then the interviews were structured according to the follow question format:

- what do you like about the model?
- what does not fit/not make sense to you in the model?
- are there elements which you would like to in an ICRC leadership model that are not present?
- any other ideas, comments, suggestions?

It would be great if you could all do this with at least 1 person, after that the more we ask, the better we can make it. I will send the same questions to our peer group sounding board and see what they have to say.

The full results of the interviews can be found in Annex 18. To summarise, the following points stand out from an analysis of the interviews:

- General appreciate of a three dimensional model which comprises the full scope of leadership. At the same time wondering if it is a bit too ambitious or utopian?
- Balance between personal aspects and organisational ones
- Needed a clearer explanation of organisational values
- Several mentioned that the idea of a “sense of humour” seemed misplaced in such a document

- Model can be modulated to the weight of various leadership posts throughout the organisation
- A wording which is more ICRC related would be appreciated

From these comments, a Version 2 document was created and sent to the peer group.

## 24.10 Peer group meeting of March 2011

Prior to the meeting the results of the inquiry process was sent to the peer group. Along with this was sent a re-worked Version 2 based on the results of the inquiry process. This document can be found in Annex 19.

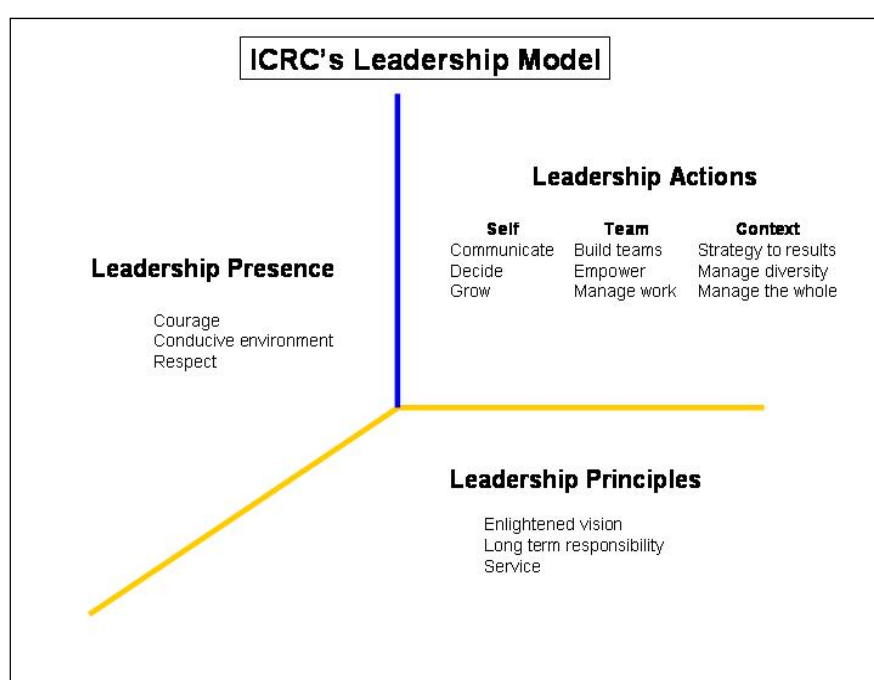


Figure 10: The ICRC Leadership Model Version 2

The only changes made between Version 1 and 2 was a change the language in the definitions to a more commonly used organisational language. Only one change, which is related to this language question, was made in the model - the term “conducive environment” within the ICRC represents one of the 4 “People Leadership and Management (PLM)” principles which the ICRC adopted in 2009. The 4 PLM principles are conducive environment, self-awareness, decision-making and feedback. The internal definition of conducive environment within the ICRC aligns itself with the model’s definition of positive energy, hence the change in wording.



#### **24.10.1    *Summary of the discussions of the March meeting***

This meeting started with the author presenting a list of questions which came from an analysis of the feedback on the leadership model. These are summarised as follows:

- is the specific aim of the model also to underpin recruitment, performance evaluation, learning and development – this questions was immediately and unanimously confirmed as yes
- Long term responsibility versus accountability – what is the difference and what is right for the ICRC
- A question which was regularly raised was can we realistically expect each of the competences below
- Do we place equal value on all three fields - confirmed strongly as yes
- Do we need to explain the difference between leadership and management?
- Do we need to put management of resources somewhere
- Clarify the aspect of respect versus efficiency
- Clarify the elements of “grow” versus “act” versus “ self”

To some of the open questions, there were immediate and unanimous confirmations made. These have been noted alongside the questions above.

During these discussions we met for the first time (but by no means the last) the challenge of finding the right words in the absolute as opposed to finding the right words which had organisational meaning, i.e. which were part of the fabric of the common understanding within the organisation. This was to be an aspect which would be discussed a number of times. The peer group had, in terms of language, people with 3 different mother tongues (French, German and English); the ICRC is a principally French speaking organisation which is increasingly using English as the majority working language with French being the common language of the senior management.

The accountability versus long term responsibility took some time to discuss. Accountability is currently a “hot topic” in the organisation and thus it was natural that there was a need to see if reflected in any future leadership framework. There was a general appreciation of the idea and definition which underpinned long term responsibility which carried the idea of a broader responsibility in the role of leadership than simple accountability to the current tasks. Long term responsibility meant that the thought of long term consequences of actions and responsibility to and for the whole institution rested present in the mindful actions of any

leader. It was felt to support the idea of service in leadership expressed elsewhere in the model. It also pushed leadership to define actions in relation to the longer term outcomes rather than the tendency to think short term. As it was felt to carry a much wider perspective that accountability, it was decided to confirm and keep the term “long term responsibility”.

A question which was regularly raised in a number of interviews was whether we can realistically expect each of the competences in the model to be present in leadership at the ICRC. Interestingly in the discussion, there was a quick, unanimous and strong confirmation of this. It

Next, the element of courage was discussed. This was felt to be an extremely important aspect of leadership. As with any positions of responsibility there was felt to be a permanent temptation to hide behind others and the ability to have the courage to stand and represent the actions and decisions of both the self and those being led were an important aspect of leadership. In a similar light there should be found too the courage to be loyal too the institution. This demanded the courage to take a position and hold a position, a stand, to be present. Courage also demanded that a leader be prepared to take a different decision should needs change and not to be afraid to change direction or drive a discussion about present or future states. It was felt that courage strengthens the ability of a leader to contribute to quality of work and the evolution of an organisation in a real and impactful way.

The responsibility of a leader for vision was confirmed by all. The group agreed with the idea of enlightened vision as it gave the sense of a vision which fitted into the wider organisation and should fit the context and the people within it better than just a vision coming from the leader's own interpretation.

The discussion then turned to the weight of each quadrant of the model – those of action, presence and principles. It was agreed that each field should have equal weight as this brought a balance to the act of leadership. The reasoning put forward was that if something is missing, it affects all the rest so yes all are equally valued. It was felt that the principles. It was noted that actions would be easier to measure than presence; indeed the question which needs looking into was the aspect of presence and how could it be measured to assess performance. It was noted that once the model was drafted, the institution would have to take a stand as to whether it was prepared to ask all this of its leaders.

From here a discussion took place and the difference between leadership and management as there is a tendency to call everyone a manager and think of only those at the top of the organisation as leaders. The question was put as to whether you can be a good manager and not a leader – the group saw a manager as one who organises, structures and controls

and a leader as one who motivates, brings vision, has a broader width and depth. One participant made an interesting comment that they felt that in general most companies over manage and under lead. It was decided in the group that “leadership actions” was the part of the model that framed the “management” part of leadership. As the group took this position almost naturally, they agreed that to define the difference further was not necessary. In order to make it clear within the organisation, it was decided to add the term “management” into the introduction to explanation of leadership action. This would be a good signal to the organisation that leadership is expected throughout the organisation from all those in management positions.

The next topic discussed was that of resources. This was felt to be lacking clarity in the model. Resources are an important part of what a leader has to manage. While included in “leadership actions” there is a need within the organisation to be more explicit as we very often talk much about our vision and ambitions but rarely have the ability to match resources as we have too many ambitions without the ability to prioritise correctly. This alignment of people and resources to vision is crucial. This should be added to the element of “manage the whole” and “strategy to results”. This, if it was felt, would help us make the cultural change necessary in the organisation in our attitude towards the management of resources.

“Manage diversity” was discussed next with the group somehow uneasy with this, wondering if we should rather talk about inclusion rather than diversity. The reasoning was that the term inclusion gave a more positive direction to bringing everyone into the act of leadership rather than the idea of a leader having to “manage” differences. The discussion was somewhat inconclusive with the agreement that we would talk further to the diversity team within the organisation to see what would be the most appropriate term to use.

Some further questions were put on the table:

- Grow versus self. The ICRC in the PLM principles uses the term “self” as one of the four principles which in definition is practically the same as the definition given in Version 1 of the model to grow. It was felt to be better to use the organisational terminology which has established meaning
- In “decide” need to include the idea of act in the decision making process more clearly
- Values – does the model need to be explicit about organisation values. The ICRC does not have any explicit values other than the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement’s

7 principles<sup>2</sup>. The question was asked around the table of what values would we list for the ICRC. The answers ranged from - care, respect, humility, right use of power, discretion, empathy, victim centred. The values which can be found expressed on the ICRC's website are respect, exemplarity, respect of local customs. The culture of the ICRC very implicit and no two people would make the same list, but in their absence, their lack is immediately noticed – is that the specific nature of the mission of the ICRC which means that likeminded people are attracted by it and the uniqueness of the ICRC. This question of values was said to be like the wind - you can't see it but you can feel it. There was a request to add the idea of values to introduction

This summarises the discussion on the ICRC Leadership Model Version 2. The group tasked the author to integrate all the points of the discussion to create Version 3. This would be submitted for discussion in the last peer group meeting prior to the forthcoming Montreux meeting of senior management. The ICRC Leadership Model was to be a working document for this meeting and the culmination of the action research journey by testing and retesting the model over 2 days with 60% of the ICRC's senior management and its entire Directorate.

#### **24.10.2    *Comments on graphics***

The idea of the three quadrants or fields had been validated in Version 0 and throughout the various interviews. In the process of building Version 1, work was done with a graphic artist to find options for the display of the model. These are shown below (the full size models can be found in Annex 19.3).

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<sup>2</sup> The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has 7 principles which guide all the actions of any body within the Movement. These are  
HUMANITY IMPARTIALITY NEUTRALITY INDEPENDENCE VOLUNTARY SERVICE UNITY UNIVERSALITY

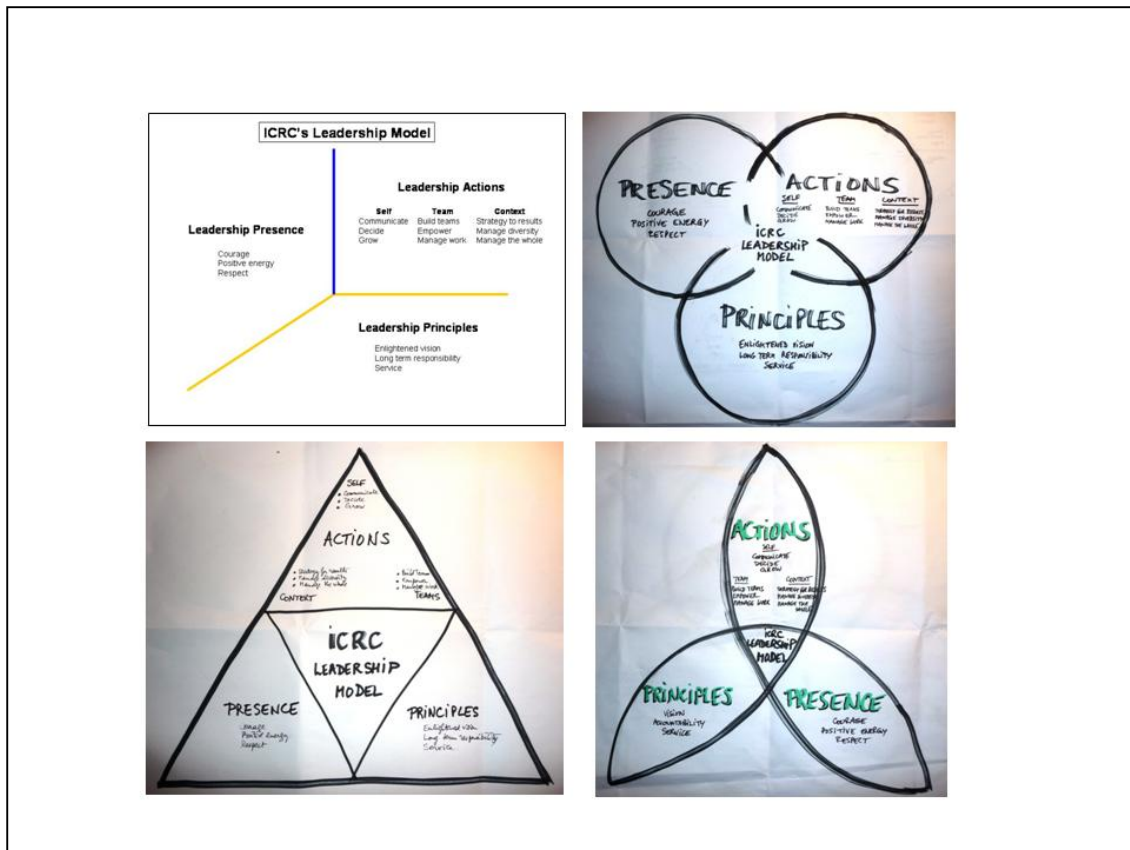


Figure 11: The choice of graphics for the ICRC model

This work was submitted to the peer group as the final part of this meeting. The discussion did not last very long – the triangular model was seen as too much top/bottom giving the impression of hierarchy and which would risk to give the idea of one quadrant being more important than the others. The circles were felt to be too classical, closing in the various elements while the “helicopter blades” as someone titled it had no sense for the members of the groups. There was a unanimous agreement that “we prefer our original drawing” as it was the most open and gave the impression of the expansive nature of leadership and of being encompassing.

## 24.11 Author comments on March 2011 meeting

A question which was regularly raised in a number of interviews was whether we can realistically expect each of the competences in the model to be present in leadership at the ICRC. Interestingly in the discussion, there was a quick, unanimous and strong confirmation of this. This echoed similar questions when the initial research was first presented, and indeed my own questions as to whether a model with 23 elements could be practical. I was surprised, pleasantly, by the unanimous and positive response from this by the peer group. They accepted that leadership is complicated and to simplify it too much was to lessen both

its importance and to ask less of those in leadership positions. I took it as a confirmation that the research was on the right track.

The discussion on leadership versus management was again a confirmation, for the author of the initial research results. This tendency to call everyone a manager and think of only those at the top of the organisation as leaders has a huge impact on organisations, lessening their ability to grow, develop and empower the kind of leadership that organisations need at all levels. This inherent understanding by the group, themselves leaders in their own right in their specific fields within the ICRC, that leaders have a specific role as a manager and that they say this as being contained within the field of “leadership actions” was an incredible insight into the future power that the model could have and its potential give a possible conclusion to the never ending leadership versus management debate.

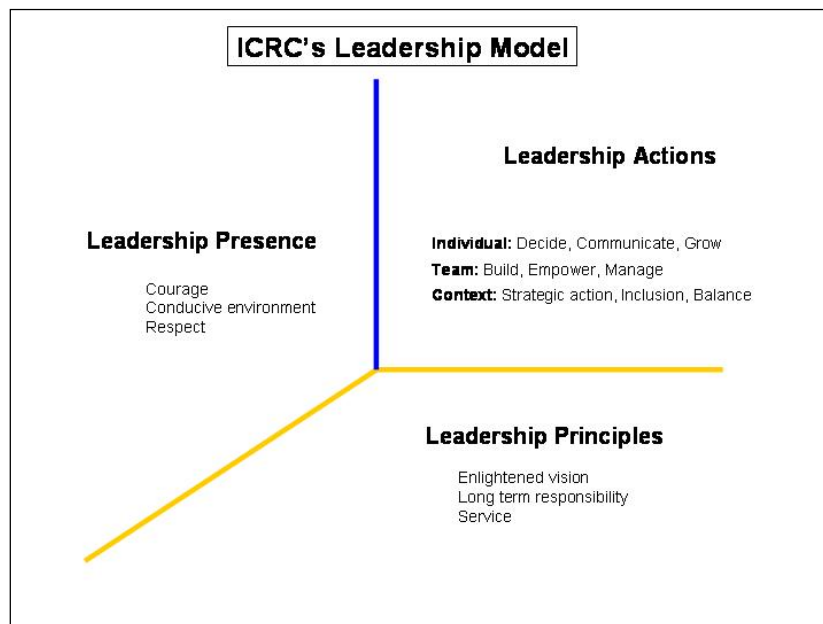
Finally the comments on the graphics were again a confirmation that the model was on the right track.

#### **24.12 Preparing for the Montreux meetings April 2011**

A week prior to the Montreux meeting a final meeting of the peer group was called. Due to the members various travelling and mission demands, it took place by conference call. The call was chaired by the consultant from the company running the ICRC’s leadership programmes who had accompanied the process since the start in November 2011.

Prior to the conference call, the author submitted the ICRC Leadership Model Version 3 to the group for reading (the full document can be found in Annex 19.5). Based on the discussion during the peer group meeting in March, Version 3 of the model was prepared for the Montreux meetings. The main changes in this model were:

- From strategy to results to strategic action: this was felt to combine better the idea of action
- From manage diversity to inclusion: this change reflected the feeling of the group that thinking in terms of inclusion was more appropriate and would produce a stronger leadership than thinking in terms of managing diversity
- From manage the whole to balance: this arose primarily from the discussion around the management of resources (material, human, financial) as an important and main aspect of managing the whole. It was felt that the aligned of people and resources was better defined when using the term “balance” rather than “managing the whole”



*Figure 12: The ICRC Leadership Model Version 3*

The planned conference call of the peer took place without full attendance of the peer group. It unanimously approved Version 3 as being sufficient to present to the Montreux meeting. It decided to use the time allocated during the Montreux meeting to form a series of working groups around the Model over two days with the objective to create a final draft which would meet the approval of the senior management present and which could be presented to the ICRC Directorate board for final approval.

## 25. The Montreux Process - April 2011

### 11. Model 2

The Montreux process was part of a leadership training initiative of the ICRC. It closed a four year leadership development programme within the organisation with a three day summit bringing together the top management and directorate of the ICRC. In attendance were 63 senior managers at the ICRC (a full list of participants can be found in Annex 20, Chapter 6). The peer group felt that this would be an ideal opportunity to test the model that has been created and to use the chance of structured working groups to advance the model to a final draft. To do so, the peer group was allocated five working sessions in total over a three day period. This meant that every single one of the 63 senior managers present was involved in the drafting process through the working sessions. In between each step of the process, the peer group met and drafted a new version integrating the comments and discussions. This meant that the model moved from Version 3 presented at the beginning of the Montreux meeting, to Version 5 which was the final version.

The ICRC Leadership Model Version 3 was presented to the whole group on the first day of the 3 day summit. On the second day, there were 5 structured working groups each time consisting of approximately 12 people each time. By the end of this second day, the ICRC Leadership Model was in Version 4. Day 3 consisted of a presentation to the whole group of Version 4 which was followed by discussion with all the participants broken up again into 5 smaller groups over the morning. The outcome was Version 5 which was the final version of the ICRC Leadership Model. The following sections detail the discussions during each round.

### 25.1 The Montreux Process – Step 1: the opening

Step 1 of the process consisted of a general presentation to the whole group of the ICRC Leadership Model Version 3. It was followed by five detailed presentation and discussion sessions to ensure the contribution of all present.

#### 25.1.1 The ICRC Leadership Model Version 3 - Discussion Round 1

The peer group gave a short presentation on the background to the document, the work done by the peer group to date and opened the discussion. The role of the author was to minute the process. The summary below highlights the main issues and questions which were the subjects of discussions.



General appreciation of the work done, its completeness and the necessity to have such a framework.

Long term responsibility was seen as being very important; it gave the ability to connect to the past and to the future which was important for the organisation. It ensured reference to the people we work for and that we have them at the heart of our leadership. It serves people, the staff, the organisation, and the beneficiaries. One participant questioned the fact that that long term responsibility was in the model as how can we have long term responsibility when only present in a mission for a short period of time (on average, managers at the ICRC have missions in the field which are between 2 and 4 years) or when we have a planning system which is yearly. The balanced view of the group was that even if missions are short, in a leadership role there must be accountability over the long term.

It was questioned whether the Leadership Model was something new or already part of the system/something already present (participants were told it was clearly something in draft). It was felt that the model still needed development as did the idea of leadership within the organisation. At the ICRC it was noted that we still had a culture of adapting to the leader and their personality without enough account being taken about what already has been built, decided or what has existed. It was felt that clarify what the organisation expected of leadership through such a model would help in this process.

There was general agreement that a good leader should be able to walk along all three quadrants – to have good results based on objectives and to have flexibility through the whole range of the model.

The model was felt to be attractive for the following reasons:

- it brings together the processes, the results and the people
- it gives and would ensure continuity
- it brings the idea of a responsibility and the long term responsibility towards the staff and the beneficiaries and not just to the objectives
- high level of approval for the idea of courage as one of the elements

Some participants to the discussion noted that they would like the model to be clearer on the deliverables, the results and the desired impact of leadership. A question was raised of where to put the mission of the organisation and the fact that leaders must have a fundamental belief in the mission and deliver results accordingly; should this not be at the centre of the model?

Things that were missing or needed further discussion:

- A leader has to do outside relationship management as well as all the internal work – where is this relationship management aspect reflected?
- Can a leader be made?
- A reference for the people we work with (the beneficiaries) should be at the heart of leadership and thus reflected in the model; should that reference be to serving beneficiaries, the staff or the organisation – all agreed it should be all three
- why do we lead needs to be at the centre of leadership principles

In summary a very detailed range of aspects which needed further study by the research team and would be integrated into a new version of the model.

### ***25.1.2 The ICRC Leadership Model - Discussion Round 2***

Round 2 consisted of the same working process, still based on Version 3 of the model, but with a different group of people.

There was general approval of the leadership model and everyone was impressed about how far the peer group had come with their work, its structure and its practicality.

This group had many useful questions and comments which are summarised below:

- Is the model to identify, recruit or develop leaders – the peer group answered that it should be able to do all three if it was to have a practical application across the organisation. This idea met with general approval.
- There are different leadership and management models. In this model are both leadership and management aspects. For example in the principles is the vision is the leadership part and the service the management part; similarly in presence, is courage the leadership part and respect/conducive environment the management part? It is felt by the group that differentiating between leadership and management is very difficult to do in the field as both roles are intimately tied together as all moments. Do we want and need to have and recognise both in the model?
- Do we want to differentiate leadership and management – this is very difficult to do in the day to day running of a delegation. Interesting the general answer was no which reflected the earlier work of the peer group. All participants felt that these are two indivisible aspects of the same job/role

- What kind of leaders do we want to have? Answer – we want leaders with vision and the management skills to carry out that vision
- Some of the things in the model are personal qualities while others are competences that can be developed – do we need to differentiate more clearly between the two
- If every leader at every level has a vision, do we risk to have too many visions?
- The model is missing the aspect accountability. It was questioned whether long term responsibility is enough and whether it fully encompasses what the ICRC understands by accountability
- Can the model address the issue of “aggressive careerism”? Would it be appropriate to do so?
- Action i.e. the doing and achieving of results is incredibly important for leaders. This must be underlined and reflected

The group underlined that any ICRC model should be very explicit about the kind of leadership do we want to have in the organisation. This group unanimously agreed that we want to have people in leadership roles that have vision and have the management skills to carry it that vision, underlying their earlier discussions.

### ***25.1.3 The ICRC Leadership Model - Discussion Round 3***

The same discussion format was again taken. A member of the peer group presented the model and facilitated the discussion. The points made are summarised below:

- The discussion around management versus leadership arose again. The group question whether there was a need to differentiate. There was a general feeling that this needed to be clarified as we tend to use the term “manager” in the ICRC so if we come out with the Leadership Model, we have to make it clear that it is applicable to all managers throughout the organisation.
- Within leadership actions it would be important to emphasis idea of the accompanying a leader has towards their team and their role in empowering the team to achieve results
- The model is interesting as it would give the organisation a wider range of people who can be leaders and work in the ICRC. This would allow us to recruit a wider range of people as managers rather than our traditionally narrow definition of who is eligible in the ICRC

- Underlying the model must be clarity of what the ICRC wants in its leaders. Does it want leaders who can analyse or leaders who can manage or both
- The model gives the portrait of a leader; are all expected? Are all crucial? The group themselves answered positively to this question and judged that all were important. They agreed that all were expected but not necessarily all at an expert level but the basics in each one, yes. They expressed the idea of a leader as coordinator who ensures that all the aspects are covered even if not actually done by themselves i.e. is aware at all levels but if has a weakness in one then ensures that it is covered by someone else in the team
- The model is very ambitious but it should be, that is good
- It contains an element of efficiency – that there is good management and economy of resources. This is important.

#### **25.1.4 The ICRC Leadership Model - Discussion Round 4**

Again the same introductory remarks and explanations were given.

The discussion which followed and the questions raised can be summarised as follows:

- Can you go straight to a leadership model without first having a management mode?
- Ensure that the model takes the full spectrum of building leaders – from a training perspective to building management; the model needs to allow this spectrum
- Can you have good managers who are not leaders? How does this fit into the model?
- Group likes the model and would like to see management as one small part of leadership.

Other issues which were mentioned were:

- The term exemplarity is missing
- courage to make and manage change; the role of a leader in being able to create a team that can cope and deal with change
- building relationships externally and internally

Overall the group was very appreciative of the work done, the model presented and very much welcomed the idea that the ICRC should have a Leadership Model which would help them clarify their own roles within the organisation.

### **25.1.5 The ICRC Leadership Model - discussion round 5**

This was the last round with the remaining participants. There was a repetition of many of the previous comments, particularly in relation to leadership versus management, courage, exemplarity and accountability.

This group opened the question of whether the model could be built so that it can be used as a self-assessment/appraisal too. This the group felt would help them in their own roles by being able to calibrate concretely how they were performing and give them a framework to ensure they were performing well across the various elements in the model and not just in the narrow definition of “good performance” on which the achievement of results tends to focus. In the organisation's performance evaluation system it would be important to clarify if an individual's performance would be measured on competence or performance in terms of the results achieved. A perfect Model would allow for self performance appraisal and hierarchical performance appraisal; if this were a possibility it would be important that the model allows the balance between competence and performance outcomes.

This group also opened the question of complementarity. By this they meant the question of whether one individual person in a leadership role should have all the elements in the model or whether it is acceptable that they build “management teams” around them who together have it all (i.e. various individuals having some of the various elements and adding up to one whole).

## **25.2 The Montreux Process – Step 2**

The 5 rounds of working group sessions left the peer group with two basic messages. Firstly we were on the right track in terms both of organisational and individual need; it made sense to the senior management which was a very positive sign. Secondly, it left us with many points that needed to be clarified or reworked into the model.

The second step in the process was to summarise the discussions of the working groups (which has been presented in detail in 26.1 above) with the original peer group members. This was done on the first evening.

Below is a record of the discussion which took place and the decisions taken in order to create Version 4 of the Model for the following days meeting.

- Leadership versus management. The question of leadership versus management came up several times through the various groups.

- there was a clear wish by all not to make a simplified idea of 2 different roles
  - management things can be learnt and keeping things on course
  - the majority of the groups said NO to 2 different roles and saw leadership and management being 2 aspects of the same role – the leader has to be a manager and vice-versa
  - the peer group confirmed the decision to have a model where the function of management and leadership is encompassed into one role, After that it is a question of depth at the various levels
  - decision taken to reformulate the title from “ICRC Leadership Model” to the “ICRC Leadership and Management Model” to address the issue of the fact that the terms used in the organisation refers to “the management” and “managers”. By clarifying the title, we send the message clearly that
- Is the model too much? Does a leader need to have it all? The group agreed that it is ultimately a leader must have the responsibility to have all the elements present (of course at various levels of depth). The group felt that what the model puts forward are really basics, yes basics which can be built on and developed but basics all the same.
    - The idea put forward several times of leaders creating “management teams” (where a number of people took on complementary roles) to fulfill together the full range of the leadership model was welcomed and felt to be useful. In general the group thought that this idea had merit but it should not take away from the fact that leaders must have something of each element present in themselves in order for them to be even aware of it
  - In good leadership there needs to be hands-on management, good management and the model needs to ensure that this requirement is evident. This management role, which mainly comes under leadership actions was felt to be crucial in carrying the work of the ICRC and delivering the services to the beneficiaries.

