

MLQ training works

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At the *Centre for the Study of Leadership*, we put more than 800 managers through leadership training, largely based around transformational leadership. Fifty managers from seven cohorts undertook full pre- and post-hoc 360-degree MLQ profiling. From these data we found solid evidence that such training will increase the display of transformational leadership and the extra effort of followers.

Participants were from the public and private sectors. In-house programmes and public programmes were undertaken. Participants undertook two days training, which included interpretation of their pre-hoc leadership profile. They then worked on implementing a leadership development plan for the next 3-4 months back at work. That plan concentrated on two of the five transformational leadership factors. Finally, participants came back for two more days' intervention, based around their post-hoc profile.

Here are the main findings. First, the pre- and post-hoc profiles identified that the frequency of display of all five transformational leadership factors increased significantly, whether or not the participants included that particular factor in their developmental plan. Increases ranged from four per cent to greater than 10%, but all were significant. In other words, people were trained to display transformational leadership more frequently. For example, the average frequency of display of 'idealised behaviours' was 2.45 (approximately mid-way between 'sometimes' and 'fairly often') prior to the intervention. After the intervention, the average display of this leadership rose to 2.70, on the scale from 0-4. This represents an increase in frequency of display of 10.2 per cent.

Second, no significant differences were noted ($p > .05$) between the seven cohorts for the improvement in display of leadership. Therefore, the training is equally effective in the public sector as the private sector, and in public groups or in-house cohorts.

Third, and just as importantly, the extra effort exerted by followers increased significantly by an average of 8.6 per cent over this same time period. Also, follower satisfaction with their leadership increased significantly by 7.2 per cent.

Fourth, to assess the effectiveness of concentrating on a particular factor within a developmental plan, I conducted a Mann-Whitney U test to test for the difference in leadership improvement between the 'focus' and 'non-focus' groups. The test

indicated a difference in mean improvement for only two of the five transformational leadership factors. For example, if a participant was to focus on developing individualised concentration and intellectual stimulation, those two factors would increase substantially, and the display of the other transformational leadership factors would also increase, albeit by a smaller frequency.

There are three conclusions that can be drawn from the present research. First, and flying in the face of certain popular press literature that says one cannot discriminate between transformational leadership factors, I have found that we can do so. Certainly, it might be difficult to discriminate between transformational factors psychometrically. However, theoretically, conceptually and now andragogically, discrimination between the factors is both readily achievable and valuable to do. However, I do support the theoretical and empirical similarity between the factors.

Second, I would advocate that we don't just train 'transformational' leaders. Rather, we should train and develop each of the factors of transformational leadership separately, with the confidence that all other factors will improve concomitantly. The third conclusion is that one can increase the two leadership outcomes of 'follower extra effort' and 'satisfaction with leadership', as a result of the FRLD intervention.

Parry, K. W. & Sinha, P. (2002). *Success at Developing Transformational Leadership through the Full Range Leadership Development (FRLD) Programme*. Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) Annual Conference, Beechworth, Victoria, 4-7 December.