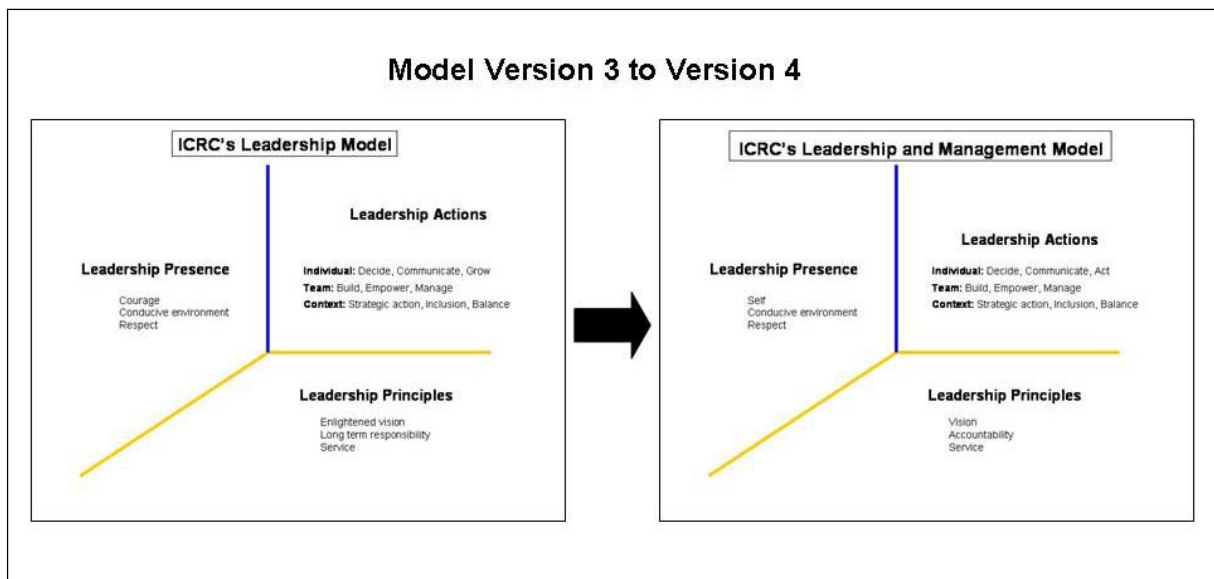
The group then discussed the remaining elements that need further clarification:

- What can be learnt? What can be developed?, What can be encouraged/raise awareness and through that evolve; i.e. actions can be taught, presence can be developed and encouraged, principles a bit of both
- Revisit accountability – the general feeling is that it needs to be added as we are at a time when accountability is only tied to a task which is why we used long term responsibility in the first place. Considering the current sensitivity in the organisation

around accountability it was felt to be more appropriate to use this term which has meaning within the organisation rather than trying to introduce a new term and concept.

- In decision making – add to first sentence “and who are accountable for the decisions and actions taken”

Based on the above, the peer group produced the “ICRC Leadership and Management Model Version 4” which can be found in Annex 19.6.



*Figure 13: The ICRC Leadership Model Version 3 to 4*

The main changes from Version 3 to 4 are:

- From grow to act: the idea of grow was felt to be included in the PLM principle of self, hence the group felt at this place in the model it would be more appropriate to focus on the enacting of the self, i.e. putting the growing into action
- From courage to self: courage as an element of leadership was strongly supported but was felt to be incorporated into the PLM definition of self and so the use of an ICRC term which is already understood was felt to be more appropriate
- From enlightened vision to vision: the removal of the word “enlightened” reflected the discomfort of many people at asking something which seemed too “fuzzy”. It was felt that the idea of vision would be equally strong within the organisation without the work enlightened as this is balanced by the aspect of service in the model

- From Long Term Responsibility to Accountability: while long term responsibility was understood and felt to be important, it created much discussion around its relation to year planning cycles and frequent changes of postings. As accountability is one of the institutional priorities, this was felt to better represent in terms of organisation language, the idea behind long term responsibility.

Perhaps the most striking change is that of the title – to “Leadership and Management Model”. This reflects discussions which have taken place throughout the research journey of what is the difference between leadership and management. Throughout the discussions there was convergence around the fact that all leadership has a component of management which sits within it and which especially sits in the “leadership actions” quadrant of the model. In the organisation, we refer to everyone as managers so the danger of only calling it a leadership model would be that very few people would feel that the model would be applicable to them.

### **25.3 The Montreux Process – Step 3**

The third part of the work took place over the following day with a group who volunteered to become part of the Leadership and Management Model (LMM) working group. There were 15 volunteers in all. Their objective was to create a final version of the LMM. These are the notes from the discussions in bringing the LMM to its final version (Version 5).

The LMM should be something which allows an explicit statement of the institutional leadership values while at the same time an implementation of leadership on a day-to-day basis. The group felt this was very necessary as today on the 4 PLM principles are too narrow and too little to constitute a framework. In that respect, the LMM offers a bridge between the PLM principles and implementation of good leadership throughout the organisation and in turn allows leadership and the PLM principles to become more specific and tangible.

The working group discussed the pending issues, the changes proposed and questions arising from the previous days work:

- Long term responsibility versus accountability: within the organisation we need to have a leadership model which shows clearly that the decision makers are responsible and thus accountable for that decision. It was felt that to be responsible for individual actions is important but to be responsible without being accountable for felt to be of no use. There was a split in opinion as to whether accountability was larger than long term responsibility or not. At this stage in the organisation the fact that



there would be clarity around someone being held accountable for what they had done would ensure transparency. Thus it was proposed to replace the word “long term responsibility” with “accountability” while keeping the same explanation. This allows us to keep the “ICRC” word which has meaning and a focus on the need for people to be accountable for the decisions they take, while at the same time keeping the vision of long term responsibility.

- Leadership versus management: one view is that it is the same person which carries out two different functions, the other view is that we make a distinction that management is about fulfilling a role while leadership is about the person. Today, the group felt, our organisation requires you to manage (and measures your performance on this) but does not require you to lead. Can we define management roles through sets of skills while leadership is more qualitative? Does the difficulty is defining leadership relate to the fact that we are talking of the quality of the person more than just their output? Is it possible to define what we ask of a leader in these qualitative terms? Management is broader than leadership in terms of the “things” that have to be done; it includes technical, financial, project aspects etc.; training and development of managers is rather wide whereas leadership tends to be applied to the more relational aspects of management? The group put forward the idea that we can train a manager and we can develop a leader; that leadership development is an engagement in a process of self awareness and self development. It puts individual in front of the question of how much of themselves they are prepared to invest and contextualise; it is a process of understanding ones self and ones own authenticity and the context of that and the affect of the context on the self and the self on the context. It requires a personal step in and a personal investment in helping make sense of the context/situation and in encouraging people to participate. This is based around the idea that leadership is a relational act and if one understands oneself then the relationship with others (people and context) is easier.
- Group confirmed the proposal to adapt the model (title to Leadership AND Management model) so that we in effect answer the question and show that we want leaders to be managers. Also as leadership is contextual (sometimes to focus on detail, sometimes to see the big picture and the leader must be able to move between the two with ease). This decision ensures that we make clear that there are both aspects in the full expression of good leadership.
- Courage: the group confirmed the decision to change “courage” to “self” for two reasons. Firstly, the PLM principle of “self” (see Annex 21) is now established and we

should build on that investment already made. In taking the definition of self, the group felt that this covered the definition of courage which was in the Model.

- It was felt that the model must, and indeed does, offer a framework to be able to identify, as well as develop, leadership skills and competences throughout the organisation at all levels. It gives us a framework for recognising current and potential future leaders
- The model is felt to be applicable worldwide. However, there should be the flexibility to be able to culturally adapt its practical application. By this participants mean that the elements of the model would stay the same, but the examples of behaviour under each of the elements would be local or regional examples

The group then discussed how the LMM could be put into practice. An important next step would be to link it to both the new institutional strategy and to the People Management strategy which is currently being built. It is important that its implementation be a “bottom up” approach<sup>3</sup> as this will integrate the model into the fabric of the organisation. The question was raised as to whether we put the LMM in at the basic levels of the organisation and bring it up through the organization or whether we impose it from the top. The working group decided that due to the importance of the LMM both paths should be taken.

The working group made the following conclusions:

- The model sets out what is expected from leadership in the ICRC
- It allows context and team specific application of leadership
- It should be integrated into job descriptions
- There would be a need to look at how to make it context/culturally specific in terms of examples of best practice
- The reality in our organization is that you have to become a leader again and again as missions change. There is positional power which is a factor but coping with change

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3: ICRC's « bottom-up » approach is refers to the fact that decision making and the running of the operations happens from the field upwards through the hierarchy much more than from the Headquarters to the field

is important as managers change yearly and team members continually change. The LMM was felt to support leaders in doing this better than before

- The next steps should be validation of model formally by this meeting the next day and then through the formal channels
- Further work should be undertaken once the model is validated on an assessment table which could be used by individuals in the form of a self assessment, by teams or within the annual performance appraisal system of the organisation. The group thought that the creation of the model could allow a generic table of leadership attributes to be created which would allow the building of a leadership self-assessment framework which could be used by managers and which could be culturally adapted to each context allowing a generic best practice by country to be created.

These conclusions show that the model had already gained acceptance by the senior management. The fact that such a model is welcomed model points out the vagueness of leadership expectations from the organisation towards its leadership. This is perhaps due to the nature of the organisation as a non-profit organisation. However one could equally argue that this model goes towards balancing the “material profit” with the “human profit” mentioned at the very beginning of this thesis. We will come back to this point in Part 7.

The fact that participants wanted the work on the model to move forward in terms of formalisation through the organisational systems was perhaps the most concrete sign of acceptance.

#### **25.4 Presentation of the final version on Day 3**

Based on the discussions which took place in the working group, the peer group made a final version of the ICRC Leadership and Management Model (Version 5). The model itself did not change from Version 4; Version 5 has some changes in language in the descriptive parts. This discussion also confirmed the choice of calling it a “Leadership and Management” model. The final version of the ICRC Leadership and Management Model (Version 5) is presented below and met with general approval.

The implication that the research work and its results could be used in the practitioners reality and has been able to create a model for an organisation gave support to the fact that the results had field applicability, as the research question had first set out to look for. This fact, and its implications, shall be further discussed in the following chapter.



# ICRC

## ICRC's Leadership and Management Model

The ICRC's Leadership Model addresses the way leading and managing people and objectives should be implemented throughout the ICRC's many geographical locations. It identifies key actions, values and behaviours which are expected of **all** those in leadership roles anywhere and at any level of the ICRC.

The ICRC Leadership Model:

- offers a clear vision of the way in which leadership should be enacted at the ICRC
- encompasses and builds on the PLM principles of self, decision making, feedback and conducive environment
- communicates clearly the leadership actions, values and behaviours which are expected at all levels of the organisation
- provides a common language regarding leadership throughout the organisation
- supports all staff through clearly targeted leadership learning and development

The model is a dynamic interaction of three fields of leadership – that of the actions of a leader, the presence of a leader and the principles which leadership at the ICRC embodies. Each of the three fields has equal importance.

The model allows effective context-based leadership, respecting and enabling all staff to contribute to their best capacity. It ensures that change is managed in a way which gives security to the teams involved and ensures a right balance of power, shared for the good of all stakeholders involved.

The ICRC model of leadership and management allows the development of operational, human resource and learning processes which are coherent with the leadership which is expected from ICRC staff at any level of the organisation. It ensures the right balance of personal, operational and organisational wellbeing for our staff, our management and everyone who interacts with the ICRC.



ICRC Leadership Model\_V5 - Output of Montreux  
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Figure 14. The Final ICRC Leadership and Management Model

## Leadership Principles

Vision, accountability and service are considered to be the three leadership principles which underpin the ICRC's approach to leadership. It can be thought of as the "spirit in which leadership is to be held". The three leadership principles are organisational wide principles which the ICRC requires of its leadership at all levels.

Attributes	Explanation
Vision	Leaders who demonstrate vision which are clear and well communicated; a vision which respects organisational strategies, the context and holds within it a sense of service to the future.
Accountability	Leaders who take a real responsibility for what they, and those working for them, do; who are accountable for the decisions they make and the actions they take.
Service	Leaders who serve the team by helping them reach the vision or goal. This entails leading by example, in service of not just people but in service of the purpose, in service of the aims, service of the goal.

## Leadership Presence

Leadership presence is the "how to be" of an individual leader. Leadership presence is defined as the personal attributes which a leader embodies and the qualities they hold in their leadership role. They embody the important qualities which the ICRC wishes each of its leaders to hold and enact as they take on a leadership role at any level within the organisation.

Attributes	Explanation
Self awareness (PLM Self)	Leaders who are aware that they set an example, who are attentive to the impact of their strengths and weaknesses on team work and performance and they engage in self-improvement. Leaders who demonstrate courage in the actions they take, and in the values they hold and who demonstrate fairness and transparency in an impartial manner to all.
Conducive environment	Leaders who create open space for communication, for dialogue, for the generation of ideas, for innovation. Leaders who bring positive energy and create an environment and generate opportunity where all are motivated to do their best.
Respect	Leaders who show empathy, trust and who have a clear and appropriate set of values and who embody a sense of respect in all their actions. Leaders who show and generate respect for the institution's values.



## Leadership Actions

Leadership actions are defined as the “what to do” list of leadership at the ICRC. These are the actions expected of those in leadership positions at the level of the individual, the team and the context. Leadership actions, as listed below, implies the “putting into action” of these various attributes and of having a constant focus on the results of those actions.

Detailed attributes		Explanation
<b>INDIVIDUAL</b>		
	Communicate (inc PLM feedback)	Leaders who can listen and who can communicate with clarity in a way which can be heard by all, who are responsible to ensure a flow of communication in all directions and to ensure feedback in a 360° way.
	Decide (PLM decision making)	Leaders who can prioritise and take decisions; who ensure that the decision making process is appropriately inclusive, that resources are appropriately taken into account and that actions are taken in line with decisions
	Grow	Leaders who demonstrate knowledge, intelligence and competence of work-related skills, who encompass the idea of self development and self learning as being a permanent process of developing knowledge and competence.
<b>TEAM</b>		
	Build	Leaders who build, support and develop teams; who act as mentors, ensuring the passing on of their knowledge and skills thus developing the competences of their staff.
	Empower	Leaders who recognise individual uniqueness, empower it, and bring out the best in people, thus empowering the organisation to evolve.
	Manage	Leaders who manage the day-to-day work and resources with consistency and ensure outcomes, who can manage complexity, fix priorities and manage performance.
<b>CONTEXT</b>		
	Strategic action	Leaders who analyse, who show clarity of strategic thinking, and ensure that there is a continuum between analysis-strategy-delivery-outcome. Leaders who manage clear deliverables of their teams and demonstrate progress in results.
	Inclusion	Leaders who value diversity, adapt to cultural and gender diversities and differences within the team, organisation and context. Leaders who integrate appropriate ways of harnessing and managing these diversities.
	Balance	Leaders who balance needs of the operations with those of the staff, context and environment. Leaders who manage change and help others manage change.

## **26. Author comments and Conclusions to the Field research**

At the end of the first round of discussions, we were impressed by the initially very positive feedback from all the groups about the idea, the appreciation of the idea of having a model and even to an extent the model itself.

The comment, which was to be echoed throughout the various rounds, that having a model would help us, the managers, to know what was (and was not) their roles and responsibilities was both surprising and welcome. One participant said that “our organisation requires you to manage (and measures your performance on this) but does not require you to lead”. If there was one impression that stayed after the three days of discussions was the openness of the senior managers to actually having a model which would structure their leadership, which would guide them, which would clarify their roles both for themselves and their staff and which would give them a sense of what actually was their role as leaders and managers. This lack of clarity about what is a leader and manager made the job more difficult and this is why this work was welcomed. This is perhaps an under-rated problem in the practitioner reality.

The journey to the final version of the model reflects in a strong way the research journey which was undertaken prior to the field action research. It was encouraging to see common themes and issues and a positive result to see that the final version of the model reflects the model presented in Part 3.

At the beginning of the process the peer group had asked itself the question of whether a model could create a virtuous circle of meaning around leadership i.e. by defining the “what” (principles) of leadership could lead to the “why” (values) of leadership which in turn could look at the “how” (embody) good leadership could be enacted and which could show the added value of leadership. Looking at the final model produced, the how/embodiment is contained in the field Leadership Actions, the principles in the field Leadership Principles and the values in the field of Leadership Presence.

The final ICRC Leadership and Management Model bears close resemblance to the theoretical Model of Good Leadership presented in Part 3. The first thing that strikes the reader is the greater simplicity of the practice model compared to the theoretical model. Also the fact that on a first read it is much more obvious what is meant. The original “Leadership Field” with its notion of presence, depth and grounding has been replaced, leaving only the element of presence in the model. This would indicate that the research discussion around “leadership field” as presented in Chapter 19 does not hold a strong practical implementation capability; likewise the “underlying fundamentals” as a concept was easier to understand in

terms of principles rather than fundamentals. What had been terms as principles in the original model were actually more understandable as “leadership actions”.

What is interesting to note from the models below is that a multi-dimensional model would appear to be a more appropriate way to present a model of leadership. The research which this thesis offers gives enough “stuff” for organisations to build their own model and that this would be the appropriate action rather than imposing a model such as the one in Part 3.

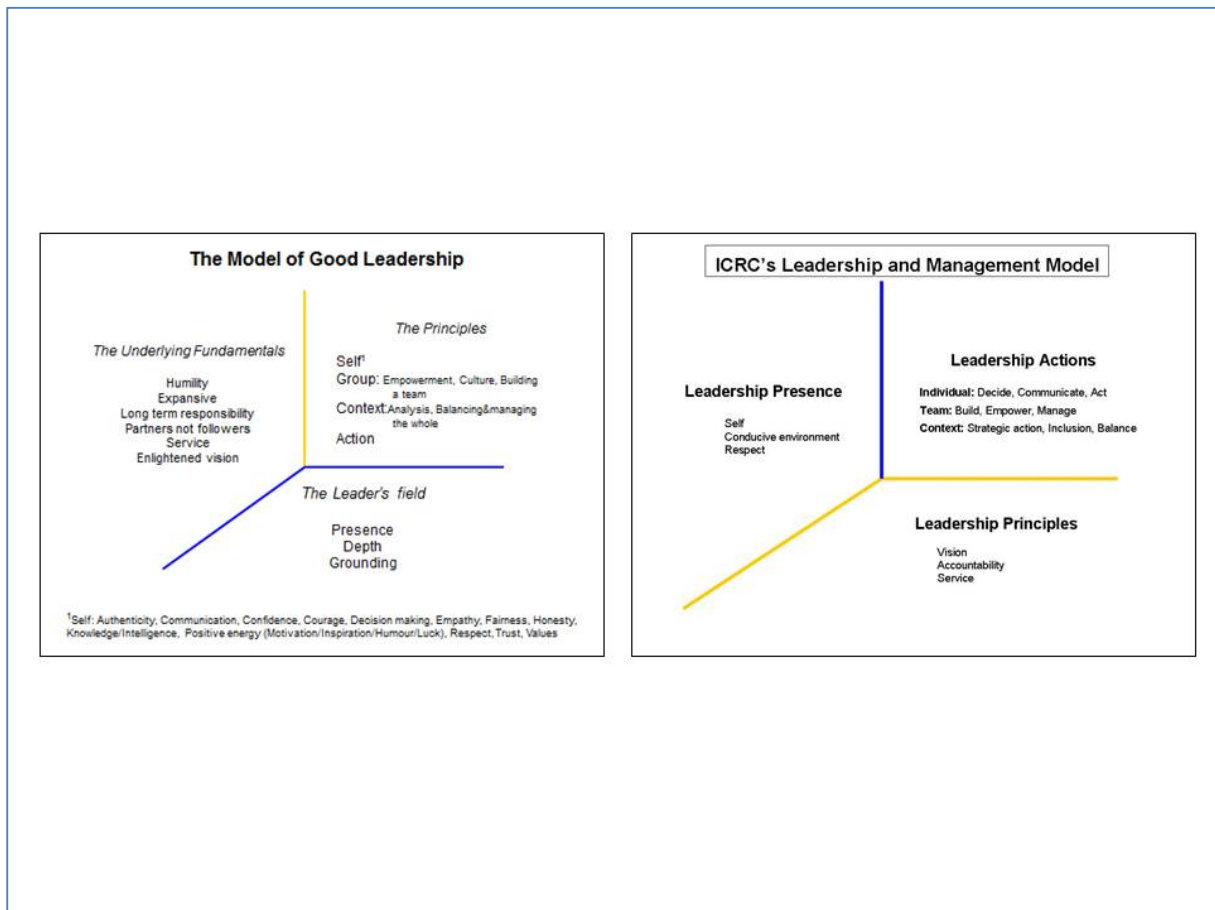


Figure 15: The Models: theory versus practice

The objective of the action research was to look at whether the Framework and Model of Good Leadership have field viability and can they be used to create individual or organisational leadership models of good leadership for practitioners which can be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?

We can answer that the Framework of Good Leadership holds true and can be used as a foundational document for any individual or organisation to build their own leadership model. We can also answer that the underlying fundamentals are also foundational documents to be



taken into consideration. The Model had applicability in terms of its three-dimensional structure and offered an example of how to bring together the elements of the Framework and underlying fundamentals but did not hold applicability in terms of the concept of leadership field and the definition of the quadrants.

## **26.1 Something to think about**

One thing that struck me during the process was the starting point. The Model of Good Leadership (Figure 7) turned out not to be the starting point for building an organisational model but rather the Framework of Good Leadership (Figure 5). It was the structure of the Framework, as well as the work on the underlying fundamentals, which gave the foundations to build the organisational model for the ICRC. It struck me that the Model of Good Leadership was too complex as a starting point and that the Framework offered a blueprint from which anyone could create a Leadership Model.

At this point we have two interesting models (as presented in Figure 15). Have the field results consolidated the theoretical model which was constructed in Part 3 and created a practitioners tool or are we still at the point of good theoretical models? Both held much value but I still came back to the question which had been put to me when the results of Part 3 were first shown – can we ask so much? The model from Part 3 had 23 elements; the field model in Part 4 had 15 elements.

The scientific research creating the models holds strength and validity as has been shown, but the question of simplicity of wisdom still haunted me. To answer the leaders' wishes to have a frame to understand their role as leaders, which was expressed so often at the start of the action research journey is offered by the above model. And yet some intuitive piece of me still held the question of simplicity. Was it possible to take leadership away from being an elusive topic and somehow demystify it by making a simple answer to the research question?

These observation and questions led to a wish to retake the thesis from the start, looking back from this point with all the knowledge which has been generated by this research and to look deeper into some of the theoretical knowledge which has been touched upon in earlier sections. By doing this, it is hoped to see whether, with additional knowledge, a complete model can be presented in conclusion to this thesis which answers both the academic and practitioners wishes for defining good leadership in a field applicable way.

## **PART 5: THE THEORETICAL DISCUSSION**

*If you can't explain it simply, you don't  
understand it well enough.*

*Albert Einstein*

## Introduction to Part 5

At this point, the research offers two leadership models which have been portrayed in the previous chapter in Figure 15. The first model (on the left) resulting from the inductive research is the output of a pure academic research, while the second (on the right) the result of the field action research.

The similarities and differences of these models and the discussions raised through the research to date leave a number of questions open, particularly around the questions of complexity. This, it was felt, required a return to the academic literature again before being able to draw conclusions. This is a choice to take what has been learnt and developed through the research and to see whether the existing of knowledge could further strengthen this research. The choice is somewhat original but was based on the hypothesis that the undertaking of such a work could help in formulating a complete answer to the research question.

Part 5 starts by discussing the results of the research data in relation to leadership theories as presented at the start of Part 1. The research results challenges some of the current thinking in terms of the applicable leadership theory in today's organisational reality and presents a more appropriate table of leadership theories upon which future practitioners could base their work. Part 1 of this thesis set out to explore the theories of leadership which have been developed in academia since the start of the study of leadership. It traced the development of these various theories over time and presented 18 leadership theories which have been the subject of a significant amount of academic research. A discussion on this body of work and its implications for the practitioner reality was presented along with a number of key influences in the leadership debate, namely context and culture, leaders and followers, power and presence and the academic debate on leadership versus management. The influencing factors discussed in Part 1 are further discussed and Part 5 looks at the implications of the research data in relation to these earlier discussions.

Part 5 then takes up once again several of the theoretical discussions started in Part 1 in order to bring more depth to the theoretical discussion. The aim of doing this is so that possible parallels can be drawn with the research results offered until now and to see what the greater body of existing knowledge has to offer in the modelling of good leadership. This theoretical discussion was felt necessary for two reasons. Firstly the applicability of the Model of Good Leadership in the field, or rather the gaps in its applicability left questions which needed an answer. Secondly the fact that the field results moved the model towards

further simplicity required a further review of literature in order to see if there was a natural flow which could be captured in a newer version of the Model. The Leadership Model from Part 3 had 23 elements; the field model in Part 4 had 15 elements. The scientific research creating the models holds strength and validity but the question of simplicity of wisdom still haunted me. This is the motivation underlying the in-depth theoretical discussion now presented in Part 5.

Two bodies of work have been chosen to do this – the field of physics, and more specifically that of quantum physics and the work of Mary Parker Follett. Both these bodies of work have been referred to in this thesis so far. The reason for returning now in more detail is two-fold. Firstly, if we agree with Bennis that “just about everything written today about leadership and organisations comes from Mary Parker Follett’s writing and lectures” (Bennis, 2003:178) then we have much to gain from a more detailed exploration and secondly both these fields can help to put the model back into a context of today’s reality and further test it against a body of work which is widely accepted. By doing so, it is felt that we can strengthen the creation of a generic model of leadership based on the research work to date.

The choice of returning to these two bodies of work is also an intuitive one – throughout the five years which this research journey has taken, they are the two bodies of work from which I have learnt the most about organisations and leadership and which have spoken most directly to my practitioner reality. It is also a selfish choice. As I complete the action research journey presented in Chapter 26, I felt that there was still some refinement which could be brought to the model by matching it with bodies of knowledge which were greater in size and scope than my research field. This was both an ultimate challenge and the pleasure of creating.

## 27. Leadership Theories – the Results from the Research Data

This chapter looks at the results of the coding data on leadership theories and of what this research data says about the validity of the leadership theories presented and the construction of Table 1.

As explained in Chapter 13, a second dictionary of themes related to the study of the leadership theories was built based on the material discussed in Chapter 1. The full details of the coding table can be found in Annex 2 and the related coding texts in Section VI. The value of using the research data available here to look at leadership theories lay in ability to see if leadership theories found a real place and use in the reality of the field. As already mentioned, part of the motivation for this was the rich basis of the research data (43 out of the 52 respondents were senior managers in their organisations) and part was out of my own questioning of how much the rich academic knowledge was valued, had a place and use in the practitioner field reality. The third motivation was to see if, through the research data available, there could be a validation (or indeed invalidation) of the choices which had been made in terms of the various theories which had been included and excluded from Table 1.

### 27.1 The results

	Theory	Direct or named reference	Indirect reference or inference
1	Great Man	1	1
2	Trait	2	24
3	Behavioural	1	1
4	Situational/ Contingency		11
5	Path-Goal Theory		6
6	Charismatic	1	5
7	Transactional		
8	Transformational		9
9	Cognitive		5
10	Servant	1	3
11	Authentic		8
12	Complexity		
13	Cross-Cultural		3
14	e-Leadership		
15	New-genre leadership		6 by default
16	Leader-member Exchange (LMX)		4
17	Shared leadership		2

Table 14: Leadership theories in the research

The results showed some interesting and thought-provoking facts and the results are presented in Table 14.

Of the 18 main theories, 3 found no correspondence, even by inference. These were transactional, complexity and e-leadership. All theories which had been left out of the table in its construction during part 1 of this thesis found at least 1 respondent in the research data. Based on such a small sample size, it would be arrogant to offer these results as conclusive; however they do give some interesting hints regarding leadership theory in the reality of the workplace.

## **27.2 The "High" scorer**

The trait approach essentially aimed at developing the list of key characteristics or traits which could define successful leaders. Not surprisingly no one set of traits has ever been agreed upon. This analysis looked at whether leaders were described in terms of traits which are more suited to leadership, at whether there was an accepted set of traits which, for the person, describes the leader, and if there was any consistency in the sets put forward. While traits were mentioned in all of the research data, we can only concur with the findings already mentioned in terms of research on traits - that traits are difficult to agree on and researchers often ended up with long lists and a high degree of subjectivity. This is mirrored perfectly in our research question of the 5 attributes of good leadership, which gave 89 different elements – see Annex 3 for the full list. Within trait theory was the assumption that people were born with such traits. The fact that they can be learnt or developed was left to the behavioural theorists to put forward. However the analysis of the research data shows that people did not speak in terms of “natural” or “learnt” but rather of leadership attributes which good leaders had.

## **27.3 The “No” scorers**

Transactional leadership looked at whether the leader-follower relation was clearly established, at whether “transactions” (i.e. rewards, punishments) were clear motivators for the work done and whether there were any material transactions which were clear motivators for leadership. The fact that this substantial theory found no parallel in the stories was strange. Or was it? This research after all focused solely on good stories of leadership, on good leadership. Transactional theory, as we saw before, placed the role of “reward” as the motivator for achieving results and “punishment” as a motivator to ensure adherence. The transactional leader was a leader whose actions take place within the existing organisational

system and who makes no effort to change that system. These, in my own experience, do not make good leaders – effective perhaps, but usually not experienced by others as good leaders. Have we, by focusing the research on good leadership, simply ensured that such a view of leadership has no place? Or do good leaders find the right balance within the framework we have built of good leadership not to need transactional rewards/punishments to elicit behaviours?

Complexity leadership theory a theory that, personally, I liked. This theory seemed to match, all be it in a complex way, the reality of current organisational contexts. Organisations evolve in complex adaptive environments and this requires leadership to be interactive and dynamic, managing unpredictable agents that interact with each other in complex feedback networks which produce adaptive outcomes. This seemed to me pretty normal. Would the case for complexity leadership theory be a victim of its own complexity? Or do good leaders seem to manage the complexity in a fluid way which helps others find a sane way to deal with complexity. If we refer back to the fact that “managing change” also found no correspondence within the research, it could be paralleled to the lack of reference to complexity. No one doubts that complexity or change are not part of the organisational reality which we all face, however good leadership, it would appear, makes it rather manageable.

The third leadership theory which found no correspondent was e-leadership. While it is said to have grown out of the changing nature of the workplace and the increasing presence of advanced information technology, all the stories told incorporated a real relationship between leader and follower, between people. Yes, today organisations face the challenge of high technology environments and global organisations which manage many aspects at a distance. Perhaps that is the key word “to manage”; management can be done at distance, but can leadership? At the beginning we did remain with an open question of whether e-leadership is a theory or simply a contextual influence on how leadership takes place? While there is no doubt that an increasing number of examples exist where interactions are mediated by technology, this research would seem to indicate that for “leadership” to take place there has to be some form of real contact, and at least some level of face-to-face interaction.

## **27.4 The “Low” scorers**

Only one person referred directly to the “Great Man” in talking about leadership. As the “father” of all leadership theories, it is remarkable that there is only one direct and one indirect mention, especially when the stories told are all of good examples of leadership - the type of question that would have a tendency to bring out the heroic type of stories. One



interviewee mentioned that we only seem to notice "leadership" in times of crisis, but that really good leadership tended to happen quietly, all the time. Has in fact this theory run its course and should it now be left to the history books? While most people would agree that leadership is something that a person can have a natural talent for, leaders are not just born, but often are made through whom they are and the circumstances in which they find themselves. Based on this small sample, it has been decided to remove this theory from the list because it undermines the depth that good leadership must hold.

The other theory that found very little response - like the Great Man theory it had one direct and one indirect response – was behavioural leadership theory. While it developed out of dissatisfaction with the trait approach and moved away from trait theory in considering that leaders are made and not born, it seemed to have, like the pendulum, swung too far to the other side and it has rightly lost place in terms of practical leadership theory due to the lack of consideration given to context and people. Hence the decision to drop this theory from the table.

The last "low scorer" was cross-cultural leadership theory. It is interesting that it only found 3 inferred responses, when all interviewees were working, or had worked, in multi-cultural settings. At the time of interviewing, only 4 people were working in their country of origin and in national organisations. What made culture such a seemingly unimportant aspect of good leadership? Without a doubt, anyone who has worked in a multi-cultural setting experiences the challenge it poses to leadership. Again we come back to the idea that good leadership takes this into account as a natural part of seeing the differences in team members and within the context. Due to this aspect, it will remain in the list.

## **27.5 Theories which arrived by indirect reference of inference**

New-genre leadership was defined earlier as a mix of charismatic and transformational leadership theory with a focus on leader behaviour, visioning, inspiring, ideological and moral values. This rather wide mixture of transformational and charismatic leadership theories and was felt to offer more complexity rather than simplicity to leadership research. However here it finds a high number of responses, by default as when both charismatic and transformation aspects were found in the stories, new-genre leadership theory was marked as being inferred. Thus the indication from the research data would be to give validity to the theory and require it to be added to the table.

Leader-member exchange theory holds that leaders develop different exchange relationships with followers and the quality of these relationships influences the outcome. Here we are

looking at whether the effectiveness of the relationship is the deciding factor in the performance achieved. The stories clearly showed that the leader-member relationship is important, is real, and has a direct effect on the quality of the leadership and its outcomes. However for all the reasons outlined in the section on leadership theory, I continue to feel that leader-member exchange is rather a view of leadership which emphasis leader-member relations and their quality rather than a leadership theory per se. When one looks at the leadership framework which emerges from the research data, it is not just the quality of the relationship that makes the difference, but a myriad of factors which have equal value.

Shared leadership theory is specifically where the members collectively share the leadership role. In analysing the research data, the question was to look at whether there was a shared leadership among the group. While there are 2 corresponding inferences, both cases were more focused on sharing in terms of empowerment rather than an actual sharing of the leadership role. While this theoretical area continues to be too ill-defined, it does hold value in cases of leadership amongst peer groups.

Spiritual leadership theory was defined as leadership that has a deeper sense of calling or service, linking the act of leadership to something deeper than material returns. Here we were analysing the research data to see if spiritual belonging/achievement was mentioned. It found one mention (from the CEO of a religious order). While it remains “discarded” from the list of theories, one feels that somewhere within this heading there is an important aspect of leadership, but that the word “spiritual” has too many religious connotations for it to be acceptable. Leaders, by default, have a central role in an individual’s life. Good leadership, as we have seen from the research results, encourages people to grow and develop. It would indicate that while this aspect is crucially important to good leadership, the extrapolation of that into the spiritual realms (which are highly personal and private) is a step too far.

## **27.6 The Leadership theories in comparison to the research data**

The development of leadership theory has been described in Part 1 in detail. The Great Man theory was the father of leadership theories. We have put forward a case for it no longer to be used in a modern list of applicable theories. As already mentioned at the start of Part 2, one surprising feature in the research process was the continual comments of how difficult it was for people to offer good stories, good experiences of good leadership. Great leaders admired from afar like Gandhi, Albert Schweitzer, Abraham Lincoln, or Mandela inspire from afar as well. They seemed to be ideals but no one seemed to be able to translate that into their everyday working lives. We have discussed here the “Great Man” theory, and taken the

bold step to suggest dropping it – from the small sample of data in this research, it doesn't seem to help.

The argument between traits and the behavioural view of leadership is perhaps one of the oldest in leadership literature (Plowman et al, 2007). The former looked at what were the right traits, the latter looking at what were the right behaviours. Naturally the former were considered inherent in the leader (the leader was born with them), while the latter were considered to be taught and learned. The move to situational or contingency theories spoke of the context determining the leadership style that would be appropriate. Stodgill's listing of key leadership traits and skills (Stodgill, 1974), often seen as the foundation of this research line, still holds true today and many of these traits still emerge in current leadership writings and in many recruitment criteria used today. Charismatic leadership is much discussed - some would argue over discussed (Day, 2001), but still its application is not clear. There are the supervisory theories of leadership where the focus is on leadership "in" organisations and then there are the more strategic theories focusing on leadership "of" organisations (Boal, Schultz, 2007; Dubin, 1979; Hunt, 1991; Selznick, 1984).

The situation is confusing. Many of the leadership theories are top-down approaches. Complexity theory was the first in our list to break this top-down approach as it suggests that the context interacts with the leadership role in such a way as to make the future unknown as it will emerge from the ongoing interactions which are taking place within the system and its relationships (Marion, Uhl-Bien, 2001). Complexity leadership theory is extraordinarily fascinating. It speaks to our practitioner's intuitive knowledge of the reality of the world around us and its constant interaction with the reality of the workplace. It offers a new perspective to the understanding of complexity but can complexity really be understood? Perhaps that is why it is still rather vague in the "how to" aspects for leaders, especially in regards to leadership actions at the various levels of the hierarchy (Osborn, Hunt, 2007). It is inherently a "whole organisation" approach while most organisations are operating in different contexts at any one time. Servant leadership brings a new dimension into the leadership debate, that of leadership as a service. Some would even argue that it is *the* leadership model that can serve all organisations and all generations of workers (Melchar et al, 2008).

## **27.7 A New Table of Leadership Theories for today's leadership field research?**

But what is the reality of leadership theory in the reality of the practitioner world and how do we use the richness that the academic world has to offer? The data analysed in this chapter would seem to indicate that, in reality, leaders don't spend much time considering leadership

theories. Does this mean that they don't put much importance in them? Or that they are not a part of the everyday organisational reality? It must be kept in mind that this research, considering its small sample size and the fact that leadership theory was not a direct question of the research, cannot pretend to rewrite completely the list of appropriate leadership theories. However if we were to bring the discussion above to a conclusion, one would be that the table of leadership theories – that are appropriate today - would look something like this:

	<b>Table of Leadership Theories</b>
1	Trait
2	Situational/Contingency
3	Path-Goal Theory
4	Charismatic
5	Transformational
6	Cognitive
7	Servant
8	Authentic
9	Cross-Cultural
10	New-genre leadership
11	Leader-member Exchange (LMX)

*Table 15: An Updated Table of Currently Applicable Leadership Theories*

By framing leadership theories in this way, we offer a table to the academician upon which to base future research. It moves away from the chronological basis for the construction of Table 1 to a construction based on the current “usability” of a particular theory. It contradicts some of the choices made in Table 1, most notably by including New-genre and LMX in the table.

The theoretical background on which this thesis is based was a substantial review of the academic and practitioner literature on leader theories. The path of leadership theory was described in Part 1 in detail. We have put forward a case for the “Great Man” theory of leadership being no longer useful in a modern list of applicable theories. Good leadership, the research seems to indicate, calls for a certain amount of humility and a sense of service to something greater than oneself, to a more enlightened vision. The research showed that even senior leaders do not think in terms of leadership theories. Does this mean that the field of leadership theory finds a home only in academic circles looking at leadership? The research seems to indicate that the practitioner in the field in reality doesn't spend much time considering leadership theories. Can we imply from this that they don't put much store in them or that they are not a part of the everyday organisational reality? While the research has a small sample size, and the validation of leadership theory was not its primary motive,

the high number of senior leaders would tend to allow this sample to at least have indicative value.

Analysing the data did show that there were some important factors that could not be put into any of the leadership theories, either in this table or the original one. The 23 themes of the leadership model presented in Chapter 15 opened a richer definition of leadership than I had found whilst reading through the vast leadership literature available in academia. There was something more real, more grounded about the list of themes, something more transmittable, and something more practical. Perhaps that is why the discussion on the various leadership theories when applied to the everyday reality of leadership “in the field” so to speak, is so poor. We see that the real value in leadership theory and model development should be to allow practitioners to be better leaders in the field. As we have said, the 23 themes of the leadership framework have the potential to open a richer definition of leadership, something more transmittable, and something more practical. Leadership theories need to offer a way of framing leadership that takes into account the fact that while the context is the same for everyone, the mixture of the leader, the team and the vision make something unique every time. This is what a really good leadership theory needs to capture for it to stay alive.

## 28. Leading versus Managing

Within Part 1, the question of leadership versus management was discussed in detail. The stories which we have seen above relate specifically to good leadership. They contain the elements traditionally associated with leadership such as focus on the future, creation of change, creation of culture, establishment of an emotional link and the use of personal power (Nahavandi, 2006:18). Whilst clearly about leadership, the stories contain interrelated elements which would agree with Kotter's (1990) expression that there is leadership in management (the motivational part) and management in leadership (the implementation part). The leadership framework which has been built out of the 23 themes emerging from the research clearly shows this by including a complete range of elements which enable the managing of the whole enterprise.

We have offered a possible definition of good leadership above as being leadership that acts, and interacts, at the level of self, group and context and who manages the related fundamentals at each of these levels. It is within this definition that we can perhaps see one possible conclusion to the leadership versus management debate – that good leadership manages as much as it leads; good leaders must balance and manage the whole of the enterprise they have taken the responsibility to lead. This lends credence to the discussion that the management elements of leadership should not been seen as second class citizens to the leading elements and would support the view that this superior/inferior differentiation must be challenged (Toor, Ofori, 2008). Leaders must be able to manage well, just as managers must be able to assume leadership roles when necessary. Leadership without structure leads to chaos and in the long run cannot sustain organisations (Capowski, 1994).

At this stage it is perhaps useful to look at the 23 themes presented of good leadership and see what the research data has to say in the "leadership versus management" debate. To do this a table was drawn (see Table 13) based on the following rules which were used to make the judgements within the table:

- that the attribute is deemed in the literature to be necessary to leadership or management
- that based on this research all 23 attributes are seen to pertain to leadership, therefore all 23 were automatically added as pertaining to leadership
- in a review of the academic literature, each attribute was further researched to see if it pertained to management (see Annex 12)

- If reference was found that an attribute pertained to management, then it was moved to the middle column.

Using these rules, Table 16 was thus constructed. It shows five attributes that received no mention in the management literature - authenticity, courage, presence, service and vision. Can we consider that these are the attributes which differentiate leadership from management? All other themes are present in those who must lead and also in those who must manage. To take the example of culture – leaders must take this into account in how they lead, what they do and the way they communicate; equally managers must do the same otherwise they cannot manage to achieve the appropriate results in the context they are in.

<b>Leadership (attributes application to leadership only)</b>	<b>Both (attributes application to both leadership and management)</b>	<b>Management (attributes application to management only)</b>
	Action	
	Analysis	
Authenticity		
	Balance / Managing the whole	
	Communication	
	Confidence	
Courage		
	Culture	
	Decision making	
	Empathy	
	Empowerment	
	Fairness	
	Honesty	
	Knowledge/ Intelligence	
	Positive energy	
Presence		
	Respect	
	Responsibility	
Service		
	Team	
	Trust	
	Values	
Vision		

*Table 16: Leadership versus management and the 23 themes*

In building the reference table for management attributes (which can be found in Annex 12), there was certainly some difficulty in finding information. Management and leadership are very mixed subjects - one just has to search "management" on the "Business Source Complete" webpage to find the vast majority of information refers to leadership rather than

management. Indeed Mintzberg (1990) talks of a leader role in management which serves to confuse the debate further.

With this in mind, a conclusion that could be drawn is that the “leadership versus management” debate is slightly stale or as one writer puts it - this debate simply “gets us into trouble” (Pritcher, 1997:154). To say that managers are administrators and leaders get organisations, and people, to change (Maccoby, 2000) simply does not “hold water” as an argument in today’s organisational reality. There are simply no leaders who don’t manage, and I would be hard pressed to find a decent manager who doesn’t lead. Leadership in today’s organisations is a process where the leader is architect, coach and manager of their organisation’s vision and how that is implemented and lived. Leadership and management processes are different but do not necessarily involve different people. The results of Table 16 are interesting to a practitioner - the five differences are not what would be instinctively thought. However, when one considers the stories which have been told of good leadership, it is interesting that these five aspects stand out as marked expressions of what distinguishes a good leader.

This small analysis underlines the fact that while it may be the same people undertaking an inter-changing management and leadership role, there are differences in the authenticity, courage, values and presence we expect from a good leader; we also expect a sense of service and vision. These are what make the difference between someone who is managing an organisation and someone who is leading it. Leading and managing are different, but this research shows that they should be combined in order to arrive at a state of good leadership.



## 29. Quantum Physics and the Lollipop

### 12. Literature Review 2

This chapter retakes the initial mentions of quantum physics in Part 1 and looks at this body of knowledge, the understanding of the universe that this science brings and explores if and how we can relate this to leadership and the models we have constructed up to now. In particular we retake the idea of “leadership field” as was originally presented in Chapter 19. This is motivated by the fact that in Part 4 the field research journey often referred to the three quadrants of the model as the fields of leadership which is fundamentally different from how the theory was presented in Part 3. These differing meaning needed clarification.

### 29.1 Leadership and quantum physics

As we have already seen briefly in Chapter 3, building bridges from physics to leadership is not altogether new. Notions of complexity theory, chaos theory, non-linear dynamics, bifurcation – all of which are drawn from physics – can be found as keywords in papers on organisational science or leadership (Uhl-Bien et al, 2007; Osborn et al 2007; Plowman et al, 2007; Polley, 1997; Thiétart, Forgues, 1995) and are all aspects which help us define and explain nature as it exists around us.

The growing interest in applying these new perspectives to organisations is very real (Grobman, 2005). Some would argue that organisational research has become “stuck in theories developed in the latter half of the twentieth century” (Schoonhoven et al, 2005:327), while others argue that there is a pressing need for new conceptual ideas into which today’s organisational situations can be framed (Weber, 2005; El-Meligi, 2005). Physicists and management writers have often drawn parallels between these two fields of study, especially over the last twenty years (Gleick, 1987; Prigogine, 1980; Prinogine, Stengers, 1984; Wheatley, 2006; Levin, 2005). This trend suggests that organisations are living systems (Wheatley, 2007) and postulates that physics offers a particular way of looking at and understanding organisations which is based very much in the “reality” of how interactions actually happen (Capra, 2003). This is why we return in more depth to this body of knowledge.

Some physicists argue that physics is a science of process rather than state, of becoming rather than being (Gleick, 1987); writers in organisational sciences make similar statements in their theories on organisations. While physics looks at microscopic detail, many writers see

parallels to the macroscopic levels of the world in which we live (Bohm 1980, 1987; Capra, 1976; 2003; Heisenberg, 2007; Prigogine, Stengers 1984; Briggs, Peat 1999). Certain social scientists have been attracted, for example, to chaos theory as it emerged from physics due to the possibility it offered to understand disorder in organisations (Polley, 1997; Briggs, Peat, 1999) or to the idea of “quantum” to understand change (Shelton, Darling, 2004) or to complexity science as the way to understand the reality of organisations (Anderson, 1999). Each uses the powerful idea of metaphor as a useful tool to understand the learning of one science and generate new learning or insights in another. This method, if used carefully, can construct valid research models (Tsoukas, 1991).

So why do we do this here, at this stage of the research journey. It was in fact motivated in part by reading Gleick’s book “Chaos” where he wrote that some physicists argue that physics is a science of process rather than state, of becoming rather than being (Gleick, 1987). This mirrored the experience of research journey and people’s stories about leadership. The analytical nature of the academic research process had channelled the stories into an analysable state and yet each story was a myriad of processes meeting together at a point in time. Could looking at the research data through a more holistic lens of quantum physics here us see the data with new eyes?

## **29.2 The evolution of physics and its parallel to organisational science**

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the mechanistic approach drawn from the work of Newton and Taylor became the dominant worldview and, in its historical context, paralleled the current understanding of physics at the time. The Newtonian view of the world has largely evolved through quantum physics, giving a quantum view of how the world functions (Bradley, 1999; Guerrini et al, 2004) which postulates a total interconnectedness of many related elements (Capra, 1983; Weber 2005). Organisational theories and design have largely, until now, mirrored the working of the mechanical age of Newton – with functions, roles and organisational charts and processes, each part being separately identifiable and potentially able to work without interference (Wheatley, 2006) but more and more it is becoming clear that the influence of the individual does not fit either nicely – or predictably – into our neat mechanistic organisational designs (Weber, 2005; Levin, 2005).

Physics offers a way of looking at the world and how elements interact. It brings another way of looking at the world precisely because it describes – at least in our current understanding – the reality in which the world works. Its evolution of physics over the last 100 years is vast.

Chaos theory showed how a simple system can explode into shocking complexity through the feedback of non-linear systems; relativity put forward the principle that everything in existence was moving in relation to each other; David Bohm theorized that the universe must fundamentally be indivisible which meant that all things must be linked in some way; the principle of uncertainty posed the unquestionable reality that a system cannot be observed without affecting the system. Organisational science has for years been based on the concept of “observability”. Typically, in organisational science, a theory was constructed, a hypothesis designed, an observation made and generalisations deduced from the observed results. This new understanding of reality which physics brings means that subjectivity is always present and that the very act of observing changes the outcome. Thus somewhere these two approaches must meet if there is to be any framework of reality. “The belief in an external world independent of the perceiving subject is the basis of all natural science. Since, however, sense perception only gives information [...] indirectly we can only grasp the latter by speculative means. It follows from this that our notions of physical reality can never be final” (Einstein, 1934:40). Unlike Newtonian physics, physics today talks about probabilities and not certainties of outcomes (Capra, 1976) – this implies that an outcome can never be predicted with certainty even if all the initial conditions are the same. This idea has been mirrored in some organisational literature since the 1960’s. The quantum view of the world has moved us from a deterministic science where the focus was on objects, to a science of relativity where the focus is on relationships (Bradley, 1999; Guerrini et al, 2004). The Newtonian model is one of materialism and reductionism while the quantum model is one where the relationship is the key factor, where the initial conditions affect the outcome, where there is interconnectedness and where our notions of reality can never be final.

Crucial within all these theories is that change is a catalyst for evolution (Shelton et al, 2004) and that chaos brings the creative interaction needed to evolve (Prigogine, 1980). This is why the understanding of new physics is so important to the organisational environment, and to those who lead organisations. Before looking in detail at the elements that make up physics, and at the individual and the leader in quantum view of context, we will look first at the link to the traditional leadership theories currently found in organisational science.

### **29.3 Leadership theories – a review of today’s many questions**

As we have seen in Part 1, leadership theory is today a wide-ranging mass of theories deriving from a whole realm of competing ideologies. All these theories present various aspects of leadership which often compartmentalise leadership, offering, at any one time, only particular views of particular realities. We have seen that leadership is a societal

phenomenon, which must thus be placed in its context; we have discussed the interconnectedness that exists in any system which our understanding of physics proves beyond doubt. This shows us that we must change our thinking from disconnected fragments to a more interconnected whole (Briggs, Peat, 1999). Leadership theories must do the same. They must be reality based, anchored in their context, deal with the relating of real people and real organisations, roles that are crafted to meet the context and not tasks that can be taught (Pitcher, 1997). Leaders connect – they connect context, followers, organisational goals, energy; connecting a real world, in a real way.

This understanding of the “real world, in a real way” as we have said above is precisely why the link to physics is useful. The insights of physics can shed light on our understanding of the way we work and live and interact (Zohar, 1991). Organisations are entities which make deliberate efforts to manage the “energies” available (be they human or material) to meet a common goal (El-Meligi, 2005). Follett describes leaders as those “who can liberate the greatest amount of energy in [their] community (O’Conner, 2000:178). Physics describes how energy behaves. Therefore we could conclude that physics could offer a possible “conceptual box” with which to better understand leadership in the reality of today’s organisations.

Intrinsic within the subject of leadership theories are those whom leaders lead. Indeed a leader can only be such if they have followers; indeed “leadership begins when two parties meet” (El-Meligi, 2005:16). But how do we integrate the basic elements of leadership which have been outlined in Part 1 into the leadership models presented in Parts 4 and 5 and into an organisational setting that sits in the reality of the quantum context that we have described? Can we create a global framework which has a practical application? To help improve the answer to the research questions asked and the results presented so far, it is useful to look at the seven key concepts of the physics which, it is argued, defines a quantum context. Once we have discussed this, we can then look at leadership within a quantum context and put forward a postulate in defining quantum leadership which attempts to answer these two questions.

#### **29.4 The seven concepts of physics – understanding context in a quantum view**

As we have seen in Chapter 3, the aspect of context is important to any discussion on leadership. Chapter 16 places context as one of the three categories of levels of good leadership. Taking this point of view, and in order to work from the outside level inwards (considering Figure 5), it is thus first important to understand the context within which leadership takes place.

The aim of this section is to describe today's organisational context from a quantum perspective. In order to do this, the key concepts and elements that make up our current view of physics are presented and discussed. These are listed in Table 17. This table will be elaborated upon and will be the foundation for a further consideration of context in relationship to good leadership.

Concepts of Physics
1. Sensitivity to initial conditions
2. Complexity
3. Non-linearity
4. Bifurcation
5. Uncertainty
6. Relativity
7. Chaos

*Table 17: Concepts of physics*

Each of the following paragraphs describes the seven concepts of physics described in Table 17.

The complexity of a system is defined by the complexity of the model necessary to effectively predict the behaviour of the system. The more the model must look like the actual system to predict the system's results, the more complex the system is considered to be. The harder it is to be predictable in a system, the higher the level of complexity within a system. Thus in a complex system the key element which must be accepted is unpredictability. The generator of this unpredictability is what Edward Lorenz called the **sensitivity to initial conditions**, often more commonly referred to as the butterfly effect (Briggs, 1992). This concept means that with a complex, nonlinear system, very (infinitely) small changes in the starting conditions of a system will result in dramatically different outputs for that system. Thus there is an extreme dependence on initial conditions. Because of this, the general rule for complex systems is that one cannot create a model that will accurately predict outcomes. This realisation is impacting many activities in business. For example, it raises considerable questions relating to the value of creating static organizational visions and mission statements as have been and are current practices, a question already mirrored in organisational science literature. If a leader is to understand the environment and events in which they find themselves, an awareness of the initial conditions that created the event is necessary. This calls on a new awareness which takes into account seeing an event from the initial conditions which created it in order to understand.

**Complex** systems are unanalysable, irreducible into parts because the parts are being constantly folded into each other by iterations and feedback. "Therefore its an illusion to speak of isolating a single interaction [...] any interaction takes place in a larger system and

the system as a whole is constantly changing, bifurcating, iterating. So the system and all its parts have a direction in time. Time thus becomes an expression of the systems holistic interaction and this interaction extends outwards" (Prigogine, 1996). Every complex system is a changing part of a greater whole; this greater whole culminates eventually in most dynamical system of all - the universe (Briggs, Peat, 1989). Because of extreme dependence on initial conditions, the general rule for complex systems is that one cannot create a model that will accurately predict outcomes. As has been said, the complexity of a system is defined by the complexity of the model necessary to effectively predict the behaviour of the system. The crucial importance of the sensitivity to initial conditions means that with a complex nonlinear system, very (infinitely) small changes in the starting conditions of a system will result in dramatically different outputs for that system. This accounts for the extreme dependence on initial conditions. Knowing, seeing, understanding, influencing the initial conditions are a necessity for a leader. Naturally the more complex a system is the more skill will be required to understand what exactly the initial conditions of an event were. There are clear implications for organisations and the individuals working within them. If it is an illusion to study one small part of an organisation alone then how does a leaders make an organisation move forward and evolve?

The concept of **nonlinearity** is related to the type of mathematical model used to describe a system. Linear systems are easy to generate and simple to work with because they are very predictable. Linear equations in mathematics give solutions that can be applied to other equations. Non-linear solutions are individual and not applicable to other equations. The crucial element when considering non-linearity is the prevalence of feedback. Feedback in non-linear systems means that information flows back on itself and interacts with its own evolution. Being present in all systems, feedback has an inherent role of either regulating or amplifying. Nonlinearity is a basic fact of organisational interaction. Organisations can be described as related to the types of mathematical models used to describe a system. One may consider a factory as a linear system. Linearly, one could predict that by adding a certain number of people, or a certain amount of inventory to the factory, there will be an increase in the number of pieces produced by the factory by a comparable amount. As most leaders know, factories don't operate this way. Changing the number of people, inventory, or any other variable in the factory creates widely differing results on a day to day basis from what would be predicted from a linear model. This is true because a factory - as any kind of organisation - is a nonlinear system, as are most systems found in life. When systems in nature are modelled mathematically, their graphical representations are not straight lines which mean that the system's behaviour is not so easy to predict. The ability to understand

non-linearity of the system within which they are present is necessary for the leader in order to understand the reality of the context and how it interacts with its own evolution.

Bifurcation means the place of branching or forking and is an essential concept in physics (Briggs, Peat, 1989). It is the vital instant when something is swelled by iteration to a size so great that a fork is created and the system takes off in a new direction. In other words they are milestones in the evolution of a system. Another aspect that quantum brings is the idea of feedback mentioned above. Bifurcation points are the points in a non-linear system where there is a natural process of feedback on an event which alters the future of that event. Bifurcation shows us that through one small element, changes in evolution can take place. Each event creates its own energy, which through the process of feedback, creates chaos in a system until a point is reached where a fork is created and a change in direction, an evolution can take place. In other words bifurcation points are milestones in the evolution of a system. If a leader can grasp the bifurcation points of their organisation, then it is argued, that perhaps they will better understand its evolution. An element which is implicit but not explicit is conflict. Conflict is contained within the aspect of bifurcation. Much has been written about conflict by writers such as Crozier and Friedberg, Bourdieu, Foucault. Here we will not deal with the issue of conflict as put forward by these writers as such but rather as viewed through the lens of physics as bifurcation points. By looking at conflict in this way, we take away the negative connotation surrounding the idea of conflict and allow a redefinition of conflict as a point in the evolution of a system where it can no longer continue to remain the same but must (willingly or unwillingly) bifurcate. This implicit understanding of conflict places conflict as a potential source of creative evolution.

The ***uncertainty principle*** was first expressed by Heisenberg in 1927. In it he shows that the very act of observing a particle changes it, therefore the precise knowledge of something can never be known. This means that, simply put, one can never really know the whole of reality as reality is in movement and is affected by our observation. Physicists speak of “quantum uncertainty” (Gribben, 1995), meaning the random interconnections that happen simply but cannot be predicted. Stated another way, we can only know where we have been by observing it, but the very fact that an observation is made influences the reality and thus its future outcome can no longer be predicted. It is the acceptance that our interpretation of the world at any one moment is exactly that – an interpretation in a moment in time which can help understand the past-present but cannot predict the future. It encapsulates both the uncertainty of the future and its magic – that all is possible. Thus leaders are encouraged to be at ease with uncertainty and rather than trying to minimise or eliminate uncertainty within a system, to co-create with it in the evolution of a system.

The concept of **relativity** introduced a new notion into physics – namely the fact that the concept of absolute space and time as in Newtonian physics no longer existed (Bohm, 1980). Time and space thus became variables which were now relative. The implicit meaning that unites relativity and the other aspects of quantum theory is the “unbroken wholeness of the totality of existence as an undivided flowing movement without borders” (Bohm, 1980:218). This complementarity – the interaction of all elements in a whole – is a crucial part of physics. Einstein posed his theory of relativity by considering fields and the interactions that happen within, his view being that everything in existence moved in relationship. Follett said that “conceptions do not develop themselves; by mingling with concrete situations they do” (O'Connor, 2000:167). Follett passionately defended a creation of the self in relation to others, that no self can be created and have meaning in isolation (Follett, 1998). Complementarity is the ability to see varying view points, or better expressed as seeing and understanding reality. Reality cannot be defined in absolute but is rather a middle point somewhere in the interaction of all elements in a system. This complementarity is crucial better leaders and their organisations in terms of how they operate and manage their objectives, acknowledging that each are complementary to the other and affect the other.

**Chaos theory** comes out of quantum physics and is one, which some authors claim, applies to all aspects of the world today: mathematics, physics, biology, finance, organisational behaviour (Capra, 1983). Chaotic systems are deterministic, sensitive to initial conditions and neither random nor disorderly. The key aspect of chaos is that the universe is a plurality of overlapping rules. This means that at every level of description there are rules, and in-between the levels lie creative spaces where complexity and simplicity not only fail to be conserved but transmute into one another in a constant process of movement (Stewart, 1997). A chaotic system has three simple defining features. Firstly it is deterministic; this means that there is some determining equation ruling its behaviour. Secondly it is sensitive to initial conditions where even a very slight change in the starting point can lead to significant different outcomes and thirdly, it is not random or disorderly as it contains an inherent sense of order and pattern. Poincaré's early work on chaos showed the paradox that chaos only exists in a system which is entirely holistic. Indeed one of the key elements of chaos theory has been to show that a “simple set of deterministic relationships can produce patterned yet unpredictable outcomes” (Levy, 1994:168). The sudden appearance of order out of chaos is the rule not the exception (Prigogine, Stengers, 1984). They put forward the theory of two types of chaos - passive and active - and it is out of the active far-from-equilibrium chaos that new order appears. “Today it seems a trivial thing, it's a law now that in the non-linear range, far-from-equilibrium gives rise to structure, brings order out of chaos.



In far-from-equilibrium states, matter has radical new properties” (Briggs, Peat, 1989:136). It can be said that organisations are permanently in a “far-from-equilibrium state”, hence the importance of the parallel to this concept of chaos. Chaos theory has been presented as undermining the modern scientific approach to organisations (Smith 2001). We no longer innocently think that simple systems behave in simple ways, or complex systems imply complex behaviour or that those different systems behave necessarily differently (Gleick, 1987). Instead, chaos theory opens us to the very opposite thinking and presents the view that simple systems can create complexity just as complex systems can generate simplicity. Chaos theory opens us to accepting that the world is full of overlapping rules, in which simplicity and complexity are not separate things but rather continually transmute into one another – simplicity emerges out of complex interactions and interrelationships and vice versa (Stewart, 1997). Chaos brings order – eventually! This is the lesson that chaos brings – and it calls leaders to fundamentally change the way we think about our world, our organisations, and our interrelationships.

These seven concepts in new physics define, today, our understanding of how the natural world works and interrelates. This quantum view of context describes the importance of disorder, change, dynamic relationships, chaos and complexity. The quantum and chaos theory in physics puts forward a picture of the universe as a system which is dynamic, unpredictable and subjective rather than the Newtonian view of machine which is static, predictable and completely objective (Shelton et al, 2004). Here we consider that these seven concepts can be used to define context.

Quantum physics has clearly shown the interconnectedness of the universe. We can no longer consider that we can be an outside observer in a system – we are interconnected and are a part of that system. The quantum reality does not come easily. Heisenberg quite rightly points out that it necessitates accepting that the foundation of classical physics “have started moving” (Capra, 1983:77).

If the science of leadership is to meet this new (quantum) view of context, then this thesis argues that the very idea of a “quantum context” can be a useful starting point to build the new “conceptual box” (Daft, Lewin, 1990:3) and argues that this may be used to describe the contextual reality of the majority of today’s organisations (Uhl-Bien et al, 2007) and their leaders. Thus we put forward the “conceptual box” for looking at context as being made up of the seven elements described in Table 17 and which have an impact on leadership and how it is enacted.

## 29.5 Defining Leadership in a quantum context

As we have discussed above, the quantum view of context can be argued to be the reality in which nature today is understood. Numerous writers, as has been mentioned, find valid arguments to draw parallels between the organisational context and the context of physics. The parallel to physics suggests not only that a new organisational dynamic is needed in such an understanding of context but implies that a new dynamic of leadership is also required (Osborn, Hunt, 2007; Uhl-Bien et al, 2007). If we are to change how we look at leadership with a "quantum" view, we must logically also re-look at how we understand the act of leadership in such a context.

Sensitivity to initial conditions, or the butterfly effect, means that with a complex, nonlinear system, very (infinitely) small changes in the starting conditions of a system will result in dramatically different outputs for that system. Sensitivity to initial conditions for the leadership role means that there needs to be total attention to people and things; there is no such thing as insignificant details, everything matters. For the leader to understand their context, the awareness of the initial conditions that create each event is crucial. Knowing, seeing, understanding, and being able to influence the initial conditions become the foundation of the leadership role. To do so requires full involvement and presence of the leader; being present in the context, to what is going on here and now, in the context's reality and not in theory.

The idea of complexity shows that it is impossible to obtain a global understanding from building an understanding of the separate elements. The more complex a system is, the more skill will be required by the leader to understand what exactly the initial conditions of an event were. There is a necessity to acquire a holistic view of things and to integrate the various relationships and interconnections that are influencing the context. As every complex system is a changing part of a great whole, the role of the leader must be to be present in the context of the system in order to manage the reality of the situation. "Of greatest importance is the ability to grasp the total situation [...] this includes facts, present and potential, aims and purposes and men" (Follett, 2003:168). Out of all this must the leader find a unifying thread, must "see the whole" and not merely all the various pieces; must "see the relationship between all the different factors in a situation" (Follett, 2003:168). Hence the leadership role must manage all the inter-relating aspects of the organisation from the vantage of being present in the context.

Nonlinearity shows that words, actions and thoughts are not unidirectional. In this nonlinear world they will rebound. Nonlinearity shows that leadership actions affect the whole context within which they operate due to the relationships they manage. The challenge to the leader is clear but not evident. The presence of feedback means that the leader must be aware of

the inter-relations and flows taking place in the organisation. "Behaviour is not a function of environment but a function of the relating of behaviour and environment.....a function of the relation between self and the environment" (Follett, 1924:71-2). Thus the challenge of non-linearity is ever present for the leader – to take part in the context and of reacting, relating and guiding its evolution.

The concept of bifurcation indicates the necessity to accept changes as part of evolution. The old order changes and makes place for the new, but also gives it sense and direction. It is the vital instant when something new can evolve. They are moments when milestones in the evolution of a system occur. Each milestone can create its own energy which, through the process of feedback, can create chaos in a system until eventually an evolution can take place. Bifurcation shows that one small element can change the evolution of a system. They are points of change, of conflict and should be seen positively as they are points when a system will evolve. When a leader grasps the bifurcation points of their organisation, we would argue, they can better understand, make sense of and thus guide its evolution.

Uncertainty means that one must abandon the idea that one action will create one result or that one result can be explained by one action. Moving in that causal fluidity allows a more appropriate understanding of that world we live in, where matter and energy are one and a same thing. It means replacing the "why" with the "what for". Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty is reflected in Follett's idea that reality can only be sought in experience. Heisenberg showed that the very act of observing a particle changes it, therefore the precise knowledge of something can never be known as reality is in movement. The effect of "quantum uncertainty" means that interconnections that happen but cannot be predicted. Stated another way, we can only know where we have been by observing it; but the very fact that an observation is made influences the reality and thus its future outcome can no longer be predicted. Thus the leader must accept that their interpretation of the world at any one moment is only of value, and only can be grounded in reality, if it has a shared meaning. Hence the importance of having a global view which is rooted in the reality of a shared understanding of the context and the relationship of those involved.

Relativity shows that there is no such thing as absolute truth or definitive laws; that reality is defined by the interaction of all the elements which make up the context. This complementarity is crucial; leaders become stronger by acknowledging that leaders and followers are complementary to the other, each affecting the other and their organisations. Everything depends on the context, including the interactions with others. The only way to interact is with an attitude of non-judgement and acceptance, seeing the relationships and

how they work. Reality is thus not an absolute but rather defined as a middle point somewhere in the interaction of all elements in a system.

Chaos shows that a living order will only emerge from a seemingly chaotic environment. Too much order brings death (an orderly brain creates an epileptic crisis). One must therefore refrain from a tendency to place objects or matters in boxes in order to be connected to the evolution of the organisation. Follett called this creative experience, the constant evolution that comes through relating (Follett, 1924). Indeed one of the key elements of chaos theory has been to show that a “simple set of deterministic relationships can produce patterned yet unpredictable outcomes” (Levy, 1994:168). The sudden appearance of order out of chaos, as we have said, is the rule not the exception and which can bring with it radical new possibilities which Follett refers to as moments of creative potential. The quantum context demands a leader to be present in that creative experience - to be present in, and to use creatively and openly the flow of experiences being made.

Based on the discussion above and with the Framework of Good Leadership as presented in Chapter 16, we can put forward the postulate which suggests that leadership in this view of context is embodied in the seven elements of which help the leader make sense of the context. These, we put forward, are the elements which a leader needs to manage if they are to be able to interact with their context.

**Context** as a factor of leadership is perhaps one of the elements on which all leadership theories and theorists would all agree (Kellerman, 2001). Tracing the history of organisational science through what is considered its seven major evolutions (Scientific management; Human Relations; Bureaucratic; Power/Conflict; Technology; Systems; Institutional) allows one to draw simple parallels to the context of the day (Handy, 1993). Any leadership takes place in a specific context and in turn that context influences the type of presence that a leader must have. Leadership is not an intrapersonal phenomenon but rather it emerges in social settings and fields which have a dynamic impact on the leader and the eventual outcomes of the leadership process (Nahavandi, 2006). Here we propose that today's leaders operate in an organisational context that can be best understood through the seven concepts of physics as presented in Table 19. Thus the idea of context evolves into the idea of a sensemaking – a quantum context ruled by all seven concepts of physics, which in turn require a leader to pay specific attention to how they manage the environment and make sense of it for themselves and others.

Key in this level is sensemaking which can be defined as giving shared meaning to the world in which we are present. To deal with the constant changes in organisational environments, sensemaking allows leaders to “search for meaning, settle for plausibility and move on.

These are moments of sensemaking" (Weick et al, 2005). In organisations "meaning" is not a stationary thing but something which evolves. The leader is the unifying centre around which the globality of the sense can be made visible. The leader sees the interrelating elements and their relationships within a given moment. In doing so the leader facilitates, or makes conscious the bifurcation moments in their organisations, the moments of evolution and change in a system. By seeing and understanding these bifurcation points, leaders can better understand and make sense of the evolutions of their organisation. In this view lies a level of uncertainty within which the leader must move, uncertainty which means that reality can only be sought in experience and not in theory. Thus the leader accepts that their interpretation of reality can only be real if it has a shared meaning. It is this role that gives sense to a situation.

As an individual, the leader embodies this role of sensemaking through their **presence** which is defined as the energetic space an individual holds. It is a force that compels change. "Every body continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line, unless it is compelled to change that state by forces impressed upon it" (Newton, 1687:I). In Chapter 16 we defined the level of the **self** being the leader as a person and the qualities they hold. Gravity – a force which compels change. "In business we are always passing from one significant moment to another significant moment, and the leader's task is pre-eminently to understand the moment of passing. The leader sees one situation melting into another and has learnt the mastery of that moment" (Follett, 2003:170). This is gravity; this is the act of presence. Gravity is that unseen force, unnoticed until an object is placed within its field; then its effect can be observed. The presence of a leader is similar; it is unnoticed until an object is placed within its field to see if anything is different. The challenge for leader is to be present. In this sense, presence is the putting reality into experience. Follett challenged us to the richness of this idea at the end of her book saying "what I have tried to show in this book is that the social process may be conceived either as the opposing and battle of desires with the victory of one over the other, or as the confronting and integrating of desires. The former means non-freedom for both sides, the defeated bound to the victor, the victor bound to the false situation thus created--both bound. The latter means a freeing for both sides and increased total power or increased capacity in the world" (Follett, 1924:301). Accepting Follett's description of a leader as someone who can liberate the greatest amount of energy in their community (O'Conner, 2000:178) then the embodiment of quantum leadership must encompass elements which allow a leader to manage the energy available (human or material). It is the presence that an individual holds which, like gravity, effects the creation of the experience of the context and the quality of the relating. Leadership presence is all about relationship and connections. Once again there is a link to the definition of quantum context.

The central principle of the quantum world is that there is no such thing as a neutral position – “our affect has an effect” (Gunn, Gullickson, 2005:8), out of chaos comes order (Gleick, 1987), out of our relating comes evolution.

Presence can also be defined as “the ability to connect authentically with the thoughts and feelings of others, in order to motivate and inspire them toward a desired outcome” (Halpern and Lubar, 2004:8). Just because someone holds the title or role of “leader”, it does not mean that others will follow them automatically. We argue that in a quantum context, it is the presence that a leader holds which creates the impact a leader has. Presence includes the ability to influence and the ability to move people. Jones (2003) puts forward the argument that in an ever-changing and accelerating world, the challenge for leaders is to be in the moment and move from there. It is the real presence of a leader that allows the seeing, understand or influencing of the initial conditions in order to have an effect on the outcome. Leadership presence has many aspects – it inspires confidence, it brings energy into a situation, it encompasses empathy, it inspires. It must be credible, it must communicate, and it must be authentic.

Group was defined as the group of people that the leader brings together and for whom the leader is responsible. In order for leaders to make sense of the context for others they must be first able to enter into relationship or to connect. Thus the key aspect of this level is **relating** and many writers have said that all leadership is about relationships. The reaction of an individual is “always reaction to relating and that response is always to a relation, the relation between the response and that to which the response is being made” (Follett, 1924:63). Leading, by its basic definition, involves a relationship between at least two people – a leader and a follower. Accepting the role of a leader in a quantum context implies accepting the role as an intermediary rather than as someone who gives orders that are to be followed (Zeldin, 1998). It means accepting to enter in relationships with others. Through our relationships we are co-creating each other all the time; our behaviour being influenced, and indeed being a function our relating. This brings a new meaning to the concept of responsibility. It means that we are responsible for how we relate and what we create. There is no more an “I” but an interrelated “us” in our service and function within an organisation. There is no static point but a constant evolution because we are relating to something, or someone, all the time. This means that an organisation is creating and evolving constantly. How much more powerful the leader becomes if they manage the reality in which we are co-creating all the time. The concept of leadership thus moves from a concept of positional power (power over others) to that of personal power (power with others), its central concern dealing with managing the reality of change and inspiring and motivating others in the organisation to a shared vision (Khuntia, Suar, 2004). Leadership effectiveness can then be

viewed as “a composite of interpersonal relationships (Remland, 1981). Leadership, in a quantum context, now takes place within the relationships it creates.

The final level for the Framework is **action**, the ability of a leader to bring sense to a situation and translate the self and group effort into action and results. It is this concrete outcome of the leadership process which is most visible and which ensures that there is an actual effect of the act of leadership.

When we analyse in detail these descriptions, we find three levels at which leaders must embody these elements – presence, relating and action. This would seem to suggest that a leader, in order to be effective, must be able to be present, to make sense and to be able to relate to the context in order to actually be effective.

In summary, this chapter presents a postulate of leadership as being made up of the four levels of presence, relating, sensemaking and action. These can be seen as powerful reflections of the levels presented in the Framework of Good Leadership in Figure 5 of self, group, context and action. Here we argue that the postulate presented in Table 19 allows a leader to interact with the reality of an organisation, and the individuals within the organisation to produce actions. An organisation is always in a state of flux, it is dynamic with many interactions. The definition of quantum context challenges us to look at a wider horizon than we have in the past. This focus is given by a leader, a person whose presence is such that it enables a system to create and have meaning. This grounding in a quantum view places the leader as the sensemaker of context and thus pushes us to rethink context as a process of sensemaking as opposed to a level of the Framework as presented in Figure 5. Leadership in this light is seen as the interrelationship of four aspects sensemaking, relating, and action through the presence they embody.

In building a theory of leadership, the principles of this chapter rests on co-construction of reality as proposed by Piaget. Like physics, it takes the constructivist epistemology along similar lines to Vygotsky who put forward the importance of shared meaning in the construction of reality (Smith et al, 1997). The physics which has been presented in this paper has mirrored this - “whatever we call reality, it is revealed to us only through an active construction in which we participate” (Prigogine, Stengers, 1984:293).

Many leadership writers talk about the famous “it” – that something which great leaders have that make them different from ordinary managers. This chapter argues that the “it” factor is in fact a leader’s ability to be present and to influence and manage the relationships and sensemaking in order to achieve concrete actions. This puts a real weight on the aspect of presence. Presence implies authenticity – to thine own self be true – this is an important

element. But presence also implies the ability to integrate the surrounding connections, to be able to summarise and synthesise these connections so that they can both be taken into account and given a meaning that is shared. Thus presence becomes an intensity of being, an integrator and sense-giver to the quantum world and the individuals within it. This chapter thus leads us to propose a review of the Framework in Figure 5.

## **29.6 The implications of this for the research**

In this chapter we have presented a quantum view of context. By linking this deeper analysis of new physics and paralleling it to the results of the work presented in Chapter 16, we come to a view of leadership as needing to be embodied into the aspects of presence, relating, sensemaking and action. If we are to compare it to the Framework of Good Leadership in Figure 5 we can parallel to the choice made in terms of self, group, context and action which were made in Table 5. While this would appear to validate the Framework, it leaves open questions about the choices made in the Model of Good Leadership presented in Figure 7, particularly in relation to the leadership field. Also the underlying fundamentals are represented in the Model are put into question, even though the field research seems to support their importance.

The leader sees the evolving situation and must apply their wisdom and judgement not to a stationary situation but to one which is constantly changing. The leader must “see future trends and unit them” (Follett, 2003:169). This insight into the future is an anticipation of what is to come which is much larger than predicting the future – it is rather the creation of the future. The truly great leaders will be those who can make the decisions for a future which is evolving and not just the present situation within which they find themselves. “We usually have the situation we make – no one sentence is more pregnant with meaning for business success. This is why the leader’s task is so difficult, why the great leader requires the great qualities – the most delicate and sensitive perceptions, imagination and insight, and at the same time courage and faith. “[The leader] should be the pioneer spirit which blaze new trails. The insight to see possible new paths, the courage to try them, the judgement to measure results – these are the qualifications of a leader” (Follett, 2003:170).

But how can we capture this in a more complete model of leadership which will give a grounded answer to the research question? We have referenced Follett quite often in this chapter as well as in this thesis up to now, so before discussing further the implications of all that we have presented so far, it is worth looking further into her work and its implications in the discussion on leadership and the modelling of good leadership.



### 30. From the Old to the New – Mary Parker Follett and this leadership research

#### 12. Literature Review 2

In 1915, when Einstein published his General Theory of Relativity, it changed the fundamentals of physics. He went on to write that "the object of all science, whether natural science or psychology, is to co-ordinate our experiences and to bring them into a logical system (Einstein, 1922:1). Mary Parker Follett's work - written around the same time - did not have the same impact. Like Einstein she wrote about bringing experiences together in a way that could be understood and shared. When, in 1918, Follett published her book "The New State", she opened it by saying that "our political life is stagnating, capital and labour are virtually at war, the nations of Europe are at one another's throats - because we have not yet learned how to live together" (Follett, 1918:1). How well Follett captured the context of the time and how unfortunately familiar it sounds today – more nations that ever before are in struggling or in conflict; the environment rages against the industrial advances of the modern world and the lack of sustainable practices; the collapse of the financial sector, some would argue through greed and mismanagement, has started a global recession; those employed in modern organisations too often lack a meaning in their work. We have never been short of the answers to these questions of conflict – national or industrial - we simply do not often want to listen to them.

We practitioners are practical people. If a theory takes 30 pages to explain, it may not be a good one; if you can't draw it, how can you explain or use it. Some physicists present the fundamental constants of physics as horizon points within which we could construct our understanding of the universe (Choen-Tannoudji, 1993). I think that perhaps Mary Parker Follett similarly offers us some universal constants of good organisational practice. I would put forward that we can frame Follett's work around five constructs – or horizon points – which give a grounded understanding of the organisation and the leadership role namely:

- knowing the context
- the ability to understand and give sense to what is going on around
- the ability to be present
- the ability to relate to the individuals evolved
- the idea of integration and reciprocal service

We have already discussed some of Mary Parker Follett's work in earlier chapters. This chapter traces the main themes of the work of Mary Parker Follett around these five constructs and their implication for leadership. It attempts to bring the body of knowledge which Mary Parker Follett left to us into the organisational context of the 21st century, challenging organisational science to see what it missed nearly a century ago – a fundamental body of work which, like Einstein in physics, should have changed the foundations of its science.

### **30.1 The Creative Experience of Context**

Mary Parker Follett placed the importance of understanding context throughout her work. But how did organisational science understand context? Chapter 29 presents a quantum view of context. This new understanding of reality means that subjectivity is always present and that the very act of observing changes the outcome. Mary Parker Follett knew this reality without science having yet proved it. Follett was firm believer that observing an event changes its nature; that the simple fact of observing someone doing something changed what happened. This change, Follett argued throughout her theories, was due to the interconnectedness of people and events. It was 10 years later when Einstein wrote agreeing with this idea - "the belief in an external world independent of the perceiving subject is the basis of all natural science. Since, however, sense perception only gives information [...] indirectly we can only grasp the latter by speculative means. It follows from this that our notions of physical reality can never be final" (Einstein, 1934:40). Einstein and his theory of relativity put forward the principle that everything in existence was moving in relation to each other – this meant that observations and analysis were all relative to the point at which they were made (Weber, 2005). Follett paralleled this in her theory – that the context in which organisational science (or social studies as she referred to at the time) looked at events was paramount in the understanding of events. Einstein viewed the perception of reality as being relative to an individual's position and the interrelations with the surrounding environment (Einstein, 1916). This was similar to Follett's view that the individual experience of reality dictated the definition of reality for the individual (Follett, 1924). She spoke about seeking "reality in experience" and that "experience may be hard but we claim its gifts because they are real" (Follett, 1924:302). How true and yet how underestimated in our everyday work.

The simplicity with which she described the indivisible nature of the individual, the organisation, and the community is evident to the reader. Follett put forward a theory that could be paralleled to the emerging worldview that is being shown to us by physics today. She naturally moved away from the mechanistic approach, dominant in the management

views of her time, to embrace a more “quantum” view of the organisational reality. Follett's circular relations theory reflects chaos. Chaotic systems are deterministic, sensitive to initial conditions and neither random nor disorderly. The key aspect of chaos is that the universe is a plurality of overlapping rules. This means that at every level of description there are rules and in-between the levels one finds creative spaces where complexity and simplicity not only fail to be conserved but transmute into one another in a constant process of movement (Stewart, 1997). This is what Follett called the creative experience, the constant evolution that comes through relating. Indeed one of the key elements of chaos theory has been to show that a “simple set of deterministic relationships can produce patterned yet unpredictable outcomes” (Levy, 1994:168). The sudden appearance of order out of chaos is the rule not the exception (Prigogine, Stengers, 1984) which can bring with it radical new properties (Briggs, Peat, 1989). Being in that creative experience is the presence that Follett's demands of the practitioner – to be present in, and to use creatively and openly the flow of experiences being made.

Einstein's relativity introduced new notions into physics – namely the fact that the concept of absolute space and time as in Newtonian physics no longer existed (Bohm, 1980). Time and space thus became variables which were now relative. The implicit meaning that unites relativity and the other aspects of quantum theory is the “unbroken wholeness of the totality of existence as an undivided flowing movement without borders” (Bohm, 1980:218). This complementarity – the interaction of all elements in a whole – is a crucial part of this new science. This idea of relativity is mirrored in Follett's approach to circular response in organisations – the all-important fact that all things, events and people move in relation to each other.

Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty is reflected in Follett's idea that reality can only be sought in experience. Context matters. Heisenberg showed that the very act of observing a particle changes it, therefore the precise knowledge of something can never be known. This means that, simply put, one can never really know the whole of reality as reality is in movement. Physicists speak of “quantum uncertainty” (Gribben, 1995) that is the random interconnections that happen simply but cannot be predicted. Stated another way, we can only know where we have been by observing it; but the very fact that an observation is made influences the reality and thus its future outcome can no longer be predicted. Indeed one of the hallmarks of Follett's writing is the constant encouragement to organisations to keep abreast of the context (or environment as the term used by Follett) – both internal and external – within which it sits (Phelps et al, 2007). Thus understanding the context within which business is done is paramount to success. Within her understanding of context is the recognition of the fact that the context is ever changing – “we can never understand the total

situation without taking into account the evolving environment” (Follett, 1924:69). Follett defined what she called the “law of situation” which is when “there is identification with the organisational goals, the members tend to perceive what the situation requires and to do it whether the boss exerts influence to have it done or not” (Bennis, 2003:177).

Follett (1924:73) sums this up in what she describes as her three fundamental principles which should act as a guide in the study of social, thus organisational, situations:

- that my response is not to a rigid, static environment, but to a changing environment
- to an environment which is changing because of the activity between it and me
- that function may be continuously modified by itself

The challenge to the practitioner is clear but not evident. “Behaviour is not a function of environment but a function of the relating of behaviour and environment.....a function of the relation between self and the environment” (Follett, 1924:71-2). Thus the context and its influence are ever present. From this point the challenge is to make sense of the context within which we find ourselves, to be present in that context and of reacting and relating from that point.

### **30.2 Making sense of our experience**

The section looks at the first of these questions – that of making sense of the context and of our experience of that context. “Of greatest importance is the ability to grasp the total situation [...] this includes facts, present and potential, aims and purposes and men” (Follett, 2003:168). Out of all this must the leader find a unifying thread. The practitioner must “see the whole” and not merely all the various pieces; must “see the relationship between all the different factors in a situation” (Follett, 2003:168). It is this role that gives sense to a situation. Giving sense or “sensemaking” can be defined as giving shared meaning to the world in which we are present. To deal with the constant changes in organisational environments, sensemaking allows organisations to “search for meaning, settle for plausibility and move on. These are moments of sensemaking” (Weick et al, 2005). Follett was continually aware of these moments of sensemaking throughout her work. She saw that “meaning” was not a stationary thing but something which evolved as we interacted. She saw these moments as potential moments of creative experience which were often experienced as moments of conflict.

One of her enduring contributions to the practitioner is to rethink the nature and use of conflict. Follett saw conflict as moments when the sense of a situation was not shared. She

saw conflict as “a normal process by which socially valuable differences register themselves for the enrichment of all concerned” (Follett, 1924:301). Follett outlines the value of conflict in four elements:

- that the value of conflict is its ability to reveal the real issues in a way that can be shared
- that it provides the potential for stabilising a situation if dealt with properly
- that it offers the opportunity to release new energy into a situation
- that it allows the confrontation of opposing desires and the potential for integration

Follett encouraged us to think of conflict as neither good nor bad but rather “as the appearance of difference [...] for that is what conflict means – difference” (Follett, 2003(a):30). As conflict – difference is here in the world, as we cannot avoid it, we should, I think, use it. Instead of condemning it, we should set it to work for us; we should use it to harness its creative potential.

Follett outlines three main ways of dealing with conflict: domination, compromise and integration (Follett, 2003(a):31). Domination is “victory of one side over the other. This is the easiest way of dealing with conflict, the easiest for the moment but not usually successful in the long run” (Follett, 2003(a):31). In such situations there is a stale-mate, a remaining in an unchanging situation. Compromise “is the way we settle most of our controversies; each side gives up a little in order to have peace (Follett, 2003(a):31). Follett is clear that “no one really wants to compromise, because that means a giving up of something” (Follett, 2003(a):32). Compromise brings a solution but not necessarily anything new. Rather it deals with what already exists and gives a result where both sides lose something. “If we only get compromise, the conflict will come up again and again in some other form, for in all compromise we give up some part of our desire, and because we shall not be content to rest there, sometime we shall try to get the whole of our desire” (Follett, 2003(a):35). Integration means finding a solution “in which both desires have found a place, that neither side has had to sacrifice anything” (Follett, 2003(a):32). It “involves invention, and the clever thing is to recognize this, and not to let one’s thinking stay within the boundaries of two alternatives which are mutually exclusive” (Follett, 2003(a):33). The power of integration is that it creates something new. In it we find a creative experience and an evolution, we move forward, we grow. “Thus we shall not be afraid of conflict, but shall recognise that there is a destructive way of dealing with such moments and a constructive way. Conflict as the moment of the appearing and focusing of difference may be a sign of health, a prophecy of progress” (Follett, 2003(a):34).

Thus the idea of integration brings forward the idea that "something new has emerged, the third way, something beyond either-or" (Follett, 2003:189). Follett argues that only integration offers a stable outcome on which a positive evolution can be based. She is not naive; she admits that integration is not possible in all cases but is a passionate advocate of the creative possibilities of conflict if handled in an integrative way. "Integration involves invention, the finding of a third way, and the clever thing is to recognise this and not to let one's thinking stay within the boundaries of two alternatives which are mutually exclusive" (Follett, 2003:189). We all have a responsibility for integration. "We saw in our consideration of circular response that my behaviour helps create the situation to which I am responding [...] that my behaviour is helping to develop the situation" (Follett, 2003(a):48). It is the emphasis that Follett places on something new (her third way) which is enticing to the practitioner. That within this new possibility something better can be created.

To take the example from the world of physics of light; for many years light was considered to be matter or energy but not both. Since Einstein, we now know that light can be matter and energy, his famous  $E=mc^2$ . Similarly Follett saw a third way open to dealing with conflict. Are we ready to see conflict as positive? That conflict does not create an "either-or" situation but is one of matter and energy. One can only hope the answer is yes. As Follett wrote "one test of your business organisation is not how many conflicts you have, for conflicts are the essence of life, but what are your conflicts? And how you deal with them? [...it is] to be hoped that we shall always have conflict, the kind which leads to invention, to the emergence of new values" (Follett, 2003(a):35).

The role of sensemaking which the leader brings is, in essence, the opening of the possibility for a shared meaning to be created in any kind of situation. Follett argues that it is only on the basis of a shared meaning that an organisation can evolve. She places the importance of that shared meaning being created within the context in order for it to have real value. These are her first two constructs. The leader, as facilitator of these constructs, must be fully present in the situation.

### **30.3 Leadership, Power, Coordination, Management – The Force of Presence**

This section discusses the third construct, that of presence. "Every body continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line, unless it is compelled to change that state by forces impressed upon it" (Newton, 1687:I). Gravity – the force which compels change. "In business we are always passing from one significant moment to another significant moment, and the leader's task is pre-eminently to understand the moment of passing. The leader sees one situation melting into another and has learnt the mastery of that moment" (Follett,

2003:170). This is gravity; this is the act of presence. Gravity is that unseen force, unnoticed until an object is placed within its field; then its effect can be observed. The presence of a leader is similar; it is unnoticed until an object is placed within its field to see if anything is different. The leader sees the evolving situation and must apply their wisdom and judgement not to a stationary situation but to one which is constantly changing. The leader must “see future trends and unite them” (Follett, 2003:169). This insight into the future is an anticipation of what is to come which is much larger than predicting the future – it is rather the creation of the future. The great leader is the one who can make the decisions for the future that is evolving and not just the present situation (Follett, 2003).

In Follett’s lectures on leadership, she puts forward the essentials of the act of leadership:

- a thorough knowledge of the job
- the ability to grasp the whole situation
- the ability to see future trends and unite them
- the ability to organise the experience of the group

While she acknowledges the three kinds of leadership - position, personality and function – Follett’s theory clearly pushes us towards the importance above all of the act of leadership as the four functions mentioned above and that the act of leadership can be found not just at the top of an organisation but in fact at all levels. She draws the example, when discussing the need to recognise leadership at all levels of an organisation, of Aristotle alone led the world of science in his day to the present day when thousands of scientists each make their contribution (Follett, 2003:176). The parallel is true in business today.

Leadership of position gives authority but not necessarily real leadership; leadership of personality brings individualism but does not necessarily create a team. Leadership of function combines the practical aspects that Follett places in the act of leadership – knowledge of the context, an ability to grasp the whole situation, to see trends, to unite them and to organise the experience of the group together for a common purpose. Followers are seen in a new light by Follett; not as passive employees who follow orders, rules and tasks, but rather as co-creators of the act of leadership. They have an important role to play in supporting the leader to “keep control of the situation” (Follett, 2003:170). She speaks of the “consent of governing” (Follett, 2003:171), identifying the reality of organisations where developments, suggestions and advances come from within the group and the leader – as creator of the group – has a consenting role. The intelligent leader does not want followers, but rather co-creators serving a common purpose. Follett makes an interesting point – that leaders and followers are in fact both following an “invisible leader – the common purpose”

(Follett, 2003:172). Along with leadership, Follett introduces the notion of followship. "But if the followers must partake in leadership, it is also true that we must have followship on the part of leaders. There must be a partnership of following" (Follett, 1924:255). The strength of her argument is in the reality of the situation she portrays and in the energy which she opens for the practitioner. She is challenging. She challenges the leader to be both leader and follower; she challenges each to listen and hear what is said - "quietism, in a more pious age called the sin of silence, often costs organisations – and their leaders – dearly" (Bennis, 2003:180). The energy that can be released from "followers who tell the truth and leaders who listen" is unbeatable (Bennis, 2003:179).

The challenge - for leader or follower – is to be present. In this sense, presence is putting reality into experience. Follett challenges us to the richness of this idea at the end of her book saying "what I have tried to show in this book is that the social process may be conceived either as the opposing and battle of desires with the victory of one over the other, or as the confronting and integrating of desires. The former means non-freedom for both sides, the defeated bound to the victor, the victor bound to the false situation thus created-- both bound. The latter means a freeing for both sides and increased total power or increased capacity in the world" (Follett, 1924:301). Follett's reference to "power" - or what we have referred to in the paper as energy - is the essence of her theoretical and practical richness. It is the grounded reality of her work that impresses - "We usually have the situation we make – no one sentence is more pregnant with meaning for business success. This is why the leader's task is so difficult, why the great leader requires the great qualities – the most delicate and sensitive perceptions, imagination and insight, and at the same time courage and faith. "[The leader] should be the pioneer spirit which blaze new trails. The insight to see possible new paths, the courage to try them, the judgement to measure results – these are the qualifications of a leader" (Follett, 2003:170).

Follett draws an important distinction, when discussing power, between "power over" and "power with". She strongly advocated the idea that power was different to authority; power being the energy created through working together while authority being the power over another person or group. "Whereas power usually means power-over, the power of some person or group over some other person or group, it is possible to develop the conception of power-with, a jointly-developed power, a co-active, not a coercive power (Follett, 2003(a): 101). Power-with comes from respecting the circular relations wheel that Follett sets out. It comes from the presence which the leader can bring. Like the example of gravity before, the presence of the leader that effects the creation of the future. Presence exerts a type of power-with, which is created when there is respect of the relating and the relationships.



Follett's description of power brings to leadership the sense of the importance of the presence which the individual brings. It is the presence that an individual holds which, like gravity, effects the creation of the experience of the context and the quality of the relating. The next section looks at this question – of relating and circular relations. We have spoken of context, of our need to understand it, to experience it, to make sense of it and to be present within it; but ultimately the individual – whether leader or follower must enter in relationship with in and with the people within.

### **30.4 Relating with and within the context - Circular relations**

“The most fundamental thought about [circular relations] is that reaction is always reaction to relating and that response is always to a relation, the relation between the response and that to which the response is being made (Follett, 1924:63). Follett puts her idea of circular relations as one of the cornerstones of her approach to management within organisations. Circular response may seem quite a simple concept but it is one which she notes that many try to avoid. “The concept of circular behaviour throws much light on conflict, for now I realise that I can never fight you, I am always fighting you plus me [...] the response is always to a relation. I respond, not only to you, but to the relation between you and me” (Follett, 1924:81). The concept is beautifully simple. “No man is an island” as John Donne so famously wrote in 1624 and yet as Follett so often observed, we so often avoid this reality and see work from a totally individualistic perspective.

Follett brings this idea of relating as a central theme to her writings. It puts forward the idea of the simultaneous nature of the independence and interdependence within and among individuals and functions within an organisation and with the organisation and its external environment. She states that “we can never understand the total situation without taking into account the evolving environment” and that “relating becomes another element of the total environment (Follett, 1924:69). “The heart of the truth about integration is the connection between the relating of two activities, their interactive influence and the values thereby created” (Follett, 1924:53). The natural interrelatedness which is part of the interaction between individuals and organisations is highlighted in this by Follett. She places its importance as key in the understanding of reality. And that reality is constantly evolving; the “interactive behaviour between the situation and ourselves which means a change in both the situation and ourselves (Follett, 1924:86). The concept of circular relating shows that an individual's behaviours impacts the situation; is indeed is a co-creator of the situation within which the individual finds themselves. In turn this behaviour helps to develop the situation (Follett, 1924). Follett underlines the importance of this concept “we should work always with

the evolving situation, and note what part our own activities have in that evolving situation” (Follett, 1924:85).

This is the power of her circular relations theory - that "every moment is made up of a thousand reflex arcs" (Follett, 1924:63); in physics this is called feedback. All systems are ultimately complex, irreducible into parts because the parts are being constantly folded into each other by iterations and feedback. “Therefore its an illusion to speak of isolating a single interaction [...] any interaction takes place in a larger system and the system as a whole is constantly changing, bifurcating, iterating. So the system and all its parts have a direction in time. Time thus becomes an expression of the systems holistic interaction and this interaction extends outwards” (Prigogine, 1996). These are considered the paths of evolution. Thus evolution is continual and interconnected - “through circular response we are creating each other all the time” (Follett, 1924:62). This brings a new meaning to the concept of responsibility. It means that we are responsible for how we relate and what we create. There is no more an “I” but an integrated “us” in our service and function within an organisation. There is no static point but a constant evolution because we are relating to something or someone all the time – thus we are creating and evolving all the time. How much more powerful we each become if we were to see the reality in which we are co-creating all the time. Indeed Follett encouraged the social sciences to develop methods for watching varying activities in their relating to other varying activities (Follett, 1924) and that only by doing so can a true understanding of reality be obtained. She noted that “behaviour is not a function of environment but a function of the relating of behaviour and environment.....a function of the relation between self and the environment (Follett, 1924:72).

Follett wrote “that response is always to a relating, that things which are varying must be compared with things that are varying, that the law of geometrical progression is the law of organic growth, that functional relating has always a plus value (Follett, 1924:73). The challenge to the practitioner is to develop the ability to organise the experience of the group through understanding how the relating is taking place, and learning how to guide and harness the creative experience which unfolds. Thus the practitioner becomes the one who can “organise the experience of the group [...] and makes the team” (Follett, 2003:168). It is the ability to organise all the forces in an organisation and direct them in serving a common organisational goal. People with this ability create “group power rather than express a personal power. They penetrate to the subtlest connections of the forces at their command, and make all these forces available and most effectively available for the accomplishment of their purpose” (Follett, 2003:169)

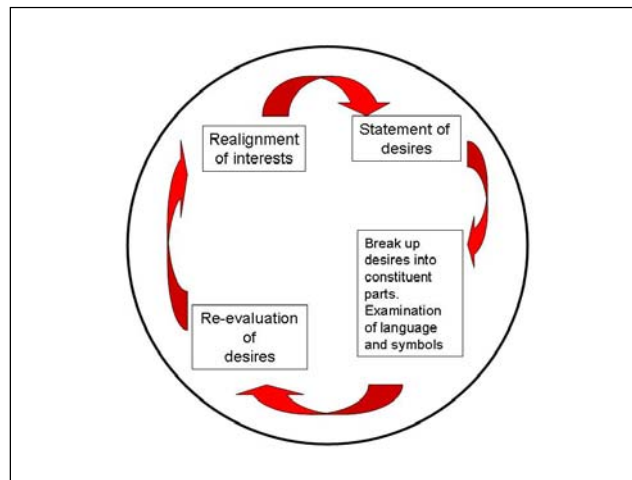
Follett had one principle message throughout her work – that relationships matter (Graham, 2003:xvi). The context, as we have discussed, and its influence are ever present. We have looked at the challenge of making sense of that context, being present in that context and of reacting and relating from that point.

### **30.5 The Third Way - Integration, collective responsibility and Reciprocal service**

This section looks at Follett's fifth construct, that of reciprocal service. "In domination, you stay where you are. In compromise likewise you deal with no new values. By integration something new has emerged, the third way, something beyond either-or" (Follett, 2003:189). This third way is the essence of Follett's contribution to organisational science. The idea is simple, but it takes courage to implement.

Follett put forward what for me is a foundation of her theory – the idea of reciprocal service. This differs from her idea of circular response. She defines reciprocal service as equilibrium of exchange, or interchange, of services; the idea that an organisation is made up of a multitude of individuals performing a multitude of various functions and the interrelation between these make up a healthy organisation. She shows clearly that the individual is not only responsible for the service they provide but also for there being an organisation to serve. It is this aspect of "service" which underlines her idea of reciprocal service. Follett argues that the social process should be seen as a confronting and integration of desires rather than a confrontation of opposing desires where there is victory for one or other side but never both (Follett, 1924). She describes this process of integration as "a freeing for both sides and increased total power or increased capacity in the world" (Follett, 1924:302)

Follett outlined in a simple way the basis for integration. But she was no idealist; she did not ignore that there are situations where integration is not possible, where there is no third way. But we have a morale obligation to try first before we say integration is not possible. The process of integration is one of bringing differences out into the open – "to put your cards on the table, face the real issue, uncover the conflict, and bring the whole thing out into the open" (Follett, 2003(a):38). This process of integration is drawn in Figure 16 below.



*Figure 16: Follett's process of integration*

Follett clearly puts forward that integration is not always possible and listed the possible obstacles to integration and underlined the challenge which integration faces. The practitioner walking the path of integration “requires a high order of intelligence, keen perception and discrimination [...], a brilliant inventiveness (Follett, 2003(a):45). The way of organisational life, and the competition it faces, has habituated many “to enjoy domination” (Follett, 2003(a):45). Often the matter in dispute is theorized over, instead of being taken up as a proposed activity. The language used is not always shared. There can be an undue influence of leaders – “the manipulation of the unscrupulous on the one hand and the suggestibility of the crowd on the other” (Follett, 2003(a):47). But most of all, perhaps the greatest obstacle to our walking the path of integration is simply our lack of training for integration, our lack of experience in the organisational world of the art of cooperative thinking.

Progress in terms of integration is established through the revaluation of desires which dialogue brings. This is done by taking the demands of both sides and breaking them up into constituent parts or, what Follett termed, the breaking up of wholes. Crucial at this stage is the examination of symbols and language used - “it is, of course, unavoidable to use symbols; all language is symbolic; but we should be always on our guard as to what is symbolized” (Follett, 2003(a):42). This allows the re-evaluation of desires by both sides. Only then can there be a realignment of interests i.e. to see the real issues and to discover the real conflict, and thus address the real issues. The visual representation of the circle reflects Follett's idea of circular behaviour “as the basis of integration” (Follett, 2003(a):45). This gives us the key to making conflict constructive.

We have already mentioned above Follett's fundamental principles which guide the study of social situations - that my response is not to a rigid, static environment, but an environment which is changing because of the activity between it and me, and that function may be continuously modified by itself (Follett, 1924). The challenge is to be willing and open to looking at integration. "Thinking (willing, purposing) is a specific relating of the interdependent variables, individual and situation, each thereby creating itself anew, relating themselves anew, and thus giving us the evolving situation" (Follett, 1924:89). Leadership thus starts with the leading of the self; the taking of one's place in the organisation and understanding the relation with all the other parts (O'Connor, 2007). Throughout her work she places this double emphasis on the responsibility of an individual towards the function they undertake and towards the relationship to the whole organisation (O'Connor, 2008). This is the challenge of the third way.

### **30.6 Mary Parker Follett's contribution and her influence on this research**

In exploring Follett's contribution, we have presented her work as having five influencing factors on and towards leadership. These five constructs, which we have discussed through this chapter, are:

- knowing the context
- the ability to understand and give sense to what is going on around
- the ability to be present
- the ability to relate to the individuals evolved
- the idea of integration and reciprocal service

These constants frame Follett's contribution to framing good leadership, as well as advice to practitioners in organisations.

The understanding the context, as has been argued earlier, is paramount to success. Within Follett's understanding of context is the recognition of the fact that the context is ever changing – "we can never understand the total situation without taking into account the evolving environment" (Follett, 1924:69). It is that placement of the individual in the experience of reality of the context which is her first anchor point.

The challenge then is to make sense of the context within which we find ourselves. Follett's grounding in reality, in experiencing it, allows the practitioner to give sense, and to ensure that the sense given can be shared. The ability to grasp the total situation, to experience its

meaning and to share its meaning and sense to others is Follett's second anchor. The leader must find the unifying thread with which shared understanding can be woven. The true building of sense and sensemaking is based open discussion which examines the shared understanding of our experience of the context. It gives an individual the potential to become co-creators of the reality of the situation within which they find themselves.

Presence is the ability to be in, and of, and understand each passing moment. It means learning the mastery of the moment and of being able to move with that moment. Presence exerts a type of power-with, as we have said, and brings to leadership an understanding of the importance of their own presence and the power if its effect on the context and relations.

One of Follett fundamental ideas was that relationships matter; that our reactions are always a reaction to our relating and that the response is always to a relation. That in fact our whole interaction with the world around us is based on relating. Relating is the constant flow that takes place when interactions occur. It embodies the idea of the simultaneous nature of the independence and interdependence within and among individuals and functions and with the organisation and its external environment. It is the constant creative flow that is potentially there to be harnessed by the intelligent practitioner.

Reciprocal service has been defined earlier the idea that an organisation is made up of a multitude of individuals performing a multitude of various functions and considers this interrelation as an equilibrium of exchange. The individual is not only responsible for the service they provide but also for there being an organisation to serve. Follett argued that the social process should be seen as a confronting and integration of desires and described this process of integration as "a freeing for both sides and increased total power or increased capacity in the world" (Follett, 1924:302).

Without the first four constructs we do not manage, without reciprocal service we do not evolve. This is Follett's rich legacy to the leadership practitioners. Follett gives us perhaps one of the most powerful insights to our social and organisational life in showing "that we have the power through open debate and discussion to examine and reconstitute the assumptions and structures within which we are confined" (Child, 2003:91). Drawing a new horizon within which this discussion and debate can take place, can only help in ensuring the depth needed in dealing with the complexity of today's modern, international organisations. Follett challenges us with a theory of great simplicity - "it carries with in one hand the compass for the journey, and in the other the only gift we can ever hope for all our pains, the opportunity for greater pains, for harder tasks. We give ourselves to our task and our task not only becomes larger but at the same time deeper and higher" (Follett, 1924:90).

If we parallel this to the our earlier research work and the four levels of self, group, context and action, we see, like in the previous chapter once again the elements of presence, sensemaking and relating. Mary Parker Follett places service as a main construct whereas service was one of the 23 themes within the original research results. The other offer Follett makes to this research is the idea of circular relations – that integration is based on a constant movement, a re-evaluation, a constant process of realignment of understanding of the context and the actions taken and the individuals acting. Her guiding principle – that my response is not to a rigid, static environment, but an environment which is changing because of the activity between it and me, and that this function must be continuously modified. Leadership thus starts with the leading of the self; the taking of one's place in the organisation and understanding the relation with all the other parts, making sense of the context and then taking action. The challenge which Follett places, her third way, offers a clarification for this research in terms of the circular relating of the constructs.

Follett's five constructs, together with the knowledge gathered from the discussion on physics in the previous chapter, will be brought together in the following chapter and further into Part 6 when the results of both research journeys, as well as the academic knowledge gathered in the research process will be brought together and discussed.

## 31. Starting to Bring it all Together

### 12. Literature Review 2

This chapter continues the theoretical discussion research results by bringing together the first research results (presented in Part 3), the model constructed in Part 4, the action research field study and the theoretical discussions which followed. The aim of this chapter is to deepen the analysis and propositions which this collective body of knowledge can offer in terms of leadership.

### 31.1 From the Research

If leadership is about an act “which leaves the world a better and different place, that is you lead people in new directions, to solve problems and make new things happen” (Moss Kanter, 2002), then the leadership framework and model which we have put forward in Figure 7 from this research offers the potential way to do that in everyday practice.

These research results, and the numerous elements of good leadership which they encompass, show the enormous challenge which comes with embodying *good leadership*. This is perhaps one of the reasons it is difficult to find. The Model created shows the level of complexity of what has to be managed. The field research shows that all too often neither leaders nor followers have clear boundaries around what can be expected and not expected from leaders. The research journey shows that the creation of a model of leadership can help in this respect.

Authors often have discussed whether “leaders are born or made or some combination of both, it is unequivocally clear that leaders are not like with people....it would be a profound disservice to leaders to suggest that they are ordinary people who happen to be in the right place at the right time. Maybe the place matters, but it takes a special kind of person to master the challenges of opportunity” (Kirkpatrick, Locke, 1991:59). The stories told from the research would indicate that good leadership is a rather humble profession - if done well. The research here seems to disagree with Kirkpatrick and Locke and argues against the idea of a “special” kind of person who can become a good leader, but rather puts forward the view that anybody can do it if they are willing to hold the weight of service and selfhood to the extent to which the model requires.



While writers would argue that a new dynamic of leadership is required to meet the complexity of today's organisational environment (Marion, Uhl-Bien, 2001; Osborn, Hunt, 2007; Uhl-Bien et al, 2007), this research shows rather that good leadership is an act which remains steady in spite of the changing level of complexity in the environment or in the organisation. Some research has tended to indicate that leadership often comes down to moments of chance which are exploited (Brown, 1996) in a way that consolidates a vision into action. The Framework (Figure 5) and Model (Figure 7) of Good Leadership which have been built are not affected by varying levels of technology or contexts; they would appear to remain steady across contexts and cultures. As we have discussed in Chapter 12 (with the fact that the themes like power and managing uncertainty were dropped from the final dictionary of themes) good leadership seems to offer a stability around which aspects like uncertainty, complexity and changing environments seem to be managed well enough for teams to be able to deal with them in the normal course of work.

We have mentioned that one of the reasons put forward for leadership theories failing to have a positive impact in the practitioners' reality is that many of them do not take into account the complexity of today's organisations. This research would indicate that complexity is not a factor in determining good leadership. If we take the physicists point that within complexity and chaos there is a subtle form of order (Briggs, Peat, 1990), perhaps good leadership acts as, and offers to be, the point of singularity around which that order can form.

The idea presented in Part 3 - that good leadership takes place on four levels of the self, the group, context and the action - tends towards agreeing with Drath et al (2008) who state that the current leadership ontology (made up of leaders, followers and their shared goals) narrows the view of leadership unnecessarily. The Framework presented in Part 4 does keep a very similar ontology but holds the 23 themes as the basic tenants of good leadership. Perhaps most interesting is the Model's potential ability to be beneficial across contexts and cultures. This may go some way to address what many consider as a failing of traditional leadership theories to take culture into account. While culture is a factor, it is but 1 of 23 and the others hold across cultural differences. This would imply that the leadership framework which has been built can be valid across cultures.

In all of this research, the focus has been on the positive side of leadership. While we have discussed Kellerman's (2004) argument that leadership literature has an inherent positive slant, we have put forward our reasons for choosing to focus on the stories of good leadership because of the research's aim to see if we could find the fundamentals which underlie good leadership. As mentioned before, it has been a conscious choice in this paper to focus on "good" leadership without defining what "good" means. There was a purpose in

not using an existing framework, and a risk that as a result the outcome would give nothing. Fortunately, this did not happen. This choice has, in fact, given us the chance to put forward a framework for good leadership which lets us look at its underlying fundamentals.

The field research journey has increased the validation of the Framework and the idea, and even the necessity, of a Leadership Model. It has however questioned some of the decisions made during the creation of the Model of Figure 7, notably the concept of “leadership field” and the denomination of the various quadrants. The final organisational model created for the ICRC in Figure 14 gives a field tested view of the Lollipop Model which has been accepted in one organisation.

The field study however left open questions regarding the original Lollipop model which needed further exploration. These questions were mainly around the choice of nominations of the quadrants and also the idea of “leadership field”. This pushed the research to explore the literature further to see if a better answer could be found in terms of the original idea of the leadership field and to constructing a balanced model which could offer a simple structure to individuals and organisations to enact good leadership.

One question which remained was that of the level of complexity of the model. The model resulting from the field test was simpler than the original model but was still both complex and difficult to remember. This made me consider a question that had been put forward when the models in Part 4 were first presented in public – was the level of complexity too much, was it still too much?

We have not tried to hide the basic fact that the same leadership skills, attributes and theories can as easily be used in a manipulative fashion for the benefit of the leader as they can be in a respectful way for the good of a collective, but we have, through structuring the research as we have, collected the data necessary to show that by framing leadership as we have done in Figure 6, we ensure that good leadership can be enacted that is absent of manipulation for the benefit of a single individual.

Linked to this is one of the surprising outcomes of this research which has been the absence of power as an element of leadership. No one is naïve enough to think that power, authority and influence are absent or are always used well; they can as easily be used badly. But the research seemed to indicate that good leadership uses it in such a way as for it not to be felt as power but rather empowerment. The difference, the research seems to show, is that good leadership is a choice about how a leader enacts their role as a leader through the level of service which they embody.

## 31.2 From the Quantum World

This theoretical knowledge contributes to integrate two disciplines – physics, with its principles and observations which have been posed and proven, and the science of organisations which can learn from the view of the world that physics currently offers. It was necessary in order to explore further the nominal choices which the Lollipop Model contains, especially around the idea of “leadership field”. This body of knowledge would suggest a leadership construct in a quantum context would be embodied in three elements, namely relationship, sensemaking and presence.

In building a theory of leadership, the principles of this paper rest on co-construction of reality as proposed by Piaget. Like physics, it takes the constructivist epistemology along similar lines to Vygotsky who put forward the importance of shared meaning in the construction of reality (Smith et al, 1997). The physics which has been presented in this paper has mirrored this - “whatever we call reality, it is revealed to us only through an active construction in which we participate” (Prigogine, Stengers, 1984:293).

By delving further into the theoretical knowledge of this field, we have showed that no concept can exist if not in relation to others just as there can be no self if not in relation to others. It is holistic in its nature and accepts that human interaction is complex. Like the work of Follett which was also analysed, this understanding of context shows that there is a circular response and behaviour loop (feedback) in an organisational system which must be taken into account in any theory building (O'Connor, 2000). Leaders are increasingly required to manage an interconnected world in which organisations must be sustainable in the long term in terms of organisational life cycle. Bennis (1961) wrote that we have much to learn about leadership, closing his article quoting J.H. Leckie who said “whoever would truly think of authority must think reverently of freedom” (1961:150). This paper takes Bennis’ idea a step further – it gives freedom to a theory which parallels the reality of nature. If the individual self exists only in relation to others and, as Follett postulates, there is a circular response and behaviour loop that affects relationships, how then can this be taken into account in our theory building? The construct of quantum leadership intend to make a contribution to answering these questions.

There is clear research to show the value of bringing science into the world of organisational sciences. Theories in physics have suggested that the world is an interconnected universe. Leadership – like physics – is about dynamic relationships and therefore the postulates of physics can be applied effectively and bring to organisational science a more rounded view of the world we live in and how that world is structured. Thus a quantum view can be applicable. Context is unavoidable, relationships are natural and sensemaking is the work of

the leader. Presence is not some strange skill that a leader learns – it is something everyone carries, admittedly in different degrees. A leader must be present in both the context and the relationships in order to understand the reality of a situation. In understanding this, the leader is then well placed to influence and lead. Leadership gives meaning and direction. All human beings need to ascribe meaning to what they do. Leaders are important focal points for sensemaking in organisations - if they want to give direction or make changes, then they must not only be aware of this role and embody it, but they must also be able to change and share at this level. Presence, relationships and sensemaking are key aspects of the role of a leader and thus are crucial to the leader in a quantum context.

Throughout time, scientists, philosophers and management writers have searched for the ultimate unifying theory. But, as this research journey has shown many times, the world does not function in this manner. The small but essential difference which Heisenberg's uncertainty principle has made means that the future can be written by living fully in the present. Crucial here is the belief that uncertainty is a catalyst for evolution and that a state of chaos, as described by physics and mirrored in organisations, brings the creative interaction which is needed to evolve. Because of this, an understanding of physics can be beneficial to the attainment of a better understanding of the organisational environment, and what is required to live and lead within organisations.

Here we answer Daft and Lewin's call for new "conceptual boxes" and but these new boxes, however, are not square; they have no borders and they defy a certain organisational logic. This perhaps parallels Heisenberg's famous comments regarding "moving foundations" when speaking about the effect of quantum physics on classical physics. The quantum view presented here opens a different way of thinking about context and about leadership in terms of managing the context, its relationships, its sense, and a leader's own presence. Leadership becomes an act of being present, of respecting relationships and embodying and transmitting meaning; embodying excellence in the simple act of respectful being.

The fact that we use this literature to support the idea of leadership context and a leadership which needs to embody the three elements of relationships, sensemaking and presence is justified from this body of work and is further explored the work of Mary Parker Follett. The leader sees the evolving situation and must apply their wisdom and judgement not to a stationary situation but to one which is constantly changing. The leader must "see future trends and unit them" (Follett, 2003:169). This insight into the future is an anticipation of what is to come which is much larger than predicting the future – it is rather the creation of the future. The truly great leaders will be those who can make the decisions for a future which is evolving and not just the present situation within which they find themselves. "We usually

have the situation we make – no one sentence is more pregnant with meaning for business success. This is why the leader's task is so difficult, why the great leader requires the great qualities – the most delicate and sensitive perceptions, imagination and insight, and at the same time courage and faith. "[The leader] should be the pioneer spirit which blaze new trails. The insight to see possible new paths, the courage to try them, the judgement to measure results – these are the qualifications of a leader" (Follett, 2003:170). Through this analysis, we would argue that a quantum view offers another way to act and interact with and within organisations today.

### **31.3 From Mary Parker Follett**

In the organisation world of today where more managers have read the "One minute manager" than any other classical management text, one wonders why the work of Follett has been so neglected. Some would argue that there is a question of style – the accessibility of her work to academics is limited enough, but you will hardly find a practitioner who has heard of her work. Many have speculated why her work has not been more widely recognised (Lawrence, 2003). Some would say it was the timing of her writing in a post First World War context where the very idea of a third way was simply unacceptable. Others have said it was because she was a woman – I rather agree with Drucker's clear rejection of this (Drucker, 2003) in considering that this comment is not in line with the historical context of the day.

Perhaps her work speaks too much to the "practitioner/academic". Finding the integrative solutions, the third way, is the daily business of the good practitioner. The good ones do so intuitively; there is a large dose of common sense and empathy, with a deep presence that holds the centre of the circular relating taking place. It cannot, or at least not without great difficulty, be observed scientifically. It takes place in what Follett calls the reality of experience, of co-creating reality through shared experience (Follett, 1924).

Follett's philosophy is one of movement - perhaps that is why it speaks so strongly to the practitioner. She recognised innately that the world of organisations was not a stationary one, but rather one in continual movement. "My response is not to a crystallized product of the past, static for the moment of meeting; while I am behaving, the environment is changing because of my behaving, and my behaviour is a response to the new situation, which I, in part, have created" (Follett, 1924:63). It is this recognition of the continual interaction, and thus influence, with the surrounding world that is the strength of her description.

Why was Mary Parker Follett not followed – perhaps her message was all too real. Just as she says herself; “we usually have the situation we make – no one sentence is more pregnant with meaning for business success. This is why the leader’s task is so difficult, why the great leader requires the great qualities – the most delicate and sensitive perceptions, imagination and insight, and at the same time courage and faith. [The leader] should be the pioneer spirit which blaze new trails. The insight to see possible new paths, the courage to try them, the judgement to measure results” (Follett, 2003:170). Follett’s work demands a certain humility from the practitioner as well as courage.

Nohria’s almost painful realisation that Follett had already captured the essence of organisational science more than 80 years previously to his 2 years of research echo’s many of the commentators on Follett’s work (Bennis, 2003; Lawrence 2003; Nohria, 2003). Why do so many modern management writers sound just like Follett? Why – in reading her work in 2009 – is she just so right. I think it is in this very question that we may find the reason why Follett’s work has largely gone unnoticed. She is just too challenging and demanding, and still remains so today. There is no magic formula, no list of things to do, no linearity, no security. And 100 years after her work was written, we still are mainly in a time when this linearity, this security is important. Follett’s work does not bring a certainty of response – it demands the practitioner to be present in the moment and to move and act from that point. She challenges the practitioner to know their context, to be responsible for the sensemaking within that context, to be present in a real way within the dynamic evolution of a situation and to be involved, in a real way, to the relating that takes place. “The text of the vitality of any experience is its power to unite into a living, generating activity its self-yielding differences” (Follett, 1924:302). She challenges the practitioner to experience the reality surrounding them and to take responsibility for the creative experience of the life of an organisation. It’s a tall order and it takes courage. It puts the practitioner constantly at the edge of their comfort zone – because that is where energy can be released.

Einstein, when he first posed his theory of relativity, he did not like it very much – it fundamentally shifted the foundations of the world as he had known it up to that point. And yet he stayed with the truth he saw in front of him and has the courage to continue. He was proved right only years later; and yes he changed the foundations of physics. Similarly Mary Parker Follett wrote her theories which do change the fundamentals of our approach to organisations and of how we relate to them and to the individuals within them. Have we the humility to consider that this woman writing so long ago had captured the essence of what we need to do business well. Have we the courage to take on the challenge she lays to us? We may not like the shifting foundations but we will have to come to accept them.

Managing Follett's 5 constructs is a lot to ask, but perhaps our new economic reality needs just this kind of challenge to re-invigorate itself. We are at many endings – the ending of the petrol era, the financial boom, and the male model of business – endings just like Einstein brought to the world of physics and changed its foundations. The challenge of co-creation in respect of the individual as citizen, citizen not just of the organisation but of the society at large could be the basis of our new organisational science. In all her work, Mary Parker Follett emphasises this holistic view in a very practical sense. Because of circular response, we co-create the world around us. "In domination, you stay where you are. In compromise likewise you deal with no new values. By integration something new has emerged, the third way, something beyond either-or" (Follett, 2003:189). This third way is the essence of Follett's contribution to organisational science. The idea is simple, but it takes courage to implement – do we have that courage whether it is on the factory floor, in the design team, in the boardroom or at a national level. Relationships matter, being present matters, creating and sharing meaning matters and knowing the context you are in matters. With this you can open the third way.

#### **31.4 The literature reviews and the research data – modelling good leadership?**

Perhaps, like Follett, we too risk here falling into the same trap of failing to impact on practitioner reality as we ask too much. The density of the matter which the Framework, the research Model and the field Model all contain show a basic fact – leadership is a complex, interrelated act where everyone involved have a range of differing needs and expectations and where our human nature, complex as it is, means that all stakeholders in the relationship react differently.

Many leadership writers talk about the famous "it" – that something which great leaders have that make them different from ordinary managers. This thesis first set 23 elements of good leadership around four levels (self, group, context, action). It then went to the field and ended up with 15 elements around three levels (action, presence, principles). The theoretical debate which followed in the field of physics brought three levels (context, presence, relating) while through Mary Parker Follett's work we place five constructs (context, sensemaking, presence, relating, service) as a focus for leadership.

The body of knowledge – which this thesis contains – would guide us towards the "it" factor as being in fact a leader's ability to be present and to influence and manage context, relationships and sensemaking in the service of an outcome. Presence implies authenticity but presence also implies the ability to integrate the surrounding connections, to be able to summarise and synthesise these connections so that they can both be taken into account

and given a meaning that is shared. Thus presence becomes an intensity of being, an integrator and sense-giver to the quantum world and the individuals within it. By looking at leadership through the lens of this science, we find an ability to ensure a leadership which takes place in a centred, bounded reality.

So here we find ourselves at a crossroads of knowledge, a blending of theoretical and field research results which lead to a balanced outcome. The following chapters aim to bring these results together. It attempts, based on all the work presented to date, and the more than 1,000 pages of annexes, to offer some conclusions to the wealth of data and to offer to the field practitioner a new Model of Good Leadership based on all that has been learnt on this leadership journey.





## **PART 6: CONCLUSIONS AND A NEW LOLLIPOP**

*It is our choices...that show who we truly are,  
are more than our abilities*

*Albus Dumbledore*

## Introduction to Part 6

Part 1 of this thesis set out to explore the theories of leadership which have been developed in academia since the start of the study of leadership. It traced the development of these various theories over time and presented 18 leadership theories which have been the subject of a significant amount of academic research. A discussion on this body of work and its implications for the practitioner reality was presented along with a number of key influences in the leadership debate, namely context and culture, leaders and followers, power and presence and the academic debate on leadership versus management.

From here the research question of this thesis was defined - to see if there are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. The challenge, to approach the research question in an open way, had an inherent risk of ending with data that would not form any useable conclusion. This risk was felt to be worth taking in view of the potential it offered to find some underlying fundamentals of good leadership. Part 2 presented the research process and methodology and detailed the evolution of the dictionary of themes used to code the research.

The resulting data generated by this research was discussed in detail in Part 3, and a framework representing the 23 themes of good leadership was defined as an outcome of this research. Part 3 then further testing (and confirming) the validity of the research findings by comparing the Framework of Good Leadership themes to some selected interview transcripts and to similar tables of attributes of leadership published in the research of five well-known leadership authors. Part 3 retakes the research data and complements the research analysis by a fourth round of coding which focuses on the underlying aspects of each of the stories. It presents and discusses these underlying fundamentals mentioned in relationship to good leadership and which emerged from the stories told. It then takes the Framework of Good Leadership discussed in Part 3 and discusses it in relationship to the 6 underlying fundamentals of good leadership which this research sets out. The influencing factors discussed in Part 1 are further discussed, as are the implications of the research data in relation to these earlier discussions. A model which consolidates all the research findings on good leadership presented which is termed the Model of Good Leadership.

Part 4 takes the initial research results - namely the Framework and Model of Good Leadership created in Part 3 – and presents the action research journey to see whether the initial results have field viability and if they can be used to create individual or organisational

leadership models of good leadership for practitioners which can be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types? Part 4 traces the action learning research journey which takes the Models created in Part 3 and applies them to the creation of a Leadership Model for a multinational organisation. The results produced a model which is similar in form and content to those presented in Part 3, thus validating the research once again.

Part 5 returns to the theoretical knowledge in order to bring more depth to the theoretical discussion of the research results so far. It reviews the leadership theories in relation to the results as well as the discussion on leadership versus management. It then goes on to discussion two important bodies of work, from quantum physics and Mary Parker Follett and applies them to leadership. By doing so we approach further the ability to create a valid model of leadership that can be applied in any context as both these fields can help to put the model back into a reality of context. It aims to test this research work against a body of work which is widely accepted. By doing so, it further strengthen the creation of a generic model of leadership based on the research work to date.

Finally here in Part 6 we present the implications of this research on good leadership. It presents the answers to the two research questions and analyses the research results. To practitioners it offers a new leadership model which is terms the “Lollipop Model of Good Leadership” and the Table of Leadership Elements, which like the Periodical Table in science may offer practitioners a way to construct their own leadership universe. Part 6 ends by drawing the conclusions which underlie this research and what it offers to leadership practitioners.

## 32. The Research Findings

This chapter summarises the research findings and presents the implications of the research, as well as possible limitations. This chapter will then form the basis to start bringing the research to its conclusion and to review the implications of the research for practitioners in the field.

### 32.1 The Research Question

The research question posed was:

*What are the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?*

In answer to this question, this research has first offered 23 themes of good leadership which have arisen directly from this research.

Themes of Good Leadership			
1	Action	14	Knowledge / Intelligence
2	Analysis	15	Positive energy
3	Authenticity	16	Presence
4	Balance / Managing the whole	17	Respect
5	Communication	18	Responsibility
6	Confidence	19	Service
7	Courage	20	Team
8	Culture	21	Trust
9	Decision making	22	Values
10	Empathy	23	Vision
11	Empowerment		
12	Fairness		
13	Honesty		

Table 18: The 23 themes of Good Leadership (repeated)

These 23 themes were the outcome of coding the interviews through a dictionary of themes. The building protocol for this dictionary has been outlined in Chapter 12. The approach taken has moved grounded theory from a more constructivist approach, recognising that the researcher is not neutral in the research process to a process which allowed the elements of the coding table to emerge from the results. This approach was designed to minimise any possible author influence with the objective to see if it is possible to develop an inductively derived theory about the phenomenon of good leadership. Thus this table, as indeed the entire thesis, has not built the theory *a priori* but rather with the aim to allow any potential

theory to emerge during the data collection and analysis process. The double-coding which took place (Chapter 14) as well as the matching to other leadership works (Chapter 18) has offered significant validity to this table.

Secondly the research offers a *Framework of Good Leadership* which models these 23 themes.

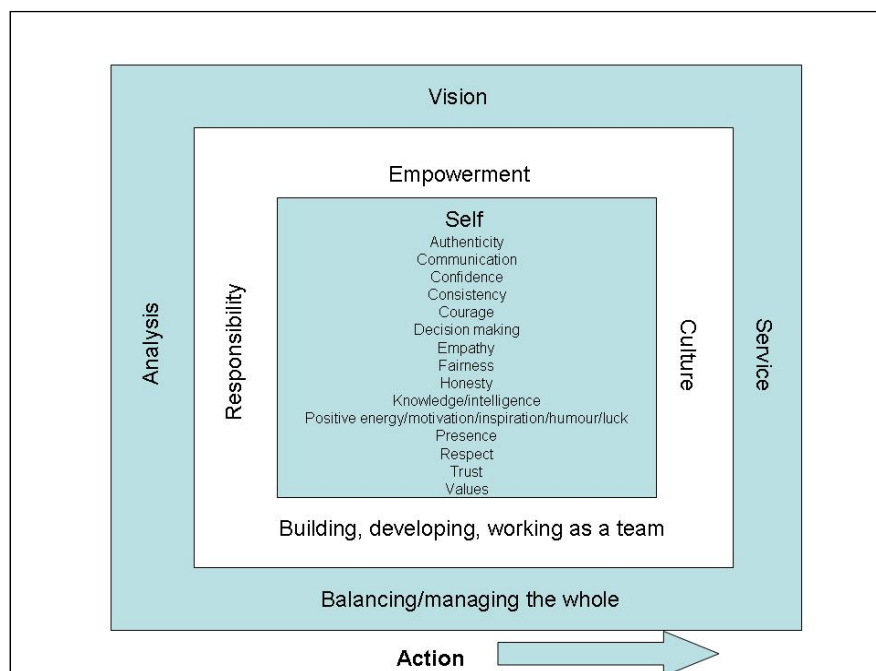


Figure 17: The Framework of Good Leadership

Thirdly it offers 6 underlying fundamentals of good leadership. These emerged from a fourth round of coding designed to respect the nature of the storytelling, a further reading of the research data was made using a summary approach - accepting the subjective nature of such a choice - to see if there were elements which emerged from the underlying constructs of the stories rather than the actual words used. This reading in a way answered the challenge of how to put the right-brained "story" into a left-brained "coding table". This meant interpreting the stories in a way that brought to the fore the underlying sense of what was said. Based on the analysis of this fourth round of coding, 6 elements which we term the underlying fundamentals of good leadership have emerged from this research work. They are not "new themes" but rather place an emphasis on some aspects of the 23 themes defined in this research which particularly underlie the enactment of good leadership. Neither can these be considered *the* underlying fundamentals of leadership, but rather can be considered to be one set of underlying fundamentals of good leadership when it is put into action. These complete results are set out in the table below.

Underlying fundamentals
Humility
Expansive
Partners not followers
Service
Enlightened vision
Long term responsibility

Table 19: The Underlying Fundamentals of Good Leadership (repeated)

Finally, it offers a model of leadership, which we have termed the *Model of Good Leadership*, which shows the full picture of what leaders have to be and do and hold if they are to be good leaders.

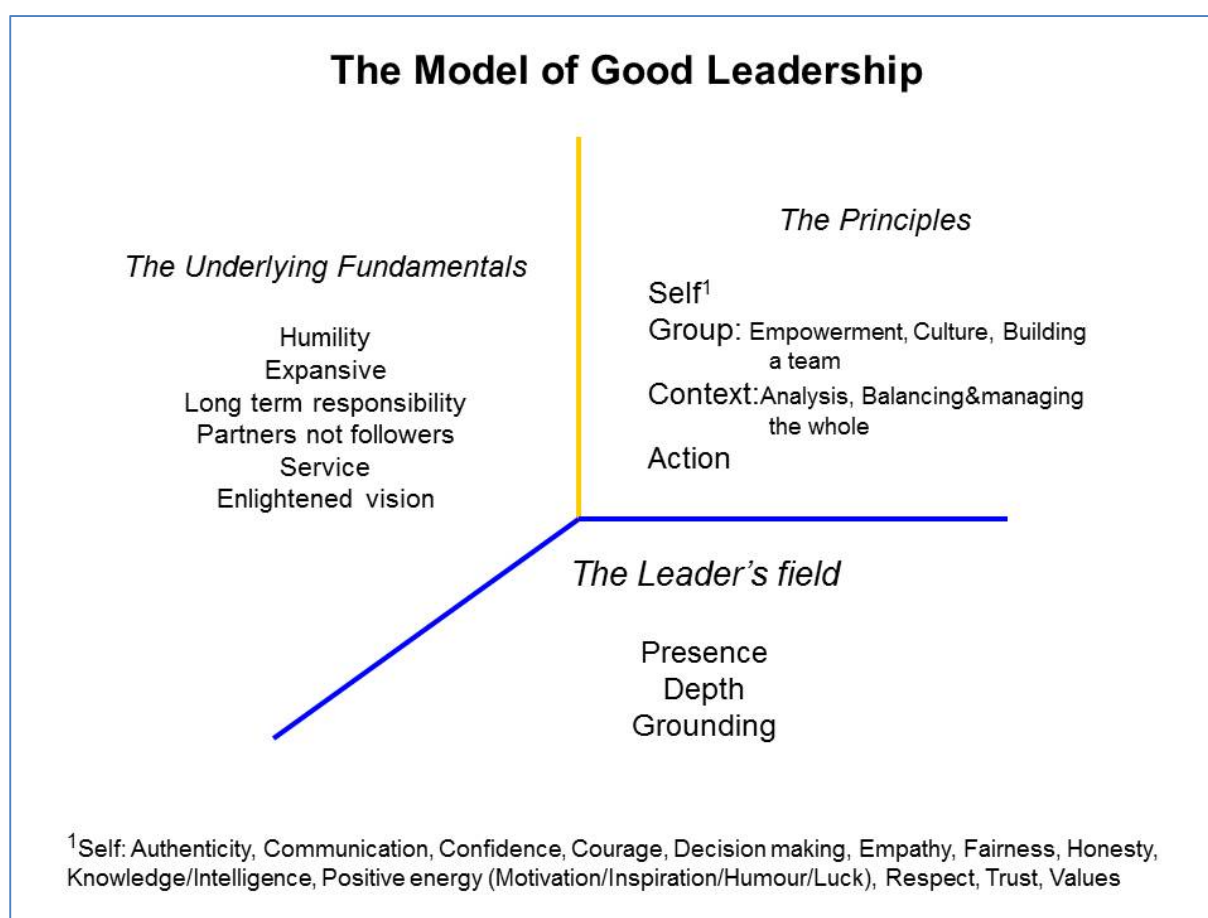


Figure 18: The Model of Good Leadership (repeated)

The model presented above is thus the formulation of the research findings on good leadership and presents one model of what is real, good leadership in action. It is an answer to this 1st research question and answers positively that yes there were underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types.



### 32.2 What the research findings offer us in terms of leadership theory

While not the main focus of the research, the depth of academic review presented in Part 1 and the choices made in the construction of Table 1 offered the possibility to analyse the research data in terms of leadership theories. The process of data analysis has been explained in detail and the results presented in Chapter 28. These results have challenged some of the choices made in Part 1, most significantly in terms of the leadership theories which were eventually left out or added to the list of currently applicable leadership theories as presented in Table 15.

Interestingly the research data has allowed the construction of a table of leadership theories which could be considered to be applicable to today's environment and thus gives the current-day leadership researcher some hints in where to focus research efforts which can have a practical implication in the practitioner reality of leadership. This being said, this research has focused on *good leadership*; thus there is a natural bias in the table which may limit its application to situations where good leadership is to be studied. This is not to say that the other leadership theories contain "bad" leadership, but rather that when discussing good leadership, these theories presented on the right side of Table 20 are considered to be more appropriate in how good leadership is enacted.

Leadership Theory Chronological list	Leadership Theory Currently Applicable list
Great Man	
Trait	Trait
Behavioural	Situational/Contingency
Situational/ Contingency	Path-Goal Theory
Path-Goal Theory	Charismatic
Charismatic	Transformational
Transactional	Cognitive
Transformational	Servant
Cognitive	Authentic
Servant	Cross-Cultural
Authentic	New-genre leadership
Complexity	Leader-member Exchange (LMX)
Cross-Cultural	
e-Leadership	

Table 20: A comparative table of Leadership Theories before and after research (repeat)

It has been interesting to note the relative lack of significance which leadership theories seemed to have in the reality of the field. Again, while it was not a direct question, the detailed analysis of the research data could mainly only cover leadership theory by

implication. Could this mean that leadership theories have little relevance in the workplace and belong more to the realm of academia rather than practitioner reality? Thus one implication of this research is a view of leadership theory which must become closer to the practitioner world in terms of its practical application. Through Table 21 we see the potential areas of leadership theory which have applicability in the field and this may help and encourage future leadership researchers to ensure practical application of theory, without which the theory has limited use.

### 32.3 The Action Research journey

Thus the second part of the research – the field or action research – was based around looking at the research question in the context of the modelling of the initial results in the form of the Framework and Model of Good Leadership. Only then, it was felt, could we present a competent answer to the research question of what could be the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types? Thus the action research looked both at whether the initial results were upheld in the field and whether they could be used to create individual or organisational leadership models of good leadership for practitioners which could be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types?

Part 4 of this thesis has shown the research journey to the practical application of the research to a field setting and the results of the field study. The fact that the model presented in the theoretical Part 4 and the field application presented in Part 4 bare resemblances is encouraging.

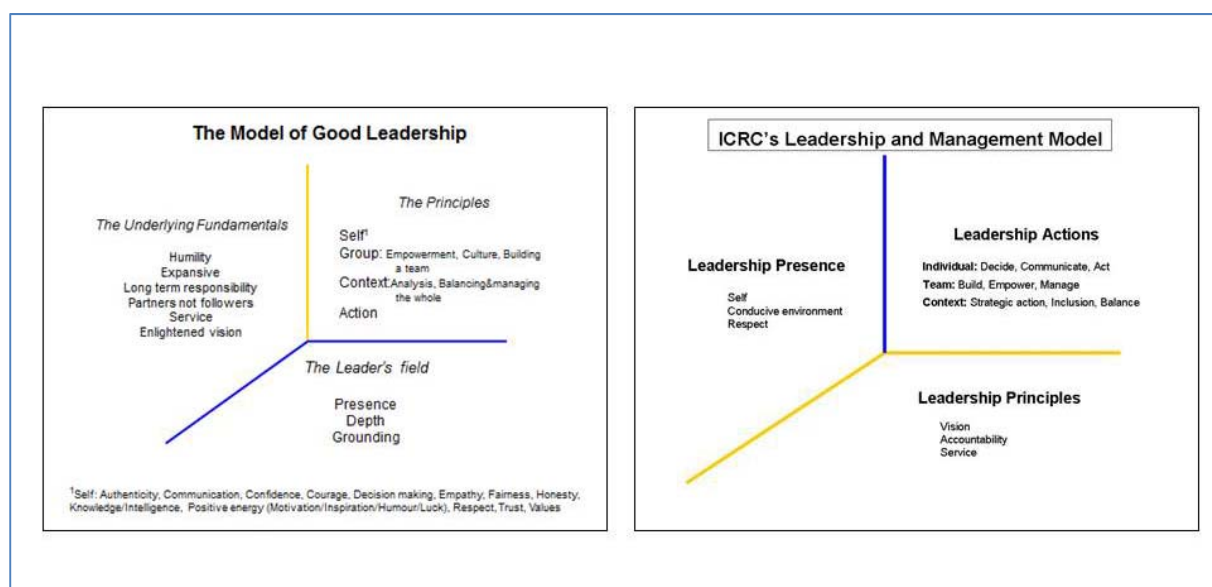


Figure 19: The Research Model versus the Field Model (repeated)

What was interesting to note through the construction process that has been detailed in Part 4 is the use of the Framework of Good Leadership which was presented earlier in Chapter 16. For both the initial building of the Leadership Model and the building of the Leadership Model for the ICRC, this was the base document from which both works grew. The Framework, as presented below turned out to act as a global platform from which an individual model could be built.

Thus the answer to the research question is yes, the Framework and Leadership Model created do have field applicability across contexts and cultures. As the field test has only taken place in one organisation, it cannot yet be said that it has applicability across any organisational types.

### **32.4 The Implications of the Research**

These results which are a direct output of the research journey have a number of practical implications. This can be listed as follows:

- The validity of researching “good leadership” is high; it gives a set of data that can focus on this aspect of leadership and has given some clear results enabling a modelling of good leadership.
- The validity of using storytelling as a research method is high.
- The strength and depth of the research data coming from the website is clearly weaker than the depth that can be extracted from the traditional qualitative research method of the one-on-one interview. It poses a warning note of caution for those who would use this method as the only source of research data.
- The difficulty for people to find “good stories” of leadership would appear to come from the complexity of the nature of the role and the lack of boundaries around what exactly is expected of leaders. The offer of a Leadership Model can positively answer these questions by clarifying boundaries around what is expected of leaders and thus calibrate expectations properly. The fact that the Model does not only concerned itself with material results (objectives achieved) but also aspects of human relating allows the building of an appropriate and balanced Leadership Model.
- The theories of leadership which continue to be the subject of academic research may find more value in using a table of leadership theories as presented in Table 15 rather than that of Table 1. This would allow a great practical application to the practitioner field.

- The *Framework of Good Leadership* (Figure 5) and the *Leadership Model* (Figure 7) which are proposed in this research have strong scientific validity.
- The *Framework of Good Leadership* which is further developed in Figure 6 by adding some fundamental principles, can ensure that leadership is effective thus allowing the practitioner to move away from a reliance on ethics and morale justification to an actual set of measurable elements which gives good leadership.
- The *Model of Good Leadership* (Figure 7) has scientific validity. The research question posed can thus be answered positively, that yes it is possible to define a model of good leadership which can allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. The aspect of “leadership field” as presented in the research model has proven to be questionable.
- The Framework of Good Leadership, together with the structure of the Lollipop Model have strong field applicability as a blueprint document which organisations can use to build their own models. The denominations of the three quadrants which results from the field research questions the initial choices made in the Lollipop Model of Figure 7 and the aspect of “leadership field” in the model however do not have field applicability.

These are the direct implications from the research findings.

### **32.5 The limitations of this research**

This thesis has challenged the research on leadership by choosing a methodology which can be challenging to manage. Storytelling as a research methodology leaves open the risk of creating a large amount of data which could be not be analysed. While this risk has been managed (the control mechanisms have been outlined in detail in Part 2) there is nevertheless a possibility to question the choice. The challenge of analysis, through the traditional qualitative means of coding, has been verified through the double coding process. Through the research, we offer here an additional methodology used to create depth of analysis of the stories. This choice (the fourth round of coding as outlined in Chapter 19) is open to discussion as there are no similar research methods of which the author is aware.

The diversity of participants to the research is felt to be acceptable. 44% of participants came from the not-for-profit sector and 30% came from the author’s own organisation which was the field testing ground. The risk of organisational bias is present and further testing would be needed in a for-profit organisation to see whether the use of the framework and model can be effective.

The research process could have been concluded after Part 5, with relative ease and showing relative success. However there is sufficient data and theoretical discussion to allow further work to bring the Lollipop Model to a next level of evolution and depth was undertaken to continue the journey to find an appropriate and simple tool for the practitioner in the field. These tools are presented in the following chapter. They have scientific validity as they are based in the research findings, but would require further testing in the field.

The first research question led to a Framework of Good Leadership and the model of Good leadership which embodied the enactment of good leadership. The second research question showed that the Framework and Model could enable organisations to make their own Leadership Models. The lingering question was why the experience of leadership is often not good in organisations and in reply to this question how can we researchers offer a framework which could improve this? In the following chapters, we will aim to bring this research to conclusion and to offer a path forward for field practitioners and organisations to support them in building good leadership for both the present and the future.

### **32.6 The Surprising Turn of Events.....and their consequences**

As mentioned in Chapter 10, there was one thing that I had not imagined when launching this research – the fact that it would be hard to find people who could come up with stories of good leadership, or to find people who had memories of good leadership experiences. From nearly everyone interviewed, the same comments came regarding the ease and countless experiences of bad experiences of leadership and that it was a real effort to think of some good stories to the point of some people even refused the interview because the question was too hard. Such comments, and the continual manner in which they came, left me somewhat disturbed. Everyone seemed to have the feeling that there was always something lacking.....

Why was good leadership such a difficult thing to find in the real world? Was leadership a thing that in reality was an ideal, but which could not be found? Why did this disappointment seem to be repeated constantly by the people from various fields with whom I spoke? Why did the difference in nationality make no difference to these kinds of replies? Why do people have so few stories of good leadership? Why does the workplace seem so void of people who have good experiences of leadership? What is failing in our definition of leadership, in our relationship to leaders, in our experience of leadership in the workplace that leaves so many people feeling let down?

Perhaps above all else, it was this question that pushed the research further through the various literature reviews, taking it out to the field and that prompted the further academic research that has been presented in Part 5. When analysing the action research journey, there are two clues to this answer which were striking through the action research process.

The first comes when analysing the interviews undertaken on Version 2 of the Model (see Annex 19 for the details). What is striking when analysing these interviews was the almost unanimous “liking” of the model yet being impressed by it in the sense that it was a lot to ask of one individual alone. To quote one senior manager “I have to say that I’m very impressed by this paper but also a bit frightened. Impressed, because it spells out very clearly what one should expect from a good manager within the ICRC. In that sense, I think it includes pretty much everything that would come to my mind. Impressed also because it spells these expectations out much clearer than anything else that ever came from the ICRC. But frightened, because I know that I don’t match all these expectations (but then again, there are few who do...)”. This echoed many other similar comments. It poses a real question and challenge. If this research (and its validity appears to be high) is correct, then there is much which a good leader has to manage, enact, embody to get the job right. The question posed is whether it is realistic to expect that?

The second outcome of the action research process was the numerous comments around leadership expectations not being clear for those in leadership positions, or indeed those who are led. The research journey highlighted that in fact many leaders do not have a clear boundary around what is expected of leadership. Thus the ability to create an organisational leadership model gives a boundary around which expectations can be properly calibrated. This has the effect, as we have seen from the discussion in Part 4, to “lighten” the load of leadership by the simple act of making the frame and expectations clear. This work must be taken seriously by organisations if they really want to create a positive climate for good leadership to exist and to grow.

This thesis has not delved into the cognitive psychology research in terms of what people recall and how, but rather has used these comments to support the intuitive search for simplicity which has motivated the author through Part 5 and in the development of Part 6.

### 33. Building a Model for the Future

#### 13. Lollipop model

This chapter builds on what has been learnt throughout this academic research journey and proposes a concept tool for building models of good leadership that practitioners may use to define their own leadership appropriate to themselves, their teams, their organisation and the context in which they are operating at any one time.

The research journey has been a rich one. The results outlined in Chapter 32 and their implications show that good leadership can be modelled. The lingering question of simplicity remains. The leadership challenge for the practitioner is to be present in the context of the organisation in a real way, to bring meaning and sense to the experience of work and to its purpose and through the circular relating of all the parts, to release the energy needed to carry an organisation forward with a sense of service which seemed to underline all of the “underlying fundamentals” which were described in Chapter 19.

It returns to the initial research question and the definition of the act of leadership presented at the beginning of this document, namely that the act of good leadership is defined as set of elements which, when enacted, produce effective results and who's enactment is experienced by others as having a positive effect. These two key aspects, that of the results (effectiveness) and the experience of the process (which we will later discuss as service) will be answered in the framework of the research question.

#### 33.1 The knowledge we have collected regarding constructs of leadership

This thesis has collected a considerable amount of knowledge around leadership, on both its theory and its practice as we have outlined in the chapters above. Throughout the various models and the theoretical discussion there has been a challenge raised regarding the constructs around which good leadership should be enacted.

- Firstly, 23 elements of good leadership which this thesis has put forward were set around four levels - self, group, context and action.
- Secondly the resulting field model ended up with 15 elements around three levels (action, presence, principles).

- The theoretical debate which followed in the field of physics brought four levels (context, presence, relating, action/sensemaking) while Mary Parker Follett's work brought five constructs (context, sensemaking, presence, relating and service).

These results are synthesised in Table 21 below.

From Part 3	From Part 4	From Part 5: Physics	From Part 5: Follett
Self	Presence	Presence	Presence
Group	Team (Actions)	Relating	Relating
Context	Context (Actions)	Context	Context
Action	Individual (Actions)	Action Sensemaking	Sensemaking
6 Leadership Fundamentals	Principles		Service
Leadership Field			

*Table 21: The various theoretical contributions to leadership levels*

There is a striking similarity between these different theoretical contributions. The fact that they offer such a consistency shows firstly validates the choice of categorising the 23 themes of good leadership into appropriate levels of intervention. It does however question the Leadership Model in Part 3 in terms of the quadrants of leadership field and leadership fundamentals.

The table does lead us the question the choice of wording of each of the levels. At this stage it is necessary to return to the definitions presented earlier:

Level	Definition
Self	the leader as a person and the qualities they hold
Group	the group of people that the leader brings together and is responsible for
Context	the vision which is formulated and held in a particular context
Action	the energy a leader brings in order to drive things forward towards an agreed result or vision
Leadership fundamentals	the fundamental elements which underlie leadership to make it good
Leadership field	the force and depth of presence a leader has
Presence	leaders ability to stand in who they are in the reality of the context and people around them
Relating	ability of a leader to relate to and interact with the group and context
Sensemaking	giving shared meaning to the context, vision and action
Service	leadership as an act of service to the purpose, vision, group,

*Table 22: The leadership levels and their respective definitions*

From the discussion in Chapter 16, context comprised of vision, service, analysis and balance. In further discussing context in Chapter 29, we extend the view of context to be a process of awareness, interaction and feedback loops which allow us to enter into contact



with our surroundings. This wider view of context rather sees context and a continual interaction with reality (at all its levels) rather than a leadership level. Indeed from Table 22 above, context appears in more than one definition. This mirrors the view of physics that the context is something which is present and surrounds us at all times and interacts with us at all levels.

A practical question of terminology arose at this point. Are these levels or are they constructs? The use of the term “level” would indicate a hierarchical relationship between the elements, which implies passing from one to the other along a linear pattern. A construct is defined as an idea or theory containing various conceptual elements. It is felt to be a more appropriate term to use instead of level as it leaves the space for each of the elements to interact in a non-linear, circular fashion.

From Table 5, the level of “self” had a large number of elements which were integrated into the subsequent model – 14 to be precise. While each of these are valid elements of good leadership, I returned to the reasoning which motivated Part 4 of this research – if you have so many elements that cannot be remembered, can it be really a practical way forward. The theoretical discussions which took place in Part 5 both centre on the idea of presence. Presence, as an element of good leadership, was already contained in the level of the self. Further discussion has shown that the aspect of presence has much more depth and complexity than was given in our initial Framework of Good Leadership. Whether reading again the leadership theories, the academic research data, the quantum physics contribution or the work of Mary Parker Follett, the aspect of leadership presence was continually portrayed as a major theme. Therefore based on this, it was decided to make “presence” a main construct of leadership.

“Group” was the next level given in the Framework. This contained aspects of responsibility, culture, empowerment, responsibility and building a team or community. Again after reading the thesis once and reviewing Tables 21 and 22 above, there appeared in my initial categorisation a mixture of “doing” and “being” with a definite interaction with context. And so again, choosing a clearer road, the construct is redefined as “relating”.

Now we start creating a more logical flow. A leader must first be present to the self, to understand who they are and how they interact with the people and world around them. That is what allows authenticity and a real connection to the context. But a leader, no matter how present and grounded they are within themselves, only becomes a leader by interacting with others, with the context, with the systems and people in places and organisations. Only then can they start making sense of the world around them, understanding the place and their place and making sense of their surroundings. The act of leadership being not simply the

ability to make sense for the self but it is also the ability act as a sensemaker for others. It is this role that, because a leader is present and relating to others, that they can embody this sensemaking role. It is in this level that vision and direction can be formulated, shared and understood. Thus the third construct of leadership becomes that of sensemaking.

Up to now, all feels very good. Leaders being present, relating to others and the context; making sense of the world around them and sharing that understanding with others. But where to from here and what makes this good?

What is the difference between effective and ineffective leadership? Do presence, relating and sensemaking create leadership which is good enough or is there something further that makes a difference? As we have seen earlier, leadership is not something which can be static. Leadership may be all of the 23 elements shown in Table 2, but as we have already mentioned, if there is no action, no movement, then it leads to nothing. Action was found to be a major theme in the research. It was described as the energy a leader brought into a situation in order to drive things forward, in order to ensure action towards the agreed result or vision. So we reinforce the choice of “action” as the concrete result of the dynamic nature of leadership. Thus action becomes the fourth construct of leadership.

Real leadership can only be present if there is movement, if there is a group moving towards an objective, doing something, achieving something. So we can argue, based on the results and conclusions presented in this thesis to date, that good leadership has four constructs of being in order to have a practical impact.

Is this enough? In Part 3 we discussed the underlying fundamentals of leadership which had emerged from the research data. These, we argued, were the fundamental elements which underlie leadership so to make it good. They were humility, expansive, partnership, long term responsibility, service and enlightened vision. We have mentioned in Part 3 that the “good” in terms of how leadership is experienced and enacted lies in the ethics and moral justification which the leader uses and which gives momentum to the leadership; the respect and service with which a leader acts in the role will determine that outcome. It was argued that the framework presented in Figure 6 – integrating these 6 fundamental principles - ensured that leadership was good and that this allowed the practitioner to move away from a reliance on ethics and morale justification to make leadership “good” to an actual set of measurable elements which, by default, would give good leadership. Taking up the various discussions throughout this thesis on the theme of service, we put forward that service is the fifth level which underpins good leadership. This pushes us to reframe the underlying fundamentals as follows:

- Humility becomes integrated in presence as it is a attitude carried by the individual
- Partnership sits with relating
- Long term responsibility is a choice of service
- Service - Expansive/space to grow is a space and service which the leader offers while enlightened vision is both an aspect of sensemaking (vision part) and service for the enlightenment

Therefore we put forward that “service” becomes the fifth construct of leadership and the level which makes a fundamental difference between the enactment of leadership and the enactment of good leadership.

Finally, based on this discussion, the concept of the “leadership field” as defined in Chapter 19 is found to not have appropriate anchorage in the research data or theoretical discussion and we follow the indications from the discussion on quantum physics that it is rather the five constructs moving together which become the leadership field rather than an additional concept.

Thus the five constructs which have emerged from the research and around which we can now formulate the response to the research question are:

- Presence
- Relating
- Sensemaking
- Action
- Service

Table 23 below summarises these five constructs of leadership with their corresponding definitions. It offers a view of the cumulated knowledge of this thesis and a structure on which to build the final answer to the research question.

Level	Replacing	Definition
Presence	Self	the personal qualities they hold, their ability to stand in who they are in the reality of the context and people around them
Relating	Group	ability of a leader to relate to and interact with and connect together a group and context
Sensemaking	Context	giving shared meaning to the context, vision and action the vision which is formulated and held in a particular context
Action		the energy a leader brings in order to drive things forward towards an agreed result or vision
Service		leadership as an act of service to a purpose, vision and group,

*Table 23: The leadership constructs for a new model*

These constructs which emerge from the research, as we have seen from this chapter, are the common threads through the literature review and the research results both from the inductive research and the action research. The following chapter will further discuss these in relation to the research question posed at the start of this work.

### **34. The Lollipop Model of Good Leadership**

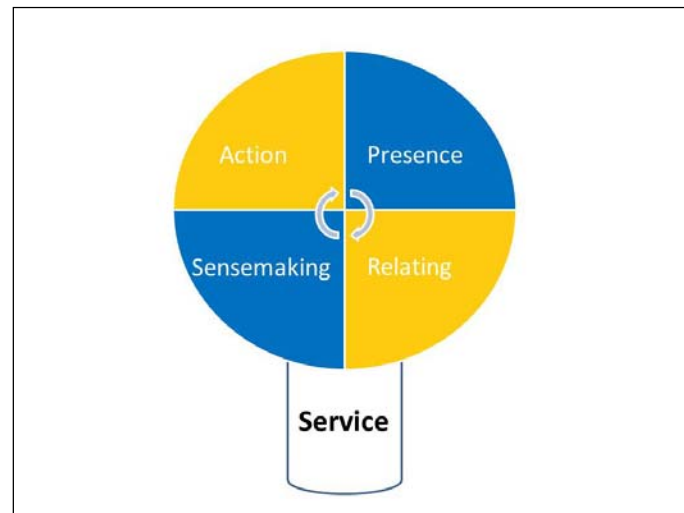
Thus the research question posed at the start of this thesis was to see what (if any) could be the underlying fundamentals or constructs which would allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. We defined of the act of leadership as set of elements which, when enacted, produce effective results and who's enactment is experienced by others as having a positive effect.

The five constructs which have emerged from the research and around which we can now start formulating the response to the research question are:

- Presence
- Relating
- Sensemaking
- Action
- Service

The enactment of leadership, as has been mentioned, has two key aspects, that of the results (effectiveness) and the experience of the process. We argue here that the results are given by the construct of action and the experience of the process by the construct of service. The constructs of presence, relating and sensemaking are the underlying fundamentals on which the enactment of leadership can take place.

From the knowledge gathered, and particularly in the relation to the rich content of the world of quantum physics, it was clear that any drawing of the model must illustrate the constant interaction and interweaving of the five constructs. It is the five constructs together which create a leadership field in which the act of leadership takes place. Therefore it is felt that a hierarchical representation would not be appropriate. Follett's circular relations idea, together with the concepts of non-linearity, bifurcation and feedback loops reinforced the idea of some kind of circular drawing for the model. And then we went back to the prologue for the inspiration – a lollipop, a round object with a handle on which it sits.



*Figure 20: The Lollipop Model of Good Leadership*

While all these five constructs are interconnected, as discussed earlier the starting point is presence. From there a leader continually spirals around the four quadrants of the circle adapting to the level needed depending on circumstances, context and levels of maturity. This would reflect the concept put forward by proponents of spiral dynamics (Grave, 1981, Wilber 2000) which portray human development as a non-linear spiralling process which deepens and widens our capacity as we grow. Perhaps this is what we had tried to capture when we first put forward the idea of a leadership field in the original definition in Part 4 when we talked about depth and grounding. By placing the model in a circular structure we capture the continual growth, feedback loops and interactions in a powerful way. This fluidity allows the leader to modulate behaviour and task in relation to the context around and to the direction which should be given thus allowing leadership to interact with both systems and people in a real and dynamic way.

The point on which it all sits is that of service. It becomes the point of singularity of good leadership. If we return to the physicists point that within complexity and chaos there is a subtle form of order (Briggs, Peat, 1990), then one could argue that it is the service in leadership which acts as, and offers to be, the point of singularity around which good leadership can form.

And so after six years, and an incredibly rich journey, we finish back in the place we started – much wiser, with more depth and knowledge, but back to the lollipop all the same. Figure 20 above is the “Lollipop Model of Good Leadership” representing the collective knowledge of this thesis.

It defines leadership as the ability of a leader to be present, to relate, to make sense of and to take action towards a vision or goal within a context and with a group of stakeholders. This is leadership. Good leadership, this thesis puts forward, is when this is done in service which is enlightened and expansive.

This new model presents us with the new structure for the constructs of leadership. This then necessitated re-looking at the original Framework which was built on Table 5. Taking the new structure of five constructs, Table 24 below maps the 23 themes of good leadership into their new corresponding levels.

Keys in New Model	Presence	Relating	Sensemaking	Action	Service
	Authenticity	Building/ developing/ working as a team	Analysis	Decision making	Balancing/ managing the whole
	Confidence	Communication	Culture		Expansive
	Courage	Empowerment	Understand and give sense to context		Long term responsibility
	Empathy	Partners not followers	Vision		Enlightened Vision
	Fairness	Responsibility			Values
	Honesty				
	Knowledge/ intelligence				
	Positive energy				
	Respect				
	Trust				
	Humility				

*Table 24: The Table of Elements of Good Leadership*

In Chapter 16, a landscape map had been drawn of the results of Table 5 producing what was called a Framework for Good Leadership. While at the time the drawing served to illustrate the relationship between the various constructs, the subsequent use of the Framework in the field research in Part 5 showed that it was in fact the table that was of use, rather than the drawing.

Based on this experience, we here put forward that Table 24 above should rather be used like a periodical table of elements of good leadership which a practitioner can refer to when defining the content – specific to the leader or the organisation – of each level of the Lollipop Model. Together with Figure 20, it becomes a practitioner tool to create leadership models for good leadership to be enacted.

### 34.1 Is it a model or a theory?

The Lollipop Model presented in Figure 20 defines good leadership as the ability of a leader to be present, to relate, to make sense of and to take action towards a vision or goal within a context and with a group of stakeholders. This is leadership. Good leadership, this thesis puts forward, is when this is done in service which is enlightened and expansive.

A great deal of the leadership literature is made up of theories. Theory might be said to be “primarily a form of insight, i.e. a way of looking at the world, and not a form of knowledge of how the world is (Bohm, 1980:4). I quite like this explanation as it puts theory in its place – that of a landscape map around which we can interact with the world. This allows new theories to be developed which build on previous knowledge, which falsifying it, but rather creating a new whole each time – that whole being a view, an insight rather than claiming absolute knowledge.

With this definition of theory, we return to the question presented in the heading – are the results presented above a model or theory of good leadership or are they both? I would argue that this thesis presents a theory of leadership which fits into a third stream of leadership theories relating to the act of leadership.

This thesis defines good leadership as:

*the ability of a leader to be present, to relate, to make sense of and to take action towards a vision or goal within a context and with a group of stakeholders which is done in service which is enlightened and expansive*

This is not a general theory of leadership (Goethals et al, 2006) but rather answers Ciulla's commentary on leadership theory that leadership and its study parallels the bigger questions “about who we are, how we live together, and how we shape the course of history (Ciulla, 2006:232). Here we offer a theory of the enactment of leadership which ensures that it is both effective and contributes to evolution. We shall return to these aspects in the concluding remarks in Chapter 37.



## 35. An Example in Practice

Before concluding, we undertook one last test of the results of this thesis and for the Lollipop Model.

One way to see if a model or theory is applicable is to build a training program around the model and put it into practice. This is the final part of this research journey and the beginning of a journey for the Lollipop Model by building a learning and development programme around the this new definition of good leadership.

This final section concludes the journey of the lollipop. It is the building of a learning and development programme for the ICRC based on the Lollipop Model. The learning programme, called the “ICRC Humanitarian Leadership and Management School”, has been in design based on the Lollipop Model since November 2012. It aims to offer an institution-wide coherent learning and development programme in leadership and management. Its vision is to develop outstanding leaders at all levels of the ICRC who have different competencies, yet equal value. It also plans to offer academic accreditation for each module which can lead to a Masters in Humanitarian Leadership with partner Universities around the globe.

It is based on a modular approach comprising of 3 modules and an optional fourth module leading to a Master’s Degree. These modules are designed in a way which builds on the participants existing skills and knowledge and over time develops good learners as well as good managers and leaders. The language used in the Lollipop Model has been the driver of design and is reflected in the titles given to each of the modules as follows:

- Presence – Leading by Example
- Relationship – Leading High Performing Teams
- Sensemaking – Leading Complex Operations and Transformation

One immediately notices the absence of the levels of service and action. This is because both service and action are an integrated part of all levels otherwise, as was said in an early chapter, the learning and development can have no practical impact in the field.

The modules have some common characteristics. Each module would be approximately 80-100 hours in total (distance, e-learning, on-the-job, etc.); each module includes a face-to-face component of up to 5 days and is based on a multiple loop approach: content is heard, understood, experienced and put into daily practice. It focuses on leadership skills, though

contains both leadership and management skills as well as practical operational skills particular to the ICRC (for example International Humanitarian Law). Content is designed and built in a progressive way and yet is organic enough to be able to continually integrate the field and organisational reality. The School is piloted in 2013 and will be taught in Amman, Bangkok, Bogotá, Geneva, and Nairobi.

The fact that a coherent learning journey can be built for leaders based on the Lollipop Model offers further evidence that the new model has field applicability.

### **35.1 The Leadership Storyboard of the ICRC Leadership and Management School**

The following section shows how the Lollipop Model is being put into practice at the ICRC. It is the foundation document to the ICRC's Leadership and Management School (HLMS) and has been written by author. It shows how the design principles upon which the school is built on the Lollipop Model. In December 2012, a European University has made a proposal to the ICRC to come into partnership based on this design and accredit the School with a Masters in Humanitarian Leadership.

The following description (35.1.1) is taken from the storyboard on which the design of the ICRC's Humanitarian Leadership and Management School is based. The full narrative storyboard can be found in Annex 22.

#### ***35.1.1 Storyboard for the ICRC Humanitarian Leadership and Management School (HLMS) of 17.03.13***

##### ***Introduction***

The ICRC's Humanitarian Leadership and Management School (HLMS) aims to develop leaders with strong leadership and management skills at all levels of the ICRC in order to better serve our humanitarian mission. It is an important vehicle to promote and integrate successful management of diversity and to lead our multidisciplinary response to humanitarian challenges.

The School is designed on a set of leadership capabilities which create, manage and drive ICRC operations. These leadership capabilities aim to ensure a dynamic and powerful leadership at all levels of the ICRC.

## ***Background***

At the heart of the ICRC Humanitarian Leadership and Management School (HLMS) is the ICRC's ambition to increase the relevance and effectiveness of the support it provides to people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence; to strengthen its contextualized multi-disciplinary response and to optimize organizational performance. The challenge was to create a successor to the People Leadership and Management Programme (PLM) that would integrate the development of leadership capabilities with the acquisition of relevant operational and strategic management skills. As part of the ICRC's People Management Programme, the HLMS will critically contribute to ensure that present and future ICRC leaders and managers have the required operational and strategic capabilities and the necessary mind-sets, attitudes and behaviours to deliver on ICRC's ambitions and ensure that the organization continues to provide quality service to those who need it most.

## ***Vision***

The ICRC Humanitarian Leadership and Management School will develop inspired and capable leaders with strong operational and strategic skills. It aims to develop leadership and management capabilities of ICRC managers at all levels of the organisation.

Graduates of the HLMS will lead multidisciplinary and diverse teams throughout ICRC to better serve the organization's humanitarian purpose in complex humanitarian settings.

To achieve this objective, the choice of a leadership development programme was made. Development supports people to realise their individual and collective potential through the combination of knowledge acquisition and experience-based insights. It is this unique combination that will eventually bring about the behaviours, attitudes and mind-sets that will foster relevant operational and strategic management skills to achieve better outcomes for affected populations.

The School is part of a wider ICRC learning system, which develops the existing and next generation leaders and managers who are capable to deal with current and future humanitarian challenges in the most efficient and effective way. The School will be rooted in operational reality, and will drive sustainable individual, team and organization development, based on the latest leadership and management theory.

All staff members who are leading, or have the potential to lead people and to manage resources or programmes are eligible to apply to the HLMS (approximately 1,500 staff members with a mixed population of 50% resident, 50% mobile). Participants will be mixed across both hierarchy and functions. Once established, the School is moreover designed to be open to people from the RC/RC Movement and potentially beyond. Access will be gained

through application. The School also intends to offer participants the possibility of continuing their studies and obtaining a Master's degree in "Humanitarian Leadership" in partnership with academic institutions.

The content of the HLMS will be a constant learning journey of continual creation and evolution. While the learning objectives remain the same, each cohort will influence the next by integrating new policies, approaches and sharing of best practice. This continual evolution is of particular importance during the development and pilot phases of the School and those participating in pilot modules will be informed of their specific role in the School's development.

### ***Key Success Factors for good leadership at the ICRC***

Why should anyone be led by you? This was the start of the ICRC's PLM journey and it remains one of the most relevant questions for ICRC's present and future leaders. To support ICRC's strategic vision the ICRC's biggest assets are inspiring, passionate and capable people who are capable of taking a leadership role.

Global crisis and competition in humanitarian work is accelerating the rapidly changing environment which means that all organisations have to deliver well and more wisely. Social media and global communications have even increased this awareness dramatically. Simply adapting to those fast changes is not enough as leaders. ICRC leaders and managers have to learn how to use and shape the system in a wise way.

Good leadership is thus a critical source for ICRC's organisational performance and its ability to have a sustainable impact. In the diverse working environments of the ICRC, dynamic and effective leadership is needed for high performance. The key success factors for good leadership should extend the 4 PLM principles to give wider scope of leadership and management at the ICRC. The design of the School has started with the integration of the 4 PLM principles. These alone however are not enough to take on the full leadership and management responsibilities which are inherent in ICRC's work.

The HLMS design defines five fundamental capabilities for effective leadership and management in the ICRC. These capabilities are presence, relating, sensemaking, action and service.



These together ensure that leaders create and sustain a working environment which is effective, agile and creates real value in each context.

The leadership development journey which the School proposes aims to develop these 5 critical leadership capabilities. It aims to develop and support the effective leadership in each of these areas to ensure that leaders and managers in the ICRC, and their teams, can be comfortable and thrive in the challenging internal and external environment in which the ICRC is situated.

### ***The ICRC Leadership Capabilities***

Each leadership capability is defined in terms of the development of the individual as a manager and leader and in terms of what is expected by the ICRC. To acquire and integrate these leadership capabilities, the learning journey of the School is built focused on developing these leadership capabilities through various stages of depth and complexity. By enacting these 5 leadership capabilities the ICRC creates, supports and develops good and capable leaders. The ICRC's leadership journey is also aimed at building leaders who are consistently and positively contributing to the evolution of the organisation through their exemplarity and positive attitude.

## **35.2 Building a Leadership School from the Lollipop Model**

The Lollipop model, as can be seen from above, became the design basis for the School. In order to design a learning journey which builds skilled and mature leaders and managers, the choice was made to build a programme which integrates learning over time and in consideration of all the other demands of the typical working environment in which our staff find themselves.

The School's learning journey takes place over 3 modules with participants completing one module each year. The modules are taken in sequence with each one building on the last. We aim that each module will be certified by an academic institution as well as the ICRC. The module design follows the choice made in Figure 2 in the initial stages of building the Framework of Good Leadership, namely that of self, group and context. The three modules under construction at the time of writing are entitled Leading by Example, Leading High Performing teams and Leading Complex Operations and Transformation.

In working with the five constructs of the Lollipop Model, the team decided to use the term capabilities. This was done in order to be able to design a learning programme which would develop an individual's capability under each of the five constructs of the Lollipop Model. Thus the HLMS's three module approach focuses on building a leadership capability in each

of the five leadership constructs – presence, relating, sensemaking, action and service. The leadership capability of service underlines all of the modules. The modules of the HLMS and its learning journey are designed to build leadership skills and maturity in each of these leadership capabilities. This gives leaders at the ICRC a palette of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours in order for them to be effective in any situation and with any group. In the design process, each module is underpinned by the leadership capability of service which ensures that all leadership actions hold the focus of service to the staff and to the mission of the ICRC. By investing in such a leadership journey, individuals – through learning, coaching, mentoring and experiencing – gain solid foundations to ensure that they have the ability to hold any leadership challenge which the ICRC may place before them while at the same time contributing positively to the impact on the beneficiaries and the evolution of the ICRC.

It is planned that a 4<sup>th</sup> optional module would be available with a partner academic institution which would complete a Masters in Humanitarian Leadership.

### 36. Questions from the Illuminated Ones

In sitting down to write the conclusions, I asked two eminent thinkers what they would like to get out of my thesis. One said to think about what you need to know when you are in a difficult leadership situation and the answers your model has to offer? The other suggested to look at what is needed to restore the trust and (self)-confidence in a de-motivated team which has no more confidence in their leadership. It was a challenge of coming back to the essentials.

I should have known better than to ask! So was the Lollipop Model strong enough?

Difficult situations arise from a myriad of factors. Today's organisations are complex, chaotic and fast moving places where stability is replaced by .....its absence. Our organisational answer to this has been to employ change managers, often at the same time as we redo process mapping, job descriptions, specialise tasks to experts, etc. etc. As I write I think of Newton and Taylor and reflect on how far we seem not to have come. While eminent writers have long put forward the fact that our organisational environments have changed (and much has been referenced to this fact in Part 1), we still seem to fall into the habit of structuring to create stability.

The Lollipop Model presented in Figure 20 presents a point of singularity in which leadership can offer a positive service in today's organisational reality. Around this, it offers five constructs around which a leader must ensure interaction in order to have a positive effect on a situation. Through clarifying the investment and impact a leader has at each of these levels -the periodical table of elements in Table 25 can help structure areas of intervention – the leader can have a positive impact.

The key word here is investment. No leadership – good or bad – happens just by chance. It is always a choice, even if sometimes that choice is a choice to do nothing, to invest nothing – it is still a choice. It is like the story in the prologue the act of leadership is an act – the lollipop itself is a tool nothing more powerful than that, nothing less powerful either. It is a tool to connect, to invest energy into the system and thus become an actor in a situation, a leader. In difficult situations, that choice carries more weight and often demands more courage but if a leader makes the choice and is willing to make the investment and interacts at each of the five constructs of presence, relating, sensemaking, action and service then an act of leadership will occur and it will be good.

The other question was to look at what is needed to restore the trust and (self)-confidence in a de-motivated team which has no more confidence in their leadership. Trust has been defined within this thesis as the confidence which is generated by the act of leadership.

Good leadership is a process of trust – a leader has to be trusted, and in turn has to be able to trust and give trust to their followers. This in turn is a basis for building motivation and being able to move together towards achieving a goal. This research has shown that good leaders seem to show an extraordinary level of trust in their followers, in their teams. That trust builds the space in which people can grow and expand; it brings teams together. It is also demanding of the leader and demands a sharing of power in a fundamental way. And here are the clues to restoring trust and confidence – the authenticity of presence which opens the space for trust to start being built while at the same time giving trust (and the authority that goes with it) in the act of relating.

Trust is built within that space of relating but grows in the process of spiralling through all the quadrants. The implication of service is in the building of confidence and motivation is the leaders approach to the context, in their ability to balance and manage the whole in respect of their stakeholders, the level at which they take responsibility and offer space to allow others to take their place and grow.

So again, like answering to the previous question – trust, confidence and motivation is engendered through the clarity and consistency of a leaders behaviour at each of the five constructs of the Lollipop Model.

We see from both these questions that by combining the Lollipop Model (Figure 20) and the Periodical Table of Elements of Good Leadership (Table 25) we offer a practical and real way for leaders to empower their leadership and stakeholders to require the investment of their leaders.

So the illuminated ones, as usual, were right in their questions.



## **37. Conclusions**

### **37.1 Conclusion (the academic version)**

So what is it in the act of leadership that makes a difference? That makes it good leadership? And can we model it in a way which is effective across organisations, context and cultures?

To find this answer was the original aim of this work which we are now bringing to a close. The journey started by looking at the wealth of knowledge available about leadership in the academic world, to see if we could bring it into the everyday reality of the practitioner, for both leaders and followers. The idea to use storytelling came from the lollipop story presented in the Prologue and the power of stories to allow people to give their own account of moments of good leadership from their own experience, without considering what should be the "right answer". The idea to focus on good leadership was in order to see if there are underlying fundamentals or constructs to the act of good leadership which make it work.

This work has looked at leadership, at good leadership and what is it that makes it work. After delving into the wealth of academic material available about leadership, I found myself much better informed than before and yet was left lacking something that could be useful in the practitioner reality in which I lived, something which I found passionate enough to be worthwhile putting into practice. The solid (and vast) academic body of knowledge on leadership served as a platform to go out and ask a very basic question – tell me a story about good leadership. The overwhelming response that this was a difficult question to answer left me somewhat dismayed about the state of leadership in our organisations and our enterprises. Why had the incredible investment in the study and development of leadership both in the academic and business world left us with only a handful of good examples and, it would seem from people's responses to this research process, an incredible wealth of bad examples of leadership.

Accepting the challenge of a research process that looked at good leadership through storytelling was the first step in the learning process. To follow the intuition that this was the right way to frame the research, while at the same time accepting the risk of ending up with no useable data, was a step into the unknown but one which served to minimise the risk of author-bias in the process. The interview process and the research website ([www.leadershipstory.org](http://www.leadershipstory.org)) created for this research gave 52 complete sets of data, crossing 16 different nationalities and all continents. This gave a rich view of good leadership in action and what that means. It also gave hope that good leadership was real and did exist.

The creation of the initial dictionary of themes for good leadership was a process deeply rooted in the existing academic literature. Here the first surprise came in terms of the elements which were defined in the initial dictionary but which found no correspondence in the research data. The fact that managing uncertainty and power did not arise as themes in any of the interviews were perhaps the biggest surprises. So much of the academic discussion focuses on these aspects as major leadership factors. The conclusion which I have drawn, after analysing in detail the data, is that good leaders use power well, wisely, with a certain respect and humility. Therefore “power” as an issue became non-existent in the stories told of good leadership experiences, and validated nicely Follett’s “right use of power” which has been discussed in early chapters. Similarly, uncertainty is supposed to figure prominently as a challenge to today’s leaders. The conclusion follows that drawn in respect to power, that good leadership manages uncertainty in such a way as to create sufficient security for the group and context around them in order for it to be manageable.

The work of coding according to the initial dictionary of themes, and re-coding according to the two final dictionaries (one on good leadership and the second on leadership theories) meant that every word and line was coded three times. This gave a depth of knowledge of the material which produced deeper information after each round. The 23 themes which, literally, grew out the initial round of coding became the basis on which the final coding took place. In analysing the resulting data and working to see how each theme fitted together, a *Framework of Good Leadership* grew which has been presented through its various stages in Figures 1-5. A fourth round of coding added 6 underlying elements of good leadership which underlined the stories and were seen to represent some fundamental principles of good leadership (Figure 6).

With this wealth of data a first attempt was made to build a framework to show the structure of good leadership and the principles that are needed to ensure that the result is in reality good for the whole group of stakeholders. Through further analysis of the research findings in terms of the themes of good leadership, the underlying fundamentals and the idea of leadership fields, an initial model of good leadership emerged, which we have called the initial *Model of Good Leadership*, and is presented in Figure 7.

From there, the journey into the field began to see if the Model could hold up to the scrutiny of practitioner reality. These results were then taken back into a field setting. The journey undertaken by a peer group of senior managers in my own organisation was a fascinating challenge to the research work which had been done. It was a process in which I had to let go of concepts which held much meaning for me and on the strength of the research results alone, allow a working group to build an organisational leadership model. The similarity to the

original research work was visually pleasing but it left a number of significant questions regarding how the original leadership model was constructed. Figure 12 shows the model which was created by this field research and which has its basis clearly in the research. The organisation undertaking the field research chose to replicate the graphics of the original model in three dimensions. So the initial Leadership Model did live up to scrutiny in the field, within an acceptable margin, but most interestingly was the construction process which showed that the foundation of building a leadership model in an organisation was not in fact the Model itself which was first proposed in Figure 7, but the earlier Framework (Figure 5) from which it was built.

The reason for not stopping at this point – which would have been simpler as it validated easily the research – was that it left open the same questions around simplicity which had been already raised in Part 3. The sheer content of the leadership models impressed (or frightened) even those who were good leaders. And still, while academically strong, neither model could be explained, or remembered, in a practical way.

And so with this wealth of data, we returned to the theory to seek further wisdom to see whether the model needed refining. Through my search into the academic literature I found two bodies of knowledge particularly useful – that of quantum physics and the work Mary Parker Follett. Through the research journey contained in this thesis, which basically spans 100 years of leadership work and scientific thinking, I found within these works a powerful reflection of what could be considered to be good leadership and how to understand the reality of the context surrounding us. The courage to undertake a second literature review and to retake the leadership literature, albeit in only two fields, was a journey to see if I could put all the wisdom which had been shared with me through the six year journey of this thesis into a form which could be more easily used in the field.

Using the totality of the data gathered through the research process and the theoretical discussion in Part 5, it was possible to refine the initial leadership model. Chapter 35 presents the Lollipop Model of Good Leadership (Figure 20) which this thesis offers as a basis on which any individual or organisation can create their own leadership model. The Lollipop Model presents five constructs of leadership – presence, relating, sensemaking, action and service. These are constructs which must be brought into being in order for leadership to occur.

The Lollipop Model in Figure 20 can be shown, explained, built upon and put into practice by anyone, at any level, in any context. By integrating culture and context into the initial model which made these elements explicit and where they become simply other elements to manage, the research process confirmed that it was possible to build a model that could

cross culture and organisational context. The Lollipop Model can be considered to be a model of good leadership which is applicable and effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. And thus the original research question is positively answered – that yes it is possible to construct a model of good leadership which can be enacted and be effective across context, cultures and organisational types.

And so after six years, and an incredibly rich journey, we finish back in the place we started – much wiser, with more depth and knowledge - but back to the lollipop all the same. Figure 20 is the Lollipop Model of Good Leadership representing the collective knowledge of this thesis. It defines leadership as the ability of a leader to be present, to relate, to make sense of and to take action towards a vision or goal within a context and with a group of stakeholders. This is leadership. Good leadership, this thesis puts forward, is when this is done in service which is enlightened and expansive.

This theory of leadership offers most directly an answer to the quest for a general theory of leadership which has been long sought (Goethals, Sorenson eds. 2006). In their concluding remarks they state that leadership “when it is done right, ... helps to create the conditions for people to flourish physically, mentally, and as human beings, and they do so without harming others or the world around them (Ciulla, 2006:233).

The theory we offer here of good leadership and its enactment is one which ensures that it is both effective and contributes to evolution.

### **37.2 Conclusions (the non-academic version)**

If good leadership is so simple, why has our organisational world not quite yet figured it out? At a time when management charts, ethical codes of conduct, leadership development are present all over the organisational world, why are the good examples of leadership so rare and so difficult to find. Here we have presented 52. From them, and the vast amount of literature and wisdom available to us, this thesis has decanted a little bit of wisdom and of knowledge that points us in a simple, rather humble direction.

And perhaps that is part of the problem. Leadership – the really good kind – is a rather humble profession. Humility is perhaps the least quality which one would expect, and certainly not often mirrored in the type of leader that tends to be promoted. Today's leadership theory and practice is built on the foundations of a theory of leadership still known today as the great men and great women. The tracing of the development of leadership theory shows that this is common to all leadership discussions. Perhaps our roots need to change and our theoretical constructs need to be reconstructed with something new; for this

reason we have constructed a table of leadership theories to reflection this practitioner reality. But perhaps most of all we need to bring back the simplicity of the act of leadership towards the elements which make it good and effective rather than the theories that seem only to offer to create boxes and limited visions.

One of the people interviewed used the term “the trust to follow”. By the end of this research I found a description of leadership that spoke to me – of trust and respect, of teams, of transparency, of people, of growing, of developing; of vision, of luck, of humility, of service. In the end the lollipops I found were the stories which were shared with me; moments in time when good leadership was real; where real people connected in a real way to a real vision of which they could be part. Good leadership stories spoke of times when things flowed, when through dedication, hard work and real investment rewards were reaped – nothing comes from nothing, nothing comes for free. Good leadership appeared in any moment, where through presence, relating, sensemaking and action leaders moved with real power, in service to those around them.

Good leadership is not a complicated act but it is highly demanding. It demands utmost honesty; it demands clarity of thought, of vision, of service; it demands respect and communication and transparency; it demands trust and the earning of it; it demands care of the vision, of the team, of the context; it demands humility and the ability to listen and to help others grow; it demands hard work and energy. That effort, that sharing - the distribution of the lollipops - that being real and honest and present is what made these leadership moments different. The act of leadership being the act of giving these moments’ direction, momentum, of bringing people together and building the teams that in turn went on to build great things.

The really good leaders are often not the most vocal, not the most visible. They were the ones who had the great teams, the ones that cared in a 360<sup>0</sup> circle, internally and externally; they were the ones who smiled in the morning knowing that by their presence they are key creators of good environments; they were the ones who valued the new and could make sense of it for others; they were the ones whose teams remained solid whatever the changes they had to manage, where the word burnout was not needed, where power was used wisely and well; where results were achieved in balance – not too much, not too little; where enlighten and expansive service underlay their actions, and where time and space were present and appropriate.

The initial research question was to see if there were underlying fundamentals or constructs which allows good leadership to be enacted. The Lollipop Model of Good Leadership is the evidence-based answer which this research work offers to that question.

In this research journey I learnt that good leadership is something real and something demanding of the incumbent. Whether leaders are born or made is perhaps an irrelevant question – do individuals have the courage to choose to be a good leader? That, perhaps, is the better question.

The Lollipop Model in the end shows that for leadership to take place it must be enacted - there must be an authenticity of the self, a real presence which comprises a large number of elements which are each challenging in their own right to hold and embody. The challenge doesn't stop there. Leadership demands a willingness to relate, to build relationships which empower, in a real way, the teams that are built; allowing the work to take place in a time and space where each individual finds their place according to their needs and talents; leadership needs to play a sensemaking role, bring vision and understanding of what is taking place and create sense for others of the context, of the direction, of the goal, of the vision. Leadership needs to ensure that right action is taken, that there is movement in the system they have create which has impacted and an added-value. And finally, leadership does so in service which is enlightened and expansive while ensuring that all these elements are enacted. This is what makes good leadership and what makes good leadership so powerful.

### **37.3 And what did I learn?**

The act of offering a lollipop was the act of being present and grounded in the reality of the context, of meeting and relating to each individual in a real way, of sharing something and making sense of what was received and using my own experience has allowed me to present a model of leadership can be used in any setting and by anyone. Leadership, good leadership that is, seems to be rather similar journey.

I learnt that good leadership carries a certain degree of humility with it; that because of this it is often not so visible, and perhaps not valued to its fullest; that good leaders give you power, empower you not just to do the job at hand but empower you to do something more, be something more. I learnt that it is this which is their power - they see more, further and then take you there with them. In turn, I also learnt that this aspect of good leadership is somehow expected and that's why it doesn't get recognised, and why so many only recognise stories when power is robbed.

I learnt that good leaders have partners not followers. They create teams around them who are empowered to fulfil the vision; that good leaders walk together with their teams, assuming the direction and responsibility when necessary while at the same time opening

the way for others. That good leadership is about being generous, being ready to help others grow and develop, and about being ready to serve while at the same time being inspiring.

I learnt that good leadership is expansive, it creates and holds space in which others, and organisations grow; and it holds the responsibility for all the aspects of what is led.

I learnt that good leadership has an innate sense of service embodied into it and it is a lived sense of service that inspires others; that service must also be towards the wider community in which the organisation sits.

I learnt that good leadership needs clarity of boundaries, of expectations for all involved. I saw that too often organisations add to the complexity of leadership by simply not taking the time to clarify what they expect from leaders both in terms of behaviour, relationships, and results. This creates a void which those propelled into leadership positions fill as best as they can until they can't anymore. This could be the root of much of our failure in leadership today.

I learnt that good leadership makes good business sense; that good leaders carry a bigger picture than others see; that they have the ability to open space to a more enlightened vision and are able to share that. I learnt that we should be looking for these kinds of leaders if organisations are to really be able to operate in the increasingly complex world which organisations face both in terms of markets, of technology, of the search for the best people, in building the best teams, in achieving a visioning of the future that offers something tangible and sustainable. Good leadership is able to balance the achievement of “material profits” with “human profits” so that care is taken of all the aspects of wellbeing.

Perhaps above all else I learnt that good leadership is something which is enacted in each moment, embodied in each step, and when enacted correctly powerfully gets things done well and wisely, creating more than what was there before.

### **37.4 A Hero's Journey?**

Good leadership takes courage, demands investment and in turn offers rewards to those with the courage to take that path of leadership. In the end, this work has offered a Lollipop Model of Leadership which helps leaders be present and lead their context, their relationships, their sensemaking role and how action that in a achievement of a vision or goal. It also ensures that leaders clarify the service which their leadership embodies. Most importantly this research offers a practical way for individuals or organisation to create their own leadership models that can be used, discussed, taught, put into practice. At the end it offers something I

can live by; it offers a way of looking at leadership which is real, is tangible and a model of what real, good leadership should be.

The work of comparative mythology maintains that all myths are based on the story of a journey which the hero undertakes (Campbell, 2008). He maintained that all myths are based on the story of a journey which the hero undertakes - from the call to adventure the quest begins, the trials, the transformation; and throughout the journey the challenge is to return from the quest retaining the wisdom gained. "Not the animal world, not the plant world, not the miracle of the spheres, but man himself is now the crucial mystery. Man is that alien presence with whom the forces of egoism must come to terms, through whom the ego is to be crucified and resurrected, and in whose image society is to be reformed....The modern hero, the modern individual who dares to heed the call and seek the mansion of that presence with whom it is our whole destiny to be atoned, cannot, indeed must not, wait for his community to cast off the slough of pride, dear, rationalized avarice and sanctified misunderstanding. "Live" Nietzsche says, "as though the day were here". It is not society that is to guide and save the creative hero, but precisely the reverse" (Campbell, 2008:337).

The interesting thing is that if you consider the myths and legends, the stories of heroes, they are always the ones who learn the most. To be a good leader is a hero's journey – it is the journey which is consciously undertaken, which holds many layers, many elements and much responsibility and it is one of constant learning. The stories told within these pages cover a myriad of contexts, situations, moments in time, types of organisations, and ways of leadership. But common throughout has been the figure of the leader appreciated for being genuine, for being true, for being authentic; of leaders who were really present to themselves, to the team, to the context, to the vision and who shaped how all of these evolved over time because they were willing to journey on the path of leadership and were able to retain and share the wisdom gained.

The journey of good leadership is indeed a hero's journey, but a humble one!





## EPILOGUE

*Qui touché à la quietude parachève tout.*

*Zhuangzi, IV-III AV. J.-C.*

## Epilogue

It is 21 years since my mission in Bosnia. When I had finished that 17 month mission, I had distributed 3,825 lollipops (honest – it became something in the delegation, so a record was kept of the numbers of lollipops bought!). I did so in many settings - the office, in the places I visited, even with the soldiers on the front line when we got stuck; places and people torn by the savagery of war and in that simple act - *as I remember it* – each time making an offer of something more, a bigger picture in which people found their own space and safety to move.

What continually impressed me throughout the journey of the last six years of this research has been the depth and importance that good leadership brought to each individual, each situation, each moment. No one talked of getting more, making more money for themselves, getting promoted; rather they talked of growing, developing, sharing, building a vision of something bigger than they would have been able to see or do on their own; they talked of being challenged, being safe, being allowed to make mistakes, of having space and being encouraged to grow. They all spoke of good leadership which made good business sense; that the business was better because they were better. Respect given, humility shown, an enlighten vision shared; real presence which inspired; a team created that left each of the members better, bigger, more connected than they were before.

The journey of leadership is not one to be undertaken lightly. Really good leadership is built through experience, through trials, through the quest to learn, to grow, to serve. It is enacted in five basic constructs, but there is also a table of elements which are needed to create a model of leadership which are numerous - so much to undertake on a journey and yet each important. This reflects the complexity which is inherent in the simplicity of the 5 constructs of leadership. And we have ended in the shape of a lollipop - a rather simple and humble form.

And perhaps that is what really good leadership is - the courage to embody these five constructs of presence, relating, sensemaking, action and service in the intricate web that they form.

Really good leaders are the ones who are present to the people and the context and yet who are able to open the space to something bigger. They are the ones who offer something more than what existed before; the ability to move with more presence, a more grounded sense of self that is more connected to the world. Good leadership is the ability to be relate and make sense of all that life has to offer, even in the grimmest of circumstances and, in service, being able to take those circumstances, and those people to somewhere better, to more than they could have thought possible, even in the smallest of ways.

Really good leadership is the talent of opening the space so that the “leadership lollipop” becomes accessible to all, a space in which people can develop, can be who they are, can grow into who they can become. Doing this on an individual basis is how good leaders ensure that organisations develop and grow. This is the act of service that good leadership offers; it is the peace and satisfaction that being a good leader brings.

Leaders who are willing to make this journey leave in their wake people who have grown and organisations as better places, but often do so with the humility of a guide who leaves the scene quietly knowing the impact that they have had, but leaving the others with the sense that they have been magnificent by themselves.

Enjoy the journey, take the risk to walk the hero’s path; but my goodness, keep it simple and let it be fun!

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## The Researcher

*“Whatever we call reality, it is revealed to us only through  
an active construction in which we participate  
(Prigogine, Stengers, 1984:293)*

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# **Annexes**

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PLEASE NOTE THAT DUE TO THE NATURE OF SOME OF THE STORIES THIS RESEARCH, THE CONTENT OF THESE ANNEXES ARE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND ARE FOR THE USE OF THE JURY ONLY.





# Summary

## **Abstract: The Power of a Lollipop**

This thesis, which starts in a journey about lollipops (hence the title), presents the story of good leadership – a story of what makes leadership good. A chronological history of the development of leadership theory is presented as the base of knowledge upon which this research sits. This thesis answers positively the research question of whether it was possible to find the underlying fundamentals or constructs which allow good leadership to be enacted and be effective across contexts, cultures and organisational types. Through inductive and action research methods, carried out globally, the enactment of good leadership is framed into five dimensions – that of presence, relating, sensemaking, action and service. It presents the Lollipop Model of Good Leadership which permits any leader to become a good leader.

Key words: Leadership, leadership model; presence; relating; sensemaking; service; storytelling; action research.

## **Résumé : J'veus ai apporté des bonbons...**

Cette thèse qui prend son origine dans une anecdote autour d'une distribution de sucettes - d'où le titre - présente l'histoire du bon leadership, l'histoire de ce qui rend le leadership bon. Cette recherche s'appuie sur des théories de leadership dont une revue chronologique est réalisée. Une réponse positive est apportée à la question centrale de cette thèse à savoir : « est-il possible d'identifier les fondamentaux soutenant ou construisant un bon leadership et permettant sa mise en œuvre et son efficacité dans différents contextes, cultures et organisations ? ». A travers des approches inductives et action-recherche conduites de manière internationale, l'incarnation du bon leadership est modélisée en cinq dimensions, celles de présence, mise en lien, explicitation du sens, action et service. Cette recherche présente le « Lollipop Model of Good Leadership » qui permet de pratiquer à chaque leader de devenir un bon leader.

Mots Clés : Leadership, modèle de leadership; présence; mise en lien; sens; service; recherche-action; récit